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Shapiro Administration Invests \$6 Million Over Two Years to Provide Free Period Products for Pennsylvania Students, Proposes Another \$3 Million in 2026-27 Budget



One in four students struggles to afford period products, and 23% miss class because they don't have the hygiene products they need.

The initiative can help many of the more than 650,000 girls in Pennsylvania schools, keeping them in the classroom learning.

The Governor's 2026-2027 proposed budget doubles down on investment, allocating \$3 million to provide free period products to students.

Pittsburgh, PA – Two years ago, the **Shapiro Administration** secured the first-ever investment in free period products for all Pennsylvania schools, and since then, has invested \$6 million to help ensure that girls can focus on their schoolwork and remain in the classroom.

Today, **Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Dr. Debra Bogen** visited **Sterrett Classical Academy**, in the Pittsburgh School District, to highlight how this historic investment is helping students across Pennsylvania.

“Free period products in schools help ensure that Pennsylvania’s more than 650,000 girls have peace of mind — so they can focus on their education,” said **Dr. Bogen**. “This is just the latest example of how the Shapiro Administration is ensuring students are prepared to learn without distractions or struggle. We heard firsthand just how essential this initiative has become over the last two years, and I am proud that Governor Shapiro continues to support its mission.”

Free period product funding is being [distributed to more than 750 Pennsylvania school districts](#), intermediate units, career and technical centers, and brick-and-mortar charter schools throughout the Commonwealth.

Studies show that one in four students nationally have struggled to afford period products, and a staggering 23% have missed class entirely because they didn't have the hygiene products they need. This funding enables schools to provide students with free access to period products, in line with the Shapiro Administration's efforts to improve health equity.

This initiative has become a vital source of funding for schools across the Commonwealth, taking one more burden off students so they can remain focused on learning.

“At our school, the Care Closet is about more than supplies. It is about dignity, access, and removing barriers so students can show up ready to learn,” said **Pittsburgh Sterrett Principal Dr. Michele Holly**. “For some of our students, having reliable access to hygiene products, including period products, can make the difference between coming to school or staying home. This investment from the Commonwealth is incredibly meaningful because it helps us meet students’ basic needs in a consistent and sustainable way. When students feel supported and cared for, they are more confident, more engaged, and better able to focus on their education. This support will go a long way in helping us ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed.”

For one week each month, a quarter of Pennsylvania's students are on the sidelines due to limited access to basic health resources. When a student misses school, it isn't just one day. It's a ripple effect that impacts test scores, graduation rates, and eventually the future of our Commonwealth.

This **\$6 million** investment is a down payment for the future of Pennsylvania.

“No one should ever be afraid to ask, or speak up, about having their period,” said **Sanaa Jackson, Sterrett Classical Academy student**. “As a female student I have been nervous to talk about it. It is completely fine, it’s okay to have different feelings, different emotions about it. Everyone should be comfortable in their own body.”

All [qualifying school entities receive funding](#) proportional to the total number of students enrolled at a rate of \$1.79 per student. Schools can opt out of receiving grant funding.

Schools should consider privacy, responsiveness, access, and education when developing and implementing strategies to make period products available to their students. Guidance and suggestions are available in the [Menstrual Equity for Pennsylvania Students – Guidance for School Entities](#).

[Watch](#) **Governor Shapiro's** full budget address to a joint session of the House and Senate and see the Governor's full remarks as prepared for delivery [here](#).

Read an overview of [Governor Shapiro's 2026-2027 budget proposal](#) or explore the full Budget in Brief [here](#).

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Editor's Note: Video downloads and photos from the news conference Sterrett Classical Academy are available on [PAcast](#).