



Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BREWER SURVEY FINDS GAPS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF NYC'S MENSTRUAL EQUITY LAW

*Survey of 99 students representing 25 schools finds significant gaps in access to period products
in NYC public schools*

NEW YORK, NY — A survey conducted by New York City Council Member Gale A. Brewer's office found significant gaps in access to menstrual products in New York City public schools, despite nearly a decade of requirements under Local Law 84 of 2016.

Responses from 99 students representing 25 schools found that in 56% of schools surveyed, period products were rarely or never available in student bathrooms. The survey found in only 8% of these schools were products always available. The data also showed that 80% of surveyed schools reported that students did not know how to report an empty dispenser or basket when products were unavailable.

A decade ago, New York City became the first jurisdiction in the country to require that the City provide free menstrual products in public schools, shelters, and correctional facilities. The law was intended to ensure that no student would lose access to education, dignity, or participation in school because they could not access basic menstrual care.

DOE's 2024-2025 Menstrual Equity Report states that a majority of schools reported having an adequate supply of menstrual products and being in compliance with Local Law 84. However, the responses show that many students continue to encounter empty dispensers, inconsistent stocking, and barriers to accessing products when they need them.

Key findings from Council Member Brewer's survey include:

- 56% of schools surveyed reported that period products were rarely or never available in student bathrooms.
- Only 8% of schools surveyed reported that products were always available.
- 80% of schools surveyed shows that students did not know how to report an empty dispenser or basket when products were unavailable.
- Students frequently reported obtaining products from teachers, nurses, or school offices rather than accessing them directly in bathrooms.

Student comments reinforced these results. Respondents frequently described empty or broken dispensers, uncertainty about how to report missing products, concerns about product quality, and the need to seek assistance from teachers, nurses, or school staff when products were unavailable.

Students wrote:

"We have dispensers but there is never anything in them."

"The dispenser in the girls' bathrooms has been empty for quite some time now."

"It is embarrassing to have to go all the way to the main office."

"We would never accept a school bathroom routinely running out of toilet paper or soap," said Council Member Gale A. Brewer. "Menstrual products should be treated no differently. New York City passed Local Law 84 nearly a decade ago because students should be able to count on having these products available when they need them. These findings show that we are still falling short of that goal."

Council Member Brewer raised these concerns during the June 9, 2026 Education Committee FY27 Executive Budget Hearing and seeks additional information from the Department of Education regarding funding for menstrual products, dispenser maintenance, reporting procedures, and compliance with Local Law 84.

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Brewer Period Product School Survey Fact Sheet

Survey Overview

- 99 student responses
- 25 schools represented
- By borough: Manhattan 48% / Queens 8% / Brooklyn 40% / Bronx 4%

Key Findings

- 56% of schools surveyed reported period products were rarely or never available in student bathrooms.
- Only 8% of schools surveyed reported products were always available.
- 80% of schools surveyed reported students did not know how to report an empty dispenser or basket.
- Students frequently reported obtaining products from teachers, nurses, or school offices rather than directly from bathrooms.

Methodology Appendix

- Survey conducted by the Office of Council Member Gale A. Brewer.
- Responses collected from 99 students representing 25 New York City public schools.
- Schools were manually reviewed and assigned a unique identifier to account for variations in school naming conventions.
- To avoid overrepresenting schools with larger numbers of respondents, responses were analyzed at the school level, with each school counted once regardless of the number of student responses received.
- School-level findings reflect the aggregate responses associated with each school.
- Open-ended comments were reviewed qualitatively to identify recurring themes regarding product availability, reporting procedures, access, and product quality.