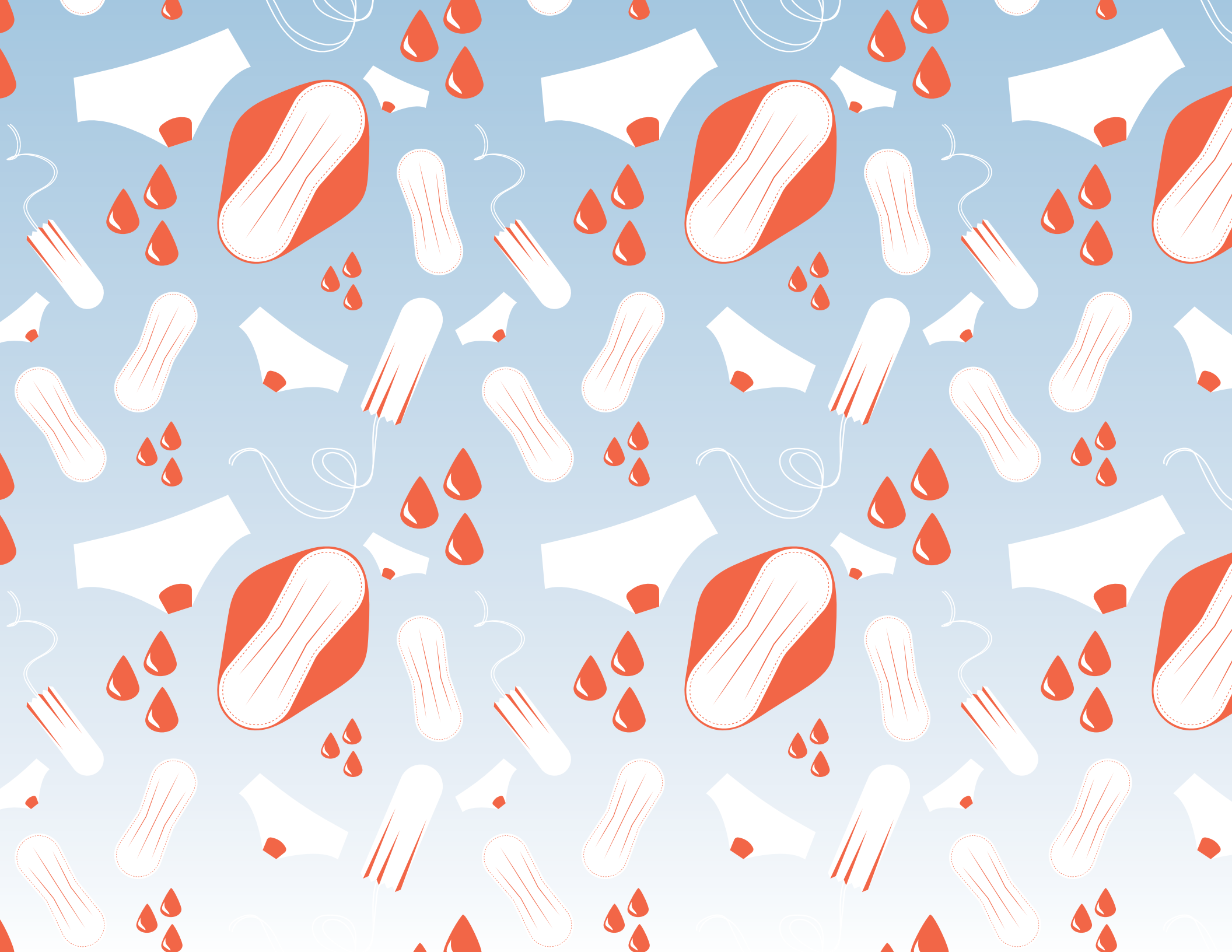




Office of the State Superintendent of Education

DC MENSTRUAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS

An addendum to the 2016 DC Health Education Standards



INTRODUCTION

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is pleased to provide new Menstrual Health Education Standards. These standards provide a clear, skill-based and age-appropriate approach to this essential health topic and renew the District’s commitment to comprehensive health education. A comprehensive health education curriculum is essential to increasing student agency and literacy and to creating inclusive school spaces. The standards aim to empower our students to become active participants in their own health, while maintaining dignity and respect for fellow students as they grow and develop.

As required by the “Expanding Student Access to Period Products Act of 2022” (DC Law 24-92), effective March 15, 2022, OSSE developed menstrual health education standards for all students regardless of gender beginning in grade 4 to ensure that students have the information, support and enabling-school environment to manage menstruation with dignity, safety and comfort. The following standards are an addendum to the current District of Columbia’s Health Education Standards Category 3: Human Body and Personal Health, for each grade band.

OSSE conducted a national literature review to identify existing standards for menstrual health education within other jurisdictions. The findings were very limited, and it was determined that OSSE would be drafting these standards from a blank canvas. Over the past several months, OSSE actively engaged with District agencies and other local and national stakeholders, including DC public and public charter school health educators, community-based organizations, university partners and pediatric health care providers.

Similar to the DC Health Education Standards, the supplemental Menstrual Health Standards are arranged by grade bands and are aligned with the corresponding National Health Education Standard strand.

By Grade 5, students should be able to:

1 Health Promotion	2 Analyzing Influences	3 Accessing Information	4 Communication	5 Decision-Making	6 Goal Setting	7 Healthy Behaviors	8 Advocacy
<p>Explain the function of the menstrual cycle.</p>		<p>Identify how to access free and available period products within the school building and in the community.</p>	<p>Describe how to communicate with, and ask questions to, a parent, guardian, healthcare provider, peer, or trusted adult at school regarding experiencing menarche.</p>	<p>Describe how students can manage period and period-related challenges and/or show support to their menstruating peers while in class and/or participating in extracurricular activities.</p>		<p>Describe healthy behaviors during menstruation, including ways to maintain personal hygiene, cope with emotional changes and manage pain.</p>	<p>Identify what to do if they or a peer are experiencing period discrimination and/or shaming by reaching out to a trusted adult.</p>
<p>Give examples of the physical and emotional changes that occur in response to menarche and during menstruation.</p>							

By Grade 8, students should be able to:

1 Health Promotion	2 Analyzing Influences	3 Assessing Information	4 Communication	5 Decision- Making	6 Goal Setting	7 Healthy Behaviors	8 Advocacy
<p>Explain the four phases of the menstrual cycle and how menstruation intersects with other aspects of reproductive health.</p>	<p>Discuss how personal values and stigma about menstrual health management appear in society and consider their impact on the health and behavior of individuals.</p>	<p>Compare and contrast the impact of the various types of menstrual products available, including both disposable and reusable period products, depending on preferences and activities.</p>	<p>Demonstrate effective communication skills that menstruators can implement to communicate changes in the menstrual cycle with a parent, guardian, healthcare professional, or another trusted adult.</p>	<p>Provide examples of safe, reliable options (not limited to medication) to address menstrual pain, discomfort, or excessive bleeding.</p>		<p>Explain how tracking the menstrual cycle may benefit individuals.</p>	<p>Generate strategies to interrupt, prevent, or challenge menstruation-related teasing, bullying, stigmatization, harassment and discrimination, including how to safely report such conduct to a trusted adult.</p>
<p>Identify factors that contribute to changes or irregularities in the menstrual cycle, including, but not limited to, age, diet, physical activity, stress, menopause, birth control and alcohol and tobacco use.</p>	<p>Recognize the difference between reliable and unreliable sources of information on menstruation.</p>					<p>Identify safe, reliable methods for tracking the menstrual cycle.</p>	

By Grade 12, students should be able to:

1 Health Promotion	2 Analyzing Influences	3 Accessing Information	4 Communication	5 Decision-Making	6 Goal Setting	7 Healthy Behaviors	8 Advocacy
<p>Examine and describe signs, causes and symptoms of menstruation-related health conditions, including endometriosis, fibroids, premenstrual syndrome and polycystic ovary syndrome, and explain strategies to manage and reduce discomfort.</p>	<p>Identify how period stigma disproportionately impacts menstruators depending on protected traits (outlined by the DC Office of Human Rights) and the consequences this has on menstruators' health and behavior.</p>	<p>Compare and contrast menstrual products and menstrual suppression.</p>	<p>Plan how to communicate and actively listen to others around privacy and intimacy while they, a peer, or a partner are menstruating.</p>	<p>Identify when a menstrual health concern should be discussed with a trained and trusted healthcare professional.</p>	<p>Design a health goal for menstruators to maintain menstrual health independently, analyze how family, peers and healthcare providers might support or hinder its achievement and recommend action steps that will encourage progress towards its achievement.</p>		<p>Critique the ways their communities are, and are not, supporting menstrual health for current, former, or future menstruators, and devise possible solutions or improvements.</p>
<p>Discuss the effects of contraception use on the menstrual cycle and the reasons for using contraception.</p>		<p>Evaluate the costs, benefits, safety, comfort and environmental impacts of menstrual products and menstrual suppression options, including both disposable and reusable menstrual products.</p>					





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