



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Planning and Priorities Advisory Committee
	For Board Meetings: Choose an item.
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	Feasibility Report on the Impact of Banning the Sale and Purchase of Single-Use Water Bottles on All Thames Valley District School Board Properties
<b>PRESENTERS:</b> <i>(list ONLY those attending the meeting)</i>	Paul Sydor, Superintendent of Student Achievement
<b>REPORT AUTHORS:</b>	Paul Sydor, Superintendent of Student Achievement Starr McGahey-Albert, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Advisor Kevin Auckland, Superintendent of Student Achievement Cathy Lynd, Superintendent of Business Andrew Canham, Associate Director
<b>PRESENTED FOR:</b>	Input/Advice
<b>Recommendations:</b> <i>(only required when presented for approval)</i>	TBD
<b>Purpose:</b> <i>(include context)</i>	This report has been prepared in response to the 2023 September 26 Board motion, as follows:  <b>THAT staff prepare a report by November 2024 on the feasibility of banning the sale and purchase of single use plastic water bottles on all TVDSB properties.</b>
<b>Content:</b>	<b>Introduction</b>  This report aims to evaluate the feasibility and potential impact of banning the sale and purchase of single-use water bottles on all Thames Valley District School Board properties.  <b>Current Context</b>  Plastic bottles are currently sold both through on-site vending machines and direct sales in cafeterias in schools. There are 23 locations with beverage vending machines (Secondary Schools, the Education Centre, and Leathorne).

The following report highlights key considerations:

**A) Environmental**

- Single-use water bottles, when not recycled, are a significant source of plastic waste. Banning them would substantially reduce the volume of plastic waste generated on school properties.
- The ban aligns with broader environmental goals and sustainability initiatives, contributing to reduced pollution and conservation of resources.

**B) Educational Impact:**

- Implementing the ban provides an opportunity to educate students about environmental stewardship and the importance of reducing plastic waste.
- Schools can integrate sustainability topics into the curriculum, promoting long-term behavioral changes among students, including reusable water bottles and water filling stations.

**C) Health and Safety**

- Ensuring that students and staff have access to clean and safe drinking water is critical. The continued installation of water refill stations must be widespread and easily accessible. Every school site currently has water refill stations.
- Reusable water bottles require proper cleaning to prevent bacterial growth. Schools would need to provide guidance and facilities for cleaning reusable bottles.

**D) Emergency Preparedness**

- In the event of issues where school wells are offline or there are problems with school water supplies, having an alternative hydration solution is crucial.
- A contingency plan must be developed to ensure an adequate supply of drinking water during such emergencies.

**E) Alignment with PPM 150: Promoting Healthy Eating Environments**

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- PPM 150 encourages schools to create healthy eating environments. One specific goal was to encourage students to make healthier food and beverage choices.
- Schools should continue to make every effort to encourage regular water consumption. The use of cleansed reusable water bottles aligns with the goal of creating healthy eating environments.

#### **F) Financial Impact**

- The sale of single-use water bottles currently generates revenue for individual schools and the school board. Banning the sale of water bottles in school cafeterias and vending machines may lead to a loss of income which is typically used to reinvest in school cafeterias and operations.
- Sale of beverages at TVDSB locations is contract to a third party vendor. The current contract can be renewed on August 31, 2026 at which time amendments, such as banning single-use plastic bottles can be added to the terms and conditions. The vendor may decline to do so, which would result in the need to issue a new Request for Proposal of cafeteria and vending service. If the vendor accepts the amendment, the contract can be renewed twice until its expiry on August 31, 2026.

#### **G) First Nations Students and Staff**

- In 2010, the United Nations declared water and sanitation human rights, acknowledging they are essential to the realization of all other rights.
- The Oneida Nation of the Thames has been on a long-term drinking water advisory since September 26, 2019, and potentially periods of time prior to that date.
- The Chippewas of the Thames First Nation has been on a long-term drinking water advisory since December 14, 2021, and potentially periods of time prior to that date.
- The Munsee-Delaware Nation obtains some of its water from the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and therefore will have some of the areas of their community under the same

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advisory. The Munsee-Delaware Nation has experienced occasional drinking water advisories.

- Students and staff from these communities rely on bottled water for nourishment and, in some instances, are provided with access to bottled water from their respective First Nation.
- Access to bottled water remains a necessity for First Nation students and staff in TVDSB.
- Educating the district about these long-term drinking water advisories would be necessary to eliminate potential discriminatory actions towards First Nation students and staff who have no choice but to consume bottled water.

**Should a motion be passed to ban single use water bottles, the following strategy would be recommended:**

**A) Phased Approach**

- Implementing the ban first on a trial basis and then in phases allows for gradual adjustment and reduces potential resistance. Starting with pilot programs in a few volunteer schools without vending machines can provide valuable insights and feedback.
- Monitoring and evaluating the pilot programs will inform broader implementation strategies.

**B) Education of Students, Parents, and Staff**

- Gaining support from students and parents is crucial. Awareness campaigns and educational programs can help build consensus and encourage positive attitudes towards a ban on single use water bottles. Staff training on the new process will also be imperative.

**C) Communication Plan**

- Clear and consistent communication is vital. Informing all stakeholders about the reasons for the ban, its benefits, and the hydration options will foster transparency and support.
- Utilizing various communication channels, such as the TVDSB website, school newsletters, social media, and school assemblies will ensure widespread awareness.

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	<p><b>Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Banning the sale and purchase of single-use water bottles on school board properties presents both challenges and opportunities. There are potential financial and logistical implications, environmental benefits and educational opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Connection to Committee Mandate:</b>	
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	TBD
<b>Timeline:</b>	TBD
<b>Communications:</b>	TBD
<b>Appendices:</b>	N/A

**Strategic Priority Areas:**

Students, families, and staff are welcomed, respected, and valued as partners: Choose an item.

**Relationships:** Promote and build connections to foster mutually respectful communication among students, families, staff and the broader community: Choose an item.

Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships: Yes

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Create opportunities for equitable access to programs and services for students: Choose an item.

**Equity and Diversity:** Students and all partners feel heard, valued, and supported: Choose an item.

Programs and services embrace the culture and diversity of students and all partners: Choose an item.

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**Achievement and Well-Being:** More students demonstrate growth and achieve student learning outcomes with a specific focus on numeracy and literacy: Choose an item.

Staff will demonstrate excellence in instructional practices: Choose an item.

Enhance the safety and well-being of students and staff: Yes

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*Form Revised JUNE 2024*

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