

I have been an active member of my school's student body government for all four years of high school. During this time I have seen a variety of different leadership tactics and many ideas for change of policy flow through. This has given me the opportunity to develop and discover how I can use my voice to create the change that I want to see. Another opportunity that I have had to gain leadership skills was attending the AASB Youth Leadership Institute, where I got to work with high schoolers all throughout the state and share our ideas with each other. One of the other notable major opportunities I have had during high school has been working at the state capital with my district's representative Johnathan Kreiss-Tompkins for a week. All of these experiences have allowed me to become a leader in my school and use my voice to create the change that I want to see.

Going into my senior year I had a couple of ideas on things that I wanted to see be done, so I could leave my mark and make my school better before I left. One of the big projects I took on was making it so that the women's restroom was stocked with pads and tampons. For the three years before this, the restroom never once had any type of feminine hygiene objects available to the student body. I had heard some complaints and discomfort from some of my peers and personally felt that this should be available to our student body because it was drawing away focus from education. From the experiences I had gained I knew how to approach this situation to get what I was fighting for. First, I introduced this idea to my school's student body government at our first meeting of the year. I got the green light during this meeting and drew up a proposal to give to my school's principal. For this I researched schools that do put out feminine hygiene items for their student bodies and how they fund this. It is even required for public schools in California, New Hampshire, Illinois, and New York to provide these items. I created a powerpoint with these statistics and other information on how other schools have enacted doing this. I set up a meeting with my school's principal and presented my case and used this powerpoint to show my case. I was able to create this presentation by the skills that I have learned over the past four years such as how to productively present information, how to use my voice effectively, and how to plan for success.

My principal agreed that the school should have this resource available and her only concern was student's misusing them. I reassured her that I don't think that that would be a problem because I believed that our student body would appreciate this and would want to have this resource available for when they may need it, and I was correct. The week after I introduced this idea bathroom was stocked up with pads and tampons available free of cost to students.

This topic can be uncomfortable to discuss because even though it should not be a taboo, it can still be considered one. I was and still am very passionate about this issue and wanted to make this resource available for the underclassman after I graduate this year. I was able to use the skills that I had developed over the years to change something that I saw to be almost an injustice to the girls in my school. I heard lots of positive feedback after these items were available and felt that I had created a change that will be available at my school for years after I graduate.