
Summary

The Governor is proposing an investment of \$60 million in one-time School Aid Fund resources for a statewide initiative to replace drinking fountains in school buildings with hydration stations to provide clean, filtered drinking water to Michigan school children. Hydration stations are combination water fountains/bottle filling stations that filter out contaminants, leading to improved water quality and also reducing the use of plastic water bottles. These stations have been utilized in Detroit and other school districts, enabling schools to provide safe drinking water without requiring cost prohibitive replacement of plumbing and water infrastructure.

The statewide target under this proposal is to provide at least 1 hydration station per every 100 pupils per school building, based on standards included in the Michigan Plumbing Code. The funds can be used for the following:

- The purchase and installation of new hydration stations.
- The removal or closure of existing fixtures incapable of filtering water.
- Any environmental abatement costs that could arise due to the installation (disposal of hazardous materials, air quality issues related to mold, etc.).

The program will be jointly administered by the departments of Education and Environmental Quality.

Background

Estimates indicate that there are approximately 3,300 public school buildings statewide that could be served by this initiative. About 600 of these buildings were built prior to 1950 and, therefore, have a higher probability of lead in water delivery systems. Approximately 68% of school buildings statewide were built prior to 1985 and may contain lead solder in copper piping systems. Through the mid-1990s, many fixtures still utilized lead-containing brass or galvanized pipe fittings.