Should plastic water bottles be banned from all city properties, including public schools?  
YES - TEAM A - You are FOR this bill

NYC Council has introduced a legislation, **Int 0846-2018** - prohibiting the sale or distribution of single use water bottles on city property

- This bill would apply both to vendors operating on city property, such as parks or city streets, and large scale events where the city grants the event sponsor reliable access to on-site water connections.
- Additionally, the bill would prohibit the use of city funds to purchase single use water bottles.

**OVERVIEW - THE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CRISIS**

“Nearly every piece of plastic begins as a fossil fuel and greenhouse gases are emitted at each stage of the plastic lifecycle: 1) fossil fuel extraction and transport, 2) plastic refining and manufacture, 3) managing plastic waste, and 4) plastic’s ongoing impact once it reaches our oceans, waterways, and landscape. In the next 10 years alone, emissions from the plastics lifecycle could reach 1.34 gigatons [billion tons of CO2e] per year – equivalent to the emissions from more than 295 500MW coal-fired power plants operating at full capacity.”  

(Plastic & Health: The Hidden Costs of a Plastic Planet, Center for International Environmental Law and partners, May 2019)

- Each year, an estimated 18 billion pounds of plastic waste enters the world’s ocean from coastal regions. That’s about equivalent to five grocery bags of plastic trash piled up on every foot of coastline on the planet. (Planet or Plastic, National Geographic)
- Plastic floating in the ocean kills one million birds and more than 100,000 marine mammals every year, according to the UK government.
- Approximately 80% of marine debris originates from land and 89% of ocean trash comes from single-use plastics. (Eunomia and Smithsonian)
- As many as 51 trillion microplastic particles – 500 times more than stars in our galaxy – litter our seas, seriously threatening marine wildlife. (United Nations Environmental Program)
- The top 10 litter items collected during International Coastal Cleanup 2017 were all plastic, including cigarette butts, food wrappers, bottles & caps, straws, plastic bags. (Ocean Conservancy)

We use way too many plastic bottles

- Humans purchase a million plastic bottles every minute of every day. 91% are not recycled. (Forbes)
- “Americans consumed 13.7 billion gallons of bottled water in 2017 - more than any other beverage by volume - boosting an industry worth $18.5 billion.” (beveragemarketing.com)

Over 99% of plastics are derived from fossil fuels

- It takes 17 million barrels of oil to make enough water bottles for just American consumption, not including the transportation of bottles (mannahydration.com)
- “One of the most inexpensive ways to make plastic is through “cracking.” When land is fracked to produce fossil fuels, ethane gas is produced as a byproduct. Cracking plants (aka, crackers) convert ethane to ethylene, which is used to make polyethylene plastic.” (5Gyres.org)

Plastic bottles are also made from toxic chemicals

- Plastic bottles are made with chemicals that are dangerous to human health and create pollution.
- BPA and other chemicals used to make plastic can affect human hormones; they get released when plastic heats up, such as when exposed to sunlight.

Other environmental impacts

- It takes more water to produce a plastic bottle than the amount packaged inside.
- It takes 47 million gallons of oil to transport the trillions of gallons of bottled water that Americans drink each year. That’s the equivalent of the exhaust output of about 100,000 cars and 1 billion pounds of carbon dioxide. (mannahydration.com)
THE DEBATE - “FOR” THE BAN

Bottled water is not healthier than tap water

- More than half of all bottled water comes from the tap. (Food and Water Watch)
- In one study, plastic contamination was found in more than 90% of bottled-water samples, which were from 11 different brands.
- The average person swallows about 50,000 pieces of plastic per year and inhales about the same amount (journal Environmental Science & Technology) and drinking bottled water drastically increases the amount of microplastics you consume. (The Guardian)

NYC has excellent water quality that is regularly tested

- New York City (NYC) has some of the best tap water in the world. (NYC.gov)
- A New York State law, signed in September of 2016, requires that school drinking water be tested and that parents should be notified if there is lead contamination.
- NYC water is virtually lead-free when it is delivered from the City's upstate reservoir system. (NYC.gov)
- NYC will be testing more than 3,500 outdoor water fountains in all City parks. (NYC Parks)

Schools are a great place to ban water bottles

- School water bottle bans provide a perfect opportunity for teaching students why reducing single-use plastic is an urgent issue.
- School PTA’s and student organizations can raise money for needed refill stations.
- Youth are ready to take bold climate action and will be willing to show adults that a world without single-use plastic is possible.
- Schools that are part of the National School Lunch Program (like NYC) are required to make free water available to students during all meal times. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention)

A ban will save money and reduce plastic garbage

- “Buying bottled water is like pouring money down the drain. Bottled water costs from $0.89 per gallon to $8.26 per gallon, compared to fractions of a penny for water from your tap, making bottled water thousands of times more expensive than tap water.” (Food and Water Watch)
- New Yorkers recycle about only 30% of all rigid plastics. The rest of our recyclables, including plastic bottles, end up as costly pollution or costly garbage! (DSNY 2017 report)
- A bottle ban will reduce plastic garbage; NYC spends $400 billion per year just to export garbage that includes plastic to out-of-state incinerators and landfills, negatively impacting communities.
- NYC’s garbage, including plastic waste, disproportionately impacts low-income New Yorkers because most waste transfer stations are located in disadvantaged communities.
- While reusable bottles cost more than disposable bottles, you only have to buy it once.

A ban would protect local water supplies

- Almost 64% of bottled water comes from municipal supplies. (Food and Water Watch)
- Nestlé, Coca-Cola, and PepsiCo continued to bottle and export water from public lands and municipal supplies in California during times of drought, even when a 25% reduction in water use was imposed on cities and municipalities in the state (www.procon.org)
- A Nestlé bottled water production plant in Pakistan depleted groundwater levels in a neighboring village, resulting in the local water supply turning to sludge. (www.procon.org)

Case Studies

- “The Houston Zoo eliminated single-use plastic water bottles in 2017, reducing plastic waste by nearly 300,000 water bottles annually. “Guests can fill up at water stations; purchase pre-filled, reusable aluminum water bottles; or purchase 100% recyclable paper-based water bottles.”
- San Francisco recently banned the sale of plastic bottles on city-owned properties Additionally, government agencies may not purchase bottled water.
- In 2013 The University of Vermont (UVM) in Burlington became the first public college in the United States to enact a plastic water bottle ban. As of late 2016, 82 high schools, colleges and universities across the world have implemented bottled water bans on their campuses. ("Map of Campaigns I Ban the Bottle")