



August 18, 2023

Dear Parents,

We will be making our school a phone-free space to improve teaching and learning using a system called Yondr. Yondr has been implemented in over 1,000 schools across 21 countries to facilitate an engaged learning environment. We believe that phones have great utility, but phones also create great issues socially, emotionally, and educationally. We also believe that learning and social behavior improve drastically when students are fully engaged with their teachers and classmates in their educational setting.

When creating this policy, it was not easy and it was not done without thought. When talking with multiple local school districts of the same size it was found that cell phones were a massive distraction and performance in the classroom decreased exponentially. We were also informed that workplace performance and productivity drops, or is lost due to cell phone distractions. Education is not any different. Education is dropped or lost when students are on cell phones. Yondr recently surveyed over 900 school partners to measure the effects of creating phone-free educational environments. These schools achieved notable progress in multiple areas:

- **65% of schools saw an improvement in academic performance**
- **74% of schools saw an improvement in student behavior**
- **83% of schools saw an improvement in student engagement in the classroom**

The new policy adopted by the USD 432 BOE during the August 2023 school board meeting can be found on the school's website: www.usd432.org. Although the new policy will start the first day of school, the pouches will not arrive for our district until the end of September. Students' phones will be unavailable for use from 8:00 a.m. to the end of the day at 3:20 p.m. or until the student is dismissed. If the student returns to the district, during the day, the phone will be placed back in the pouch. We encourage you as a parent to call the office to get messages to your student. Also, we encourage your student(s) to begin talking to employers, coaches, siblings, etc. about the phone policy. By taking these preemptive steps by talking to involved parties, work schedules, practice schedules, etc. can all be worked out in advance. In an effort to best serve your child's educational needs, we appreciate your support in the adoption of this new cell phone policy.

Please understand that with any new policy, situations will arise that don't smoothly fit into the policy. Adjustments to the protocols and procedures of the new cell phone policy will be taken into consideration as they arise. When such situations arise, appropriate adjustments will be done as quickly as possible. The new policy will not include peripheral devices to be stored in the pouch at this time, but may if it becomes a distraction. Some examples of these other devices include smart watches, earbuds, etc. The devices will be unlocked at the end of the day or as the student finishes his/her day at school.



How Yondr Works

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I want to reach my child during the school day?

We want our students to be engaged in their learning. If you need to contact your child during the school day, contact the main office at (785) 735-9211 and we will get a message to your students quickly.

What if there is a school emergency?

In case of a school emergency, we direct our students to safety first, following our school emergency preparedness protocol. We will also utilize the notifier system through the school webpage and app.

Will my student's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their Yondr pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch in their backpacks where it is completely safe. Phone pouches will be unlocked at the end of the day, or as students need to leave for the day, if before 3:20 p.m.

What if the Yondr pouch gets damaged?

The Yondr pouch is property of USD #432, and reimbursement of the cost of the pouch (\$40). If a student damages their pouch beyond normal wear and tear, the Administration will collect the damaged pouch and call home.

What if a student is caught on their phone?

*For each offense the phone will be confiscated and placed in the office and a parent/guardian will need to retrieve it.

- 1st Offense - 30 minute detention after school.
- 2nd Offense - 60 minute detention after school.
- 3rd Offense - ISS
- 4th Offense - 2-day OSS with a day added for each subsequent offense.
- If a student damages their Pouch a \$40.00 fee will be assessed

Eligibility for activities can and will be affected for any types of suspensions that result from this new policy. Thank you for your time, patience, and support of our efforts to improve the education of your student(s). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school directly at (785) 735-9211

Sincerely,

USD 432 7-12 Principal/Superintendent
Kim Woolf kimberlywoolf@usd432.org

7-12 Asst. Principal/ Athletic Director
Dan Rogers drogers@usd432.org