

Enhancing Student Engagement: Implementing Yondr Cellphone Pouches in Schools

Board Agenda Item¹

**Division of Wrap Around Services
July 8, 2024**



Introduction

- **Understanding the negative impact of cellphone usage on children during school hours.**
- **Introducing Yondr as a solution to manage cellphone usage and enhance the learning environment.**

A background image showing several hands holding smartphones, with a focus on a white smartphone in the center. The image is slightly blurred and has a light, airy feel.

The Challenge

In today's digital age, managing smartphones usage in the educational setting has created a significant to student engagement and academic performance.

The constant temptation to check notifications, text messages, and social media platforms disrupts learning environments and impedes student concentration.

Distractions From Learning

- **Reduced Attention:** Research shows that students who use their phones during class have lower levels of attention and engagement (source: *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 2018).
- **Lower Academic Performance:** A study found a significant correlation between in-class cellphone use and lower academic performance (source: *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2015).
- **Interruptions:** Notifications and messages cause frequent interruptions, disrupting the flow of learning (source: *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 2014).

Impact on Social Skills

- **Limited Face-to-Face Interaction:** Excessive cellphone use reduces opportunities for direct communication, impairing social skill development (source: *Developmental Psychology*, 2017).
- **Weaker Social Bonds:** Over-reliance on digital communication can weaken relationships with peers (source: *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 2016).
- **Impaired Social Development:** Lack of direct interaction hinders the development of essential social skills (source: *American Journal of Public Health*, 2018).

The Surgeon General Warns That Social Media May Harm Children and Adolescents

The report by Dr. Vivek Murthy cited a “**profound risk of harm**” to adolescent mental health and urged families to set limits and governments to set tougher standards for use.

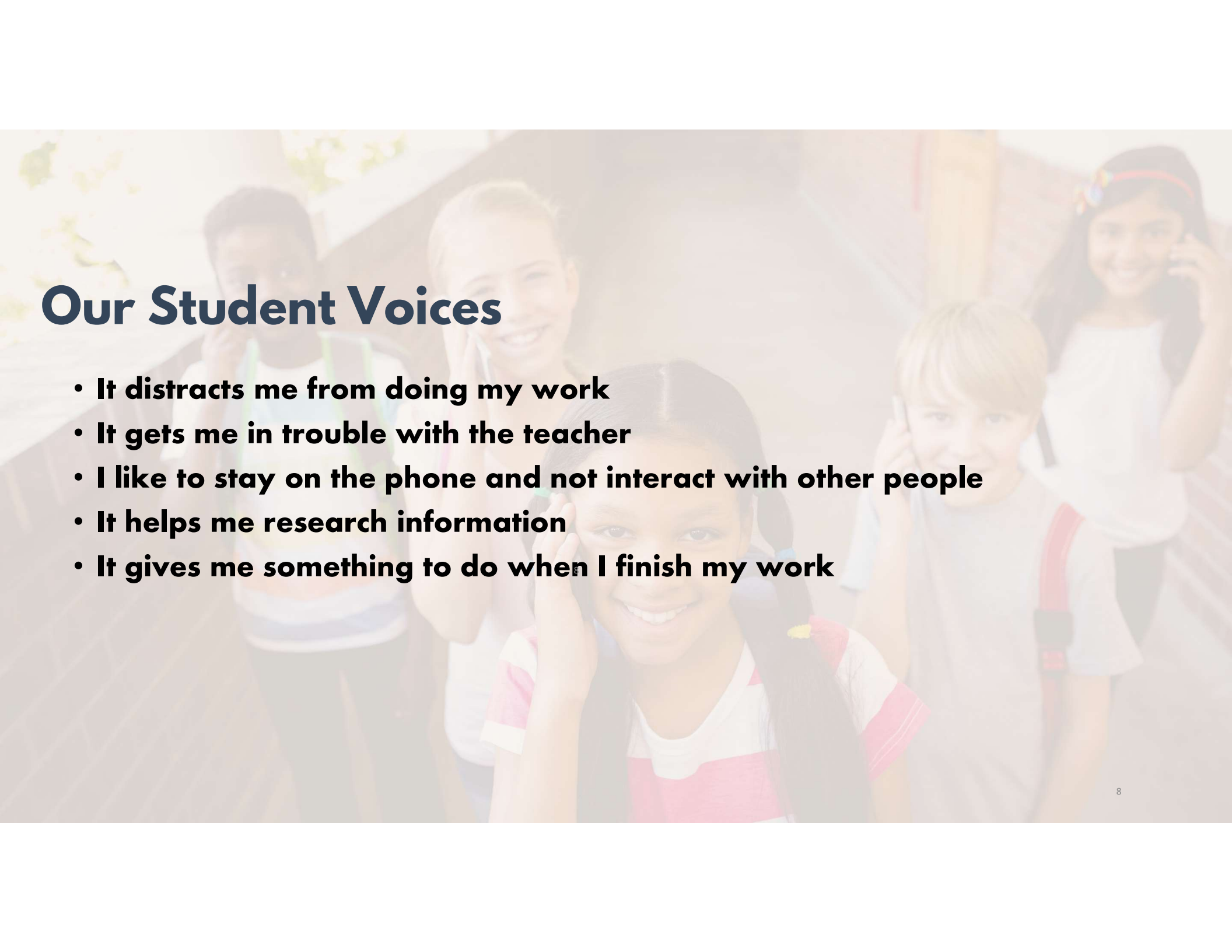
New York Times, May 23, 2023

Baseline Data Collection Information

- 18 classrooms across 9 schools (Middle & High Schools)
 - 306 students
- Tally Notifications (i.e., text messages, emails, gaming, social media, and phone calls)
 - 30-minute data collection (during the regular classroom routine)

Results: Combined Notifications: 4097

- Student Average - 13 notifications per 30 minutes
- Class Average over 227 notifications per 30 minutes
- Middle School Notification High: 976 (1 class for 30 minutes)
- High School Notification High: 883 (1 class for 30 Minutes)

A background image showing five diverse students of various ethnicities and ages, all smiling and holding mobile phones to their ears. They are standing outdoors on a paved surface. The image is slightly faded to allow the text to be read clearly.

Our Student Voices

- **It distracts me from doing my work**
- **It gets me in trouble with the teacher**
- **I like to stay on the phone and not interact with other people**
- **It helps me research information**
- **It gives me something to do when I finish my work**

Mental Health Concerns

- **Increased Anxiety:** Constant connectivity and social media exposure can heighten anxiety and stress levels (source: **Clinical Psychological Science**, 2019).
- **Cyberbullying:** Cellphones can facilitate cyberbullying, which significantly impacts emotional and psychological well-being (source: **Journal of Adolescent Health**, 2015).
- **Sleep Disruption:** Late-night phone use negatively affects sleep patterns, leading to fatigue and reduced academic performance (source: **Sleep Medicine**, 2016).

Academic Integrity

- **Cheating:** Easy access to information on cellphones can tempt students to cheat during exams and assignments (source: Ethics & Behavior, 2018).
- **Fairness:** Ensuring academic integrity is crucial for a fair and just educational environment (source: Educational Research Review, 2019).

Introducing Yondr

- ✦ Yondr offers a solution by providing patented cellphone pouches designed to create phone-free spaces.
- ✦ These pouches are easy to use, secure, and ensure that students retain possession of their devices while restricting access during specified times.



How Yondr Works

✦ **Phone Placement:** Students place their phones in the Yondr pouch at the beginning of the school day.

✦ **Locking:** The pouch is locked, and students keep the pouch with them.

✦ **Unlocking:** At designated times or at the end of the school day, pouches are unlocked using the base station.



Benefits in Schools

- ✦ **Promotes Classroom Focus:** Eliminates distractions and fosters a conducive learning environment.
- ✦ **Improves Academic Performance:** Reduces interruptions, leading to enhanced comprehension and retention of course material.
- ✦ **Encourages Social Interaction:** Facilitates face-to-face communication and collaboration among students.
- ✦ **Enhances Safety:** Minimizes the risk of cyberbullying, inappropriate content exposure, and classroom disruptions.

OVER 1 MILLION STUDENTS USE YONDR EVERY DAY

YONDR'S IMPACT

We received responses to our annual surveys from **over 1,200 school partners**, and after implementing the Yondr Education Program:

 **84%**

Saw a change in student engagement

 **72%**

Saw a positive change in student behavior

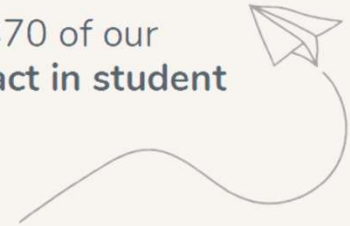
 **68%**

Saw a positive change in academic performance

Of our most recent impact survey of over 370 of our school partners: **86% saw a positive impact in student safety and wellness.**

...

*"The changes have already been profound. There's so much
¹⁴ more joy and interaction, and I can't count the number of
parents who have asked me, 'How do I buy this for my home?'"*



Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Virtual and in-person professional development will be provided to school personnel.**
- ◆ **A cellphone awareness media campaign will be implemented to reach all stakeholders impacted by this initiative.**
- ◆ **Schools will have adequate Yondr magnet bases in each school to ensure students have an opportunity to immediately unlock phones, if an emergency should arise.**
- ◆ **Exceptions are unavailable made for students who may have medical issues, disabilities, or accommodations that may require the use of cellphones during the instructional day.**
- ◆ **Three schools with cellphone lockers will be available in each room and the teacher will have access to each phone during the class period.**

Key Insights

✦ **Cellphone and other designated electronic communication device usage including smart watches has been prohibited during the school day (instructional time) for many years and is included in the 23-24 Code of Student Conduct.**

Rule #2 Electronic communication devices, including cellular phones, smart phones, tablets, walkie-talkies and similar devices.

Violations range from a ¹⁶Conference to Suspension

✦ **The Yondr pouches will assist school personnel utilizing supportive measures to enforce the rule while limiting classroom distractions and increasing student engagement.**



Yondr Pilot Schools

Middle Schools

Salem MS
Henderson MS
Sequoyah MS
Lithonia MS
Tucker MS

High Schools

Martin Luther King, Jr., HS
Lakeside HS
Cross Keys HS
Lithonia HS
Tucker HS

Cellphone Locker Pilot Schools

Miller Grove MS
Druid Hills MS
Chapel Hill MS

