



Disconnect to Reconnect:

Building and Sustaining a District-wide Culture of
Distraction-free Learning

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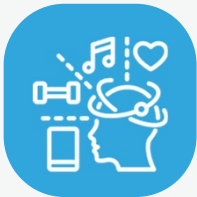
PURPOSE

- Review initiative impact and outcomes
- Address operational and financial considerations
- Align with new state legislation (HB 1009)
- Recommendation: Maintain and scale initiative districtwide



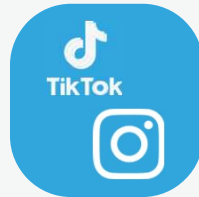
THE PROBLEM

Why Disconnect to Reconnect was needed.



Student Distraction

Increased student distraction during instructional time



Social Media

Escalation of social media related conflicts



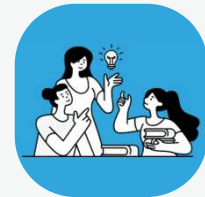
Device Use

Classroom management challenges tied to device use



Instructional Time

Loss of instructional minutes across grade levels



School Climate

Impact on student engagement and school climate

THE SOLUTION

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS



- Phone-free instructional environments
- Structured procedures (pouches, lockers, routines)
- Policy-aligned enforcement
- Focus on prevention—not punishment



OVERVIEW

PILOT & IMPLEMENTATION

- 2024–2025 pilot across 18 schools
- Middle, high, and elementary participation
- Implementation models tested - Pouches and Locker-based



MIDDLE SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Pouch Model

- Salem MS
- Henderson MS
- Sequoyah MS
- Lithonia MS
- Tucker MS

Locker Model

- Miller Grove MS
- Druid Hills MS
- Chapel Hill MS
- McNair MS
- Bethune MS

HIGH SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Pouch Model

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

Locker Model

- McNair HS





ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Locker Model

- Flat Shoals ES
- Snapfinger ES



WHAT WORKED ACROSS ALL SCHOOLS



Clear Expectations

Consistent Adult Enforcement

Administrative Visibility

Student Adaption Over Time



KEY OUTCOMES

17

17 percent decrease in combined OSS and ISS

1,289

1,289 fewer discipline removals compared to prior year.

Improvement

Improved student retention, instructional access, & school climate.





INSTRUCTIONAL IMPACT

FEWER

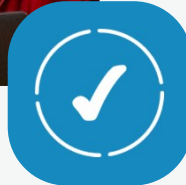
Fewer classroom disruptions

INCREASED

Increased instructional time on task

REDUCED

Reduced teacher stress related to device management



SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPACT

- Decrease in cyberbullying incidents
- Reduction in social media driven conflicts
- Less inappropriate content sharing during school hours
- Improved peer interactions



DISCIPLINE & EQUITY IMPACT

- Reduced exclusionary discipline
 - Increased classroom access
 - More equitable outcomes
-





- Teachers: “More focused classrooms”
- Admin: “Easier enforcement”
- Students: “Less pressure and distraction”



WALKTHROUGH DATA: What We See Now

- Strong adult implementation
- Clear Expectations
- Improved learning environments

Areas for Growth

- Student Consistency - especially high school
- Device use during transitions
- Need for standardized signage



The High School REALITY

- Less consistent enforcement
- Increased student independence challenges
- Leadership alignment needed



CULTURE AND CLIMATE IMPACT

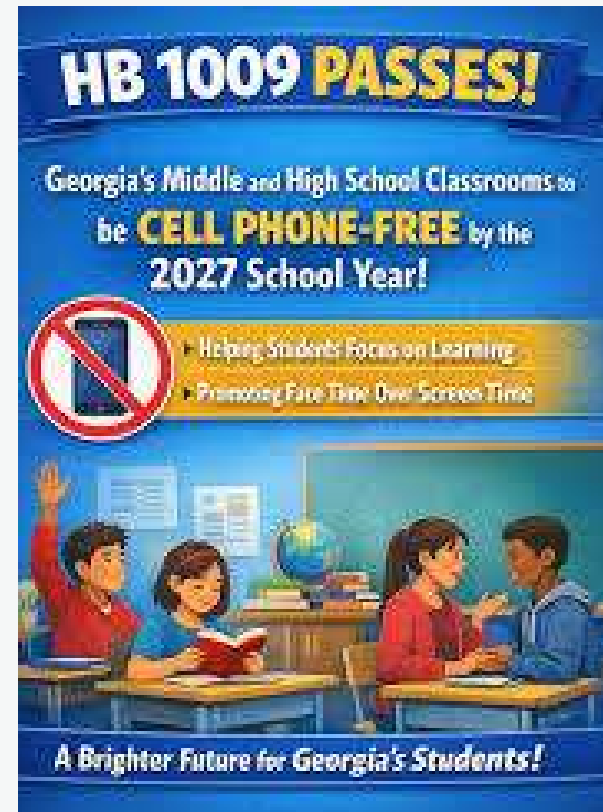
Safer learning environments

Increased sense of belonging

Improved emotional safety

NEW: Georgia House Bill 1009

- Expands “bell-to-bell” phone ban to all public high schools
- Effective 2026–2027 school year
- Includes phones, smartwatches, headphones
- Goal: improve focus & reduce bullying





WHAT THIS MEANS FOR OUR DISTRICT

- High schools must comply
- Systems must scale now
- Enforcement—not solely equipment—is required

IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION: THE LAW

- Requires restriction of access
 - Does NOT require lockers or specific products
 - Policy + enforcement = compliance
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THE LOCKER INVESTMENT REALITY

- \$1.6M previously approved (middle schools only)
- Total estimated cost: \$4.6M
- Funding no longer available

Operational Challenges

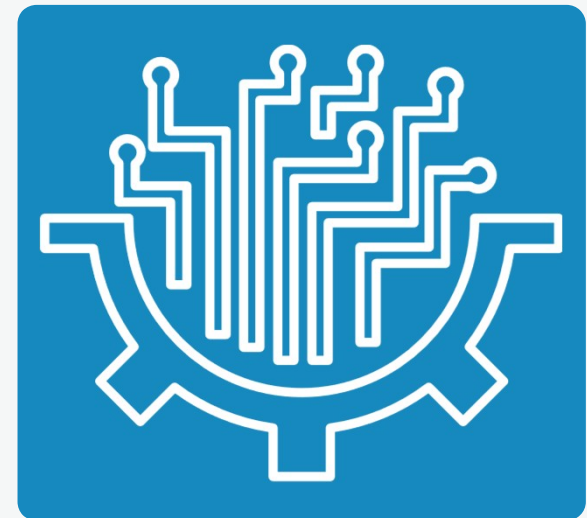
LOCKERS



- High cost
- Facility limitations
- Hallway congestion
- Ongoing maintenance

PROVEN ALTERNATIVE: WHAT ALREADY WORKS

- Low-cost procedures
- Policy-based enforcement
- Strong results already demonstrated



EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY



- Avoid partial implementation
- Ensure consistency across all schools
- Maintain fiscal responsibility

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

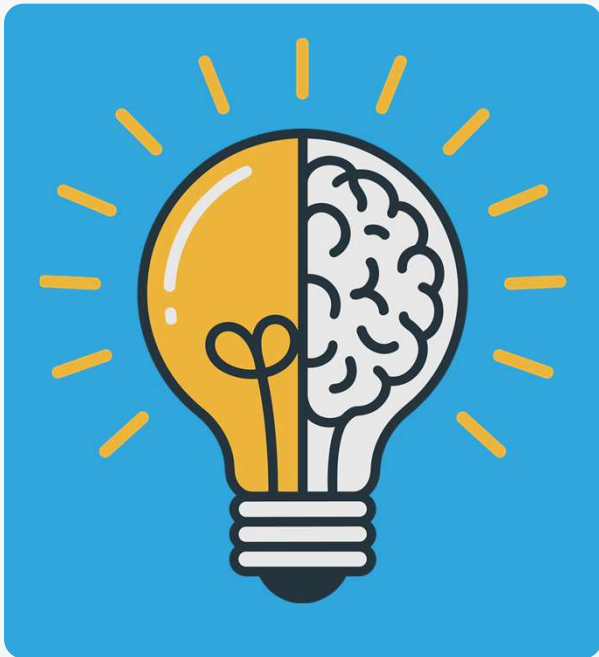
Culture & Climate

Instructional Excellence

PBIS Tier I

Equity in Discipline



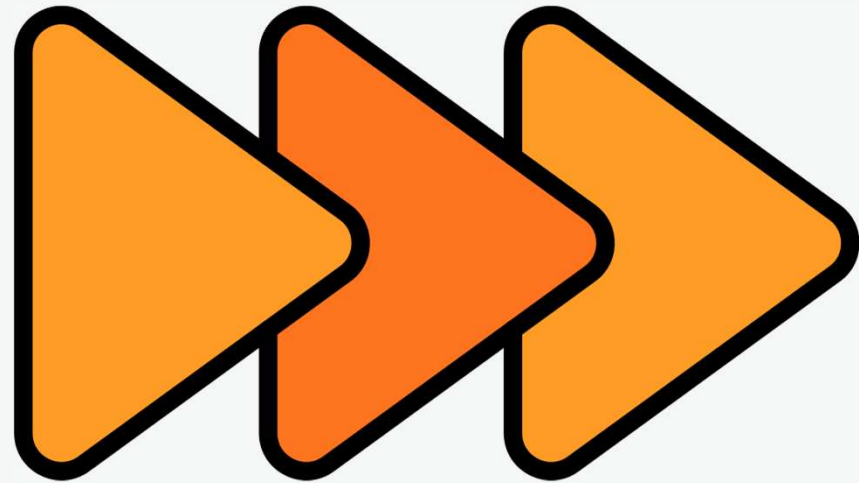


LESSONS LEARNED

- Consistency is key
- Leadership drives success
- Flexibility by school level matters

PATH FORWARD

- Strengthen high school implementation
- Standardize expectations and visuals
- Continue walkthrough monitoring
- Prepare for HB 1009 full compliance



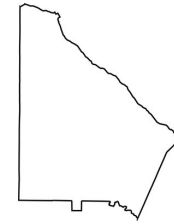
RECOMMENDATION



**Maintain
Disconnect
to
Reconnect**



**Discontinue
Locker
Expansion**

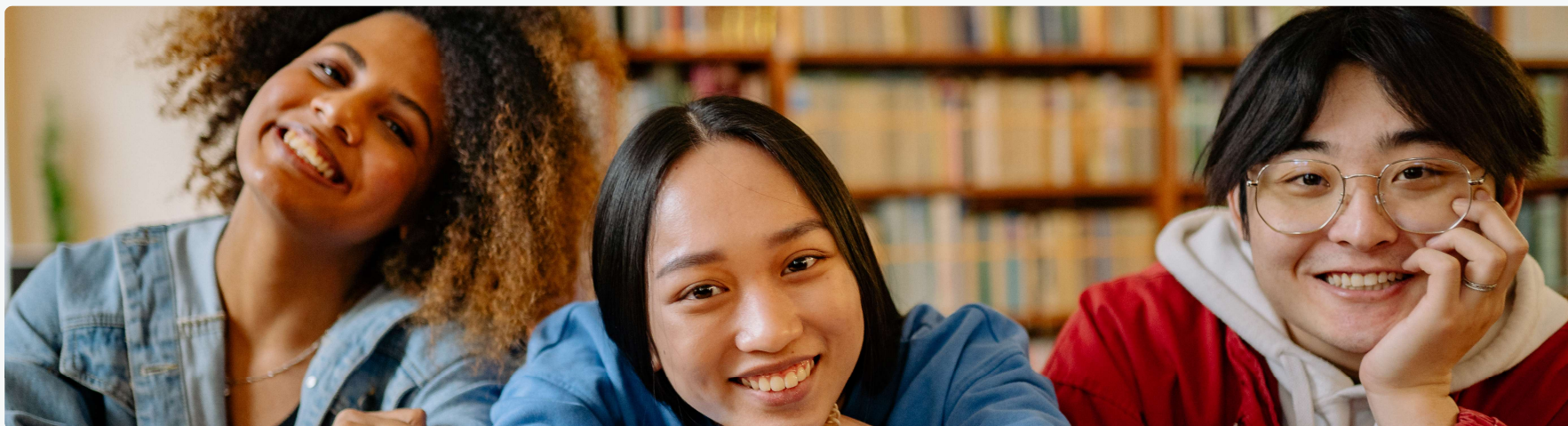


**Scale
Current
Model
District-wide**



THE BOTTOM LINE

- Proven results
- Aligned with law
- Cost-effective
- Scalable and sustainable



CLOSING

- Commitment to focused learning environments
- Responsible use of resources
- Preparing for the future

QUESTIONS



THANK YOU