



Dear Middle School Parents & Guardians,

Each year we debate the best way to approach technology for the Middle School age group. We want to teach students how to use cell phones properly but we are very aware of the distraction they are to students' academic and social learning. Check out this recent [article from the New York Times](#).

For the last few years we have deployed the use of "Cell Hotels", where students are asked to put their phones in the pouch of the Cell Hotel during lessons. During recess and lunch we have allowed students to access their phones but the duty teachers report that students spend their downtime on their phones rather than enjoying the company of their peers.

Next year, we will be partnering with [Yondr](#) - a San Francisco based company that deploys a pouch system to create socially acceptable phone-free spaces. Yondr is well known within the entertainment industry for working with artists to create smartphone free concerts and shows. And they have a great deal of experience assisting schools in creating safe smartphone-free environments for children. Check out [this video](#) to learn more about the Yondr system.

Before the start of next school year, we will come back to you with more information. But for now, we've gathered a list of FAQ's that might be helpful in advance:

- Will my child have access to their smartphone during the day?
 - No, your child's phone will be powered off and locked in their neoprene pouch for the day.
- Where will the pouch be located during the academic day?
 - Students may store their pouch in the classroom cell hotel or keep it with them in their school bag or in their pocket.
- When and where will my child's phone pouch be unlocked?
 - We will end each academic day with a short homeroom period during which agendas will be checked and phone pouches will be unlocked.
- Does my child have to bring the pouch back and forth from home each day?
 - No, your child can leave their pouch at school in the Cell Hotel in their homeroom.
- Will my child have access to their smartphone at lunch if they go off campus?
 - No. We are trying to limit students' access to smartphones during the academic day, and to make it socially acceptable to unplug during non-instructional times.
- How will I contact my child if there is a change of plans regarding end-of-day pick up?
 - Please contact Mrs. Langille by phone or email and she will relay the message to your child. We are asking all students to turn off messaging notifications on their devices during the academic day to limit distractions.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Sajatovich
Middle School Director