

"Hello, Norwich families! I'm the Middle School Associate Principal, Elly Powers."

"And I'm your High School Principal, Jake Roe. We're excited to share some important information about the upcoming 2024-2025 school year."

"Our Norwich City School District is taking a big step towards creating a better learning environment by going cell phone-free. We'll be using something called Yondr pouches to help keep classrooms free from distractions."

"We want to explain why we're making this change. Our main goal is to improve five key areas: academic performance, student engagement, positive behavior, safety, and overall wellness."

"By reducing cell phone distractions, students can focus better on their schoolwork, have more meaningful interactions with their peers and teachers, and build important social skills."

"We've seen how having constant access to phones can affect mental health, and this change aims to address those concerns, helping our students develop in a healthy way during the school day."

"Now, we'd like to show you what this process will look like." [Show a Yondr pouch and demonstrate how it works]

"Each student will receive a Yondr pouch. In the morning, they'll place their devices—like phones, headphones, and smartwatches—into the pouch, which will then lock. The students keep the locked pouch with them throughout the day."

"At the end of the school day, students will use a special unlocking station to open their pouches and regain access to their devices."

"As staff, we're also committed to this cell phone-free environment. We'll be using the pouches ourselves to set a good example."

"We want to make it clear that there are specific steps we'll take if a student's device is seen outside the pouch during school hours."

"For the first offense, the device will be taken to the office and returned at the end of the day. We'll contact the family to let them know. If there is a second offense, the device will need to be picked up by a parent or guardian, and the student will need to hand in their device at the main office each morning for the next 20 school days."

"We understand that you might have questions about this new procedure. We've put together detailed information to help address any concerns."

"On our school website, you'll find a letter, FAQs, and guidelines that cover everything, including how to communicate with your child in case of an emergency during the school day." [Cut back to the principals]

"We want to stress how important it is for us to work together as a community to support our students' success."

"This is a great opportunity for all of us—educators, caregivers, and students—to create an environment where our students can really thrive as learners."

"We're excited about the positive changes this will bring to our school community. By reducing distractions, we're opening up new possibilities for growth, learning, and social development."

"We appreciate your support and partnership as we go cell phone-free. In the fall, we'll be sending out a survey to caregivers to gather feedback on how this is impacting students at NCSD. Together, we can make the 24-25 school year our best one yet!"