

Dear RPS Families,

We are writing to inform you about the cell phone pouch pilot program that we will be implementing at River City Middle School starting on January 22, 2024. The cell phone pouch pilot is designed to reduce distractions in the classroom and promote student focus and engagement, and will be launched at six schools across the district.

All pilot participants will be required to place their cell phones in a pouch at the beginning of day. The pouch would remain with the student until dismissal. The pouches will be provided by the school and will be kept with the student throughout the day. Students will be able to access their phones at the end of the day.

We understand that cell phones are an important part of many students' lives, and that they provide parents and caregivers security in the rare case of an emergency. However, we believe that this pilot will help to create a more positive and productive learning environment for all students in River City Middle School community.

Research has shown that cell phone use in the classroom can be a major distraction for students. It can also lead to problems such as cyberbullying and harassment. By reducing access to cell phones, we can help students to focus on their studies and learn more effectively.

We believe that this pilot will provide data that will be used to enhance or revise the existing RPS technology policy that will be inclusive of cell phones. We ask for your support as we move forward with implementation. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jaqueline Murphy-Braxton

River City Middle School

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why are you implementing this program?

A: Research has shown that cell phone use in schools is a major distraction for most secondary students. Challenges such as cyberbullying, pornography access, and unwanted filming of peers have contributed to an increase in referrals for inappropriate student conduct. RPS is partnering with Yondr Technologies, a manufacturer of the pouches, to implement a cell-phone-pouch pilot. By minimizing access to cell phones from the classroom, we can assist students with staying focused and remaining actively engaged while reducing distractions in the classroom.

Q: What will happen if my child is caught using their cell phone in class?

A: If a student is caught using their cell phone in class, the phone will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day. If the student is caught using their phone in class multiple times, they may be subject to disciplinary actions outlined within the Student Code of Responsible Ethics (SCORE).

Q: What if my child needs to use their cell phone for an emergency?

A: If a student needs to use their phone for an emergency during class, they should raise their hand and ask the teacher for a pass to the front office.

Q: What if I need to contact my child during the school day?

A: Parents and Caregivers can contact the school office if you need to contact your child during the school day. The office staff will be able to relay your message to your child.

Q: Does the pouch stay at school?

A: No, the pouch will remain with students at all times

Q: What happens if my child loses this pouch?

A: The student may be offered a loaner until the pouch is found

Q: Are students allowed to remove the pouch during non-classroom times (e.g., lunch, passing periods?)

A: Although students are expected to keep their phones in the cell phone pouches at all times. Students may have the opportunity to earn incentives such as pouch free lunches. Incentives will be determined by the leadership at each school.