

Naugatuck Public Schools
Cell Phone Policy - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What is Yondr?

The Yondr Pouch is a secure bag that is used to store an individual's mobile device or devices. It is secured and unlocked with a special magnetic locking device. The Yondr system is a simple solution that allows you to always maintain possession of your phone. Yondr creates phone-free spaces for artists, teachers, organizations, and more.

2. Why is the school system introducing Yondr pouches?

The Naugatuck Public School System is seeking to limit distractions in the classroom and improve overall student engagement, mental health, and well-being.

3. How will students receive a Yondr pouch?

In August 2024, all students in grades 7-12 will be assigned a Yondr pouch to secure their phone and/or smartwatch. The pouch is the property of the school and is considered on loan to the student during the school year. Students are responsible for the Yondr pouch at all times and for bringing the pouch to and from school each day and keeping them in good condition.

4. How will the process work at arrival and dismissal?

Upon entering school, students will either turn their phone off or silence it and turn off notifications, place the phone inside of the Yondr pouch, and lock it in front of the designated staff. The pouches will remain locked until the end of the school day when they will be unlocked at designated locations within the building.

5. How is the "end of the day" defined?

The day ends at 2:00 p.m. for high school students and 2:25 p.m. for middle school students. Students who leave school before the designated time will be able to unlock their pouches as they leave.

6. Do I maintain possession of my phone at all times?

Yes. Students will maintain possession of their phone and are responsible for it throughout the duration of the school day.

7. Will the Pouch affect my phone in any way?

No.

8. How do I unlock my phone after school?

Students will unlock their Yondr bag at the school exit as they leave school.

9. Will enough time be provided at the end of the day to ensure students aren't missing buses?

Yes. There will be ample unlocking devices throughout CHMS and NHS which will allow for a smooth dismissal process after the initial implementation. No delay in the dismissal process or bus schedules are anticipated.

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10. Will students get to open the pouches before after school clubs / sports?

Yes, students will be able to open their pouches at the end of the day / dismissal time prior to after school activities..

11. What happens if a student doesn't have their Yondr Pouch?

Students should turn their phones in at the front office to secure them until the end of the day. The phone will be turned over to the main office staff and secured in the school, safe until the end of the school day. At the end of the school day, students will retrieve their phones by showing their school ID.

12. Will my student still be able to listen to music? Students will be able to use headphones with cords to connect to their Chromebooks. They will be able to use the headphones for classroom work or for listening to music during free periods. All Bluetooth devices, including AirPods, smartwatches and other headphones, should not be brought to school.

13. What if a student needs to leave the building before regular dismissal? If a student needs to leave school early for an approved early dismissal, medical emergency, work assignment, athletic event, or other school-sponsored trip, students will be able to unlock their devices at school just prior to their departure. If returning to school during the instructional day, the Yondr pouch would be locked upon re-entry to the building.

14. What if a parent or guardian needs to reach their child during the school day?

We understand that emergencies will occur. All students in grades 7-12 have an NPS issued email and can receive emails from you during the school day. If you need to speak with your child, just call the main office - we can get them from class for you..

15. What happens if there is an emergency at school and I can't access my phone?

Our staff is trained to execute safety and emergency procedures. Students will follow the school's emergency procedures in the case of an emergency. Schools will communicate with parents through the district's mass notification and communication tools. All school staff and the school resource officer have cell phones and radios. Should an emergency occur, they are trained to implement and execute safety and emergency procedures. Students should follow all instructions.

16. How will students be able to contact families if there is a lockdown or active shooter situation?

Students and staff at all schools practice drills throughout the year. Students and staff are instructed to be silent during a lockdown. The response action guidelines outlined in the school's building level safety plan has a community notification plan for all emergencies. This notification plan includes first and foremost, parents and guardians of students in the building.

17. What happens if there is an active shooter situation where students run? Will they have quick access to their phone?

Students will have their phones with them in the locked pouch. If the phone is on inside the pouch, the tracking features that parents may be using should still work. The unlocking mechanisms will be brought to the rally points. In case of an immediate emergency such as this, the bags can be cut or ripped open.

18. What if my child is at school and needs to call 911?

In addition to staff and administrator phones, security staff carry radios and can communicate quickly with the main office. Additionally, all of our classrooms have phones that call 911.

19. What if a student does not comply or damages the locked case to access their phone? Students who do not comply, are found to unlock the pouches, cause damage to the pouch, or use an alternate phone will be subject to disciplinary action.

20. If the Yondr pouch is stolen/lost, who is responsible for replacement?

Students will ultimately be responsible for the care of their Yondr pouch. If a student intentionally damages the pouch, they will be responsible for replacement and may face disciplinary consequences. As the new school year gets underway, the district will provide families and students with replacement protocols.

21. What if a student needs their personal device for a medical issue? Students who have a documented medical condition and who need a personal device for monitoring their condition will be provided with a non-locking Yondr pouch that has a velcro seal.

22. Why can't the school just implement a zero-tolerance policy and allow students to keep their phones put away?

The school system already has a no-cell phone use policy in the classroom. However, valuable instruction time is lost as these issues are addressed when students do not comply.

23. Requiring students to lock their phones away seems like a punishment for students. Is this the case? The introduction of Yondr is not a punitive measure. The intention of Yondr is three-fold: to create classroom environments where teachers can teach and students can learn free from distractions caused by the personal use of devices; to reduce the negative impacts for ALL students of inappropriate use of devices at school, such as cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and incidents involving mobile phones that detract from a healthy school climate; and to increase meaningful face-to-face connections between students.

24. If a student forgets to unlock the pouch before leaving the building, is there a way for students to unlock the pouch – ie an unlock station outside the school building?

There will not be an unlocking station outside the building. If the student forgets to unlock their pouch, we will have additional unlocking mechanisms at various locations including the BOE building which is open daily until 4:30 PM and the Naugatuck Police Department which is open 24 hours a day.

25. **Will each teacher be able to unlock the pouches in the event of an active shooter in the building or a lockdown due to swatting?** No. Individual teachers will not be able to unlock the pouches.
26. **How many Yondr stations will there be and where will they be located?** Staff from Yondr will be visiting the district to determine the most appropriate locations in the school for the unlocking devices. Safety, efficiency and effectiveness will be top priorities in locating the unlocking devices.
27. **Do the Yondr pouches block cell signals or internet?** Yondr pouches do not block cell signals or the internet. The information above doesn't answer my questions.
28. **How much is the program costing the district?**
The start-up costs for Yondr in grades 7 through 12 is \$70,000 with an estimated \$10,000 annual cost thereafter for replacement pouches. The start-up costs are being funded through a grant.
29. **How can I submit a question about Yondr pouches?** The Yondr FAQs will be updated as the implementation gets underway in 2024-25. If you have a question regarding the implementation of Yondr pouches, please contact your student's school.