The Subcommittee on School Committee Policies met on Tuesday, July 22, 2025, in the Virtual Zoom Meeting. Present were Kathy Bent, Peter Goode, Sara Ahern, Kristen Harmon, Jason Conetta, and Jen Kruczek.

Ms. Bent called the meeting to order at 8:01AM.

Discuss Cell Phones and Personal Electronics Policy JICJ-A

- Ms. Bent asked if any other feedback was received on this policy. Dr. Ahern and Mr. Goode said no. Ms. Bent stated she received items about Yondr pouches and implementation.
- Dr. Ahern stated staff members will have use of phones for legitimate business reasons.
- Ms. Bent made changes about school staff only using cell phones for emergencies or educational purposes.
- Mr. Conetta stated he is more concerned on implementing the policy that first month.
- Ms. Bent spoke about legitimate reason for students to use phone: parent was going to pick up student, but they now need to take a bus, pick up sibling, work, etc.
- Mr. Goode stated in every school he has heard about, the Yondr bags work.
- Mr. Conetta stated having Yondr bags is the only level where the school will have jurisdiction over the phones. It will be expensive.
- Mr. Goode stated Brooke Styche said this policy is not going to work unless the students have the Yondr pouch. It is just another thing teachers will have to monitor. The state is eventually going to pass a bill that we will have to do this.
- Dr. Ahern stated the bill is gaining momentum and many schools are getting out in front of it.
- Ms. Harmon stated Yondr pouches for the high school will cost $59,000 and for BHS and BIS - $79,000. Turnaround time is 4-6 business days. They help with implementation and statistics. They also have the Velcro pouches for those that need to access their pouches for medical purposes.
- Ms. Bent asked how Yondr pouches work. Ms. Harmon stated they are magnetic similar to retail stores. The Yondr pouch is on their person.
- Dr. Ahern stated at one school, they had administration stationed throughout the building where students put the phone in the pouch and it locks. At the end of day, they put the magnets out and students use them to undo the lock. Magnets are in the office if needed in an emergency.
- Mr. Conetta stated in Brockton, when students entered and did not have their pouch, they gave their phone to the Associate Principal and they would keep them. There was a magnetic device that you put the pouch up to and it locks and then unlocks at the end of the day.
- Ms. Bent asked if students have any access to email on their Chromebooks. Mr. Conetta stated yes and parents could email students throughout the day for important information such as taking the bus home or watching a younger sibling.
- Ms. Bent asked if you take a phone from a student, do we require a parent to come in to get the phone. Mr. Conetta stated this could be on a case by case basis. First strike, second strike, and third strike would have different consequences.
- Ms. Bent asked if parents need to sign that they read the handbook. Mr. Conetta stated they used to do an electronic signature, but it has not been done the last few years. We will need to start this if these policies come into place.
- Mr. Goode asked Mr. Conetta if he had a preference to have Yondr pouches or not. Mr. Conetta stated both plans have pros and cons. Dr. Ahern stated the Superintendent speaking last week was compelling on the use on Yondr pouches. It alleviated the confrontation teachers have in the classroom. She thinks the Yondr pouches solves that problem.
- Mr. Conetta stated it is easier to police when you take out the personal obstacles with the Yondr pouches.
- Ms. Bent asked if BIS needs Yondr pouches. Mr. Conetta stated BIS has a better grasp on cell phones. BHS will benefit from the Yondr pouches. If we are going to roll out this year, we will need a venue for parents to come in and voice their concerns and questions. Mr. Goode stated there is no time frame. We can start this January 1.
- Ms. Harmon stated as we get closer to the start of school, Yondr pouches could be delayed. There is value in the implementation team prior to school.
- Dr. Ahern said to wait until the School Committee votes in August and she can do a mid-summer newsletter to families on the cell phone policy.
- Mr. Conetta stated he has not heard about any schools that used Yondr pouches and then went back to not using them.
- Dr. Ahern spoke about the research out there and the decrease in class failure rates.

Motion by Mr. Goode, seconded by Dr. Ahern, and the Committee voted, unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:56AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Kruczek
Executive Assistant