

April 28, 2025

Senate Education Committee,

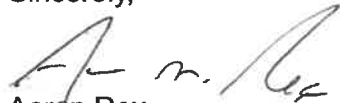
Wapakoneta City Schools has had a cell phone policy for many years. However, in 2023/2024 we began researching a policy that we believed would have a true impact on your young people and our staff. Our high school administrators visited other districts, read studies, called other district leaders, and decided to purchase Yondr pouches.

Many schools can say they have a “zero tolerance” policy, but it is never truly a zero tolerance policy until you implement a program that drives everyone to the same standard. In the summer of 2024 we let our high school parents know that we would be a school that required all students to have their phones locked in their pouches for the entire school day. I will say that there were people who were not “excited” about this new policy, but we also had those who were in total agreement.

Once school got started, there was an acclimation period, but our students and teachers have witnessed a huge change. We are further ahead in our curriculum, our discipline referrals are down, our students are more engaged, and they are talking to each other. When people are together in our society, look around and see how many are on their phones and not taking part in conversation or paying attention to the person they are with. Take their phone away, and it will change things.

This is an investment; this is a change in the way we do things. However, it is worth it. Our kids and our school are better because we have implemented a zero tolerance policy. If other schools choose to do so, they must have a strong plan in place and also communicate it to their public. It can be successful with the right follow-through, and the school will be a better place for the students and the adults.

Sincerely,



Aaron Rex