
Kevin Kinne, Principal • **Scott Frazier**, Asst. Principal

Kevin Kinne – Principal, Teays Valley East Middle School

Testimony on the Implementation and Impact of YONDR Pouches in School

With 25 years of experience in education—including 19 years in administrative roles—I have witnessed firsthand how the challenges of student engagement and discipline have evolved. Over the last five years, one of the most pressing and persistent issues has been the distraction and disruption caused by student cell phone use during the school day.

Despite having a policy in place that required phones to be off and out of sight, we consistently saw students find ways to circumvent it. As a result, teaching time was frequently interrupted, student focus suffered, and disciplinary issues stemming from digital conflicts became increasingly common.

At Teays Valley East Middle School, where I have served as principal for the past four years (and a member of the administration for 10), we knew something had to change. Last year, our administrative team researched effective alternatives. We consulted with other schools and ultimately decided to implement YONDR pouches for the 2024–25 school year.

Our process is simple and consistent: students place their phones in a YONDR pouch immediately after reciting the Pledge of Allegiance each morning. They carry their locked pouches throughout the day and unlock them just before dismissal. The results of this initiative have been nothing short of transformative.

Key Outcomes:

- **Discipline incidents have dropped by more than 50%** compared to the same period last year.
- **Fights, bullying, and distractions have significantly declined**, leading to far fewer suspensions.
- **Grades and attendance have improved** across all grade levels.
- **Student social interactions have become healthier**, with more face-to-face communication and collaboration.
- **Staff morale has improved**, with teachers reporting more instructional time and fewer classroom management issues.

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One particularly memorable moment came when a recently retired teacher returned as a substitute. He remarked that there was an unmistakable change in the building's energy—more positive, more focused, and more cohesive.

We initially expected pushback from families, but the opposite occurred. Parent support has been strong and steady. As the positive effects became more visible—better grades, improved behavior, fewer disciplinary calls—community support only grew.

In my professional opinion, simply asking students to put their phones away is no longer viable in today's school environment. The YONDR system enforces accountability in a non-punitive, practical way that empowers both students and staff to focus on what matters most: learning and connection.

I am a strong advocate for the use of YONDR pouches in schools and would highly recommend them to any educational leader looking to reduce distractions, improve school climate, and help students thrive.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns. I am happy to share more about our experience with YONDR pouches.