

Cell Phone Policy and FAQ

- **In keeping with New York State's Distraction-Free Schools law (N.Y. Education Law § 2803), Thousand Islands Central School District will be a distraction-free learning environment.**
 - Students needing to call home during the day may call from the school office.
 - Parents needing to contact a student during the day should call the attendance officer or the appropriate school office at (315) 686-5594.
 - The school is not responsible for lost or stolen phones.
- Elementary students must keep phones off and stowed inside backpacks in a locker or cubby for the duration of the school day.
- On the Sand Bay campus, Phones, smartwatches, earbuds, headphones, and related items are not allowed during the school day.
 - Phones are to be turned off and locked in a specially designed security pocket, along with smartwatches, earbuds, and related items. These pouches may be kept with students during the day or stowed in lockers and may be unlocked when students leave for the day.
 - Each student will receive a school-issued Yondr pouch at the beginning of the year. Yondr pouches lock with a magnet much like anti-theft devices used in stores. Like chromebooks, they are durable items that will stay with the student for several years of normal use. In the event that the Yondr pouch is lost or damaged, a new one may be purchased for \$25. More information about these devices can be found at www.veryondr.com.
 - Students who are in good academic standing, do not owe late assignments, and are not serving disciplinary consequences may be released at 2:30. Pouches may be unlocked at that time.
 - Students who are required to stay until 3:30 in order to make up time with a teacher or serve disciplinary consequences will keep the pouches locked until that time.
 - Students voluntarily staying after 2:30 for sports, clubs, and activities will follow the policies adopted by the responsible advisors.
 - Students who are signed out early may unlock devices when they leave. They must secure them again if they return to finish the day.
 - Students who violate the policy are subject to consequences as outlined in the student handbook. Such consequences may include confiscation of the device for the remainder of the day, confiscation for parent retrieval, lunch detention, after-school detention.
 - Refusal to surrender a confiscated device will be considered insubordination.

- **How do I contact my child throughout the day?**
 - Students will be able to see any text messages or listen to voice messages when they unlock the devices at the end of the day.
 - Just as you would during any period of testing or after-school practice, feel free to call the attendance officer or appropriate office at (315) 686-5594. Urgent messages will be delivered promptly.
- **What if there is a school emergency or evacuation?**
 - School staff are trained to execute emergency response procedures. They regularly practice drills that reflect a variety of scenarios so that they are prepared to communicate effectively and keep students safe.
 - The district office will communicate with parents and officials, and relay information as it becomes known.
 - It is important to note that sharing information prematurely may lead to inaccuracies and interference with emergency response. It will be important to ensure accuracy as well as the safety of students, staff, and responders, so information will be released in a coordinated fashion.
 - These are times of heightened anxiety and stress for parents, students, and staff, as well as for responders. Rumors and uncertainties abound and no one can predict or ensure against every possible scenario. We will communicate as quickly, fully, and transparently as possible, but will do our best to balance the need for frequent and timely communication with the need to make sure information is accurate and that it is safe for students, staff, and responders to share it.
- **What if my child has a glucose monitor or needs to access health data?**
 - Pouches with velcro closures are available for students with a documented medical reason to access the device.
 - Students who abuse the circumstance will be subject to consequences as outlined in the 2025-2026 student handbook.
- **What happens if a student violates the device procedure?**
 - Students will be subject to consequences as outlined in the 2025-2026 student handbook. Potential consequences include confiscation of device and parent pick-up, after-school detention, and for repeated offenses, in-school suspension.
- **What if my child's phone is lost or stolen?**
 - The school is not responsible for lost or stolen phones. We will do our best to help your student locate the item, but ultimately students are responsible for their own personal belongings.
 - Prevention is the best defense. Phones may be left at home, stored in locked lockers, or turned into the office for safekeeping during the day. Yondr pouches must be used to store the phones in lockers.
 - Leaving lockers unlocked increases the risk that personal items will be tampered with.

- **Where will they unlock the pouches?**
 - There will be eight locking stations available at dismissal. Four will be located near the library, for high school use, and four will be located in the “glass hallway” near the bus exit, for middle school use.
 - There will be an unlocking station at the attendance office, high school office, and middle school office at all times.
- **Does every student have to use a pouch?**
 - Every student who brings a cell phone into the building during school hours will be required to keep it in a locked Yondr pouch for the duration of the school day. Alternatively, they may voluntarily store their phone in the HS or MS office, and it will be returned to them at the end of the day.
 - Students with a medical diagnosis requiring phone monitoring may be issued a pouch that is similar in appearance, but which allows access to the phone if an alert is triggered.
- **What if they lose or damage it?**
 - Students are responsible for keeping them in working condition and bringing them daily.
 - If the device is lost, a replacement fee of \$25 will be assessed, they will be issued a new one. Until the fee is paid, phones may be stored in the office.
 - The pouches have proven to be durable. Damage will be considered vandalism.

Note: Damage consists of any signs that the physical integrity of the pouch has been compromised, whether intentional or unintentional, as determined by the school or Yondr staff. Students are expected to care for the device just as they care for chromebooks, textbooks, uniforms, or other school property in their possession.