

Subject: Letter_of_Concern_in_the_matter_of_Board_Meeting_Agenda_Item_12_-_Board_of_Education_Report_No._157_-_12/13_'Project_Definition_and_Funding_Strategy_for_Phase_1A_of_the_Common_Core_Technology_Plan'

From: [REDACTED] >

Date: Sun, February 10, 2013 9:23 pm

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To the Los Angeles Board of Education:

Comment filed by parent: C. Gartz

I am a parent whose son has now begun his 5-year high school attendance in a school that, along with most high schools in our area, has a 1:1 laptop *wireless* laptop program.

I applaud the Los Angeles BOE for their commitment to afford students the important benefits of technology in school, and also for the importance that the Board appears to place on 'Radiofrequency Safety' in this endeavour, which is listed as an 'Additional Consideration' on page 24 of the Board of Education Report No. 157 – 12/13, saying that "Implementation will follow the guidelines developed by OEHS."

It appears that the OEHS is dedicated to a precautionary approach towards Radiofrequency exposure:

The OEHS Radiofrequency Exposure Factsheet of February 2013 can be found at http://www.lausd-oehs.org/docs/Misc/Radiofrequency_Safety_Fact_Sheet_%20020613.pdf:

It acknowledges that "exposures **below existing limits** may produce harmful effects at the biological and cellular level" [emphasis added] (the current existing FCC exposure limit being 1,000 $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$). The Fact Sheet notes that the Board of Education has made 3 resolutions prohibiting the siting of cell towers on school campuses and calling "for the FCC to revise their standards based upon

[...] **new and emerging information** regarding exposure and health...” [emphasis added] since current FCC standards address only ‘thermal’ effects on the body.

The Fact Sheet states that since 2007 the District staff have utilized “a precautionary threshold level that addresses these non-thermal exposures...”: “Our threshold is 0.1 $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$ or 10,000 times lower than the FCC standard. It is believed that a more conservative level is necessary to protect children, who represent a potentially vulnerable and sensitive population.

The precautionary limit of 0.1 $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$, adopted by the OEHS accords with the independent advice of the BioInitiative Report from 2007. **However, the OEHS is not acting on their own advice quoted above regarding “new and emerging information regarding exposure and human health”:**

The new BioInitiative **2012** Report, based on *more current* scientific evidence of biological effects, has revised their previous limit of 0.1 $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$ to 0.0003 $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$:

“This equates to a 0.3 nanowatts to 0.6 nanowatts per square centimeter as a reasonable, precautionary action level for chronic exposure to pulsed RFR. These levels may need to change in the future, as new and better studies are completed.” <http://www.bioinitiative.org/conclusions/>

To quote Cindy Sage, co-author of both the 2007 and 2012 BioInitiative Report: **“chronic, whole-body RFR exposure at levels as low as 0.003 microwatts per square centimeter result in adverse health effects on children and adolescents** (Thomas et al 2008; Heinrich et al 2010; Thomas et al 2010; Mohler et al 2010). Wireless classrooms will create unavoidable and involuntary exposure to RFR at levels shown to adversely affect memory, learning, cognition, attention, concentration and behavior to school occupants. No level of RFR exposure has been conclusively determined to be safe...”

The OEHS have retained the outdated 2007 precautionary advice saying that: “Staff has evaluated the proposed use of Wi-Fi technology throughout our schools. With adherence to recently adopted use and equipment specifications (i.e., measured distances from access points/external antennas and limits on end-device power ratings), RF exposures will be significantly reduced and meet the precautionary limit of 0.1 $\mu\text{W}/\text{cm}^2$...” They have neglected to heed the “new and emerging information” that they refer to in their fact sheet.

The large-scale acquisition of wireless LAN networks and wireless-only devices (i.e. those which cannot use the internet safely via a wired connection) is a reckless false economy that both puts children at risk, and misappropriates funding by channeling it into equipment that **cannot** be adapted for safe internet use via cabling. i.e. wireless equipment is rendered obsolete in a safe and wireless free environment.

Parents should not be put in a position where they are forced to choose between educating their children and safeguarding their children's health. As a parent who has already been placed in this untenable position I respectfully ask:

Please do not allow the proposal of this 3-phase essentially wireless technology program to go ahead. Please put the health and safety of the children under your care first and revise the implementation to ensure a wireless-free and safe learning environment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

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Australia