

Kawartha Safe Technology Initiative
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Advocating for safe use of technology in schools.

Los Angeles Unified School District
P.O. Box 3307
Los Angeles, CA 90051

February 10, 2013

Dear Board Members:

RE: Proposal for Wireless Technology in LAUSD Schools

I write on behalf of Kawartha Safe Technology Initiative – a group of hundreds of parents in Ontario, Canada who formed because of our own public school board’s proposal to install Wi-Fi in all of our schools 3 years ago. When we learned that your School Board, the second largest in the US, is seriously considering Wi-Fi in its schools, we felt the need to write to give you the perspective of parents who have researched this in depth, and who believe to our core, that this technology will not lead to greater educational success for our students, but it will put them at greater risk of developing serious health disorders which will affect their lives indelibly.

WHY DO INFORMED PARENTS NOT WANT WI-FI IN SCHOOLS?

1. There is voluminous research dating back 5 decades up to the present day (over 1800 studies in the last 5 years alone), which concludes that exposure to microwave radiation causes serious health risks, including: brain and facial tumors, childhood leukemia, irreversible infertility, DNA damage, blood brain barrier leakage, electro-hypersensitivity, sleep disorders, and more. Thousands of independent scientists/doctors/medical organizations and even governments around the world are calling for a ‘precautionary approach’ to the use of wireless technology because of the real potential for world-wide health crises.
2. Pervasive, commercial-grade Wi-Fi will radiate all day while children and teachers are at school. This is 6 hours per day, 1200 hours per year, for up to 14 years of children’s most formative development. The exposure is cumulative, meaning that, like x-rays, the accumulated radiation will stay within the body.
3. There have been NO STUDIES DONE ON CHILDREN showing that long-term exposure (e.g. 1 or 14 years) to microwave radiation is safe.

4. Children are much more susceptible than adults to the effects of microwave radiation due to their thinner skulls, immature immune systems and rapidly multiplying cells.
5. In May 2011, the World Health Organization declared microwave radiation (including Wi-Fi) a "Possible Carcinogen", like DDT, gasoline, and chloroform – which we do not pump continuously into children's classrooms.
6. In May 2011, the Council of Europe, which represents 47 countries, called the microwave radiation safety standards (of ICNIRP/FCC) "Obsolete", particularly for young people, and advocates using wired technology in schools.
7. While government officials tell us that our microwave radiation exposure limits are safe (Canada's are the same as the US), they are among the least protective standards in the world, 'outdated' according to many, with many countries having standards 100 to 10,000 times more restrictive.
8. 'Funding bias' is not taken into account by government when reviewing new studies to determine a safe limit – yet it *should* be, in light of powerful vested interests funding studies that conclude in their favor. Meanwhile, school boards approving Wi-Fi are relying on government 'safety' limits.
9. Beyond physical health dangers, growing research shows that pervasive Wi-Fi in schools exacerbates the problem of cyber-bullying as well as access to pornography, since students can use school Wi-Fi to access the internet and social media sites.
10. There is NO EVIDENCE SHOWING GREATER STUDENT SUCCESS with a Wi-Fi internet connection versus a hard-wired internet connection. If student success is not the primary motivator for this major decision, what is?

CONCLUSION

As parents, we instinctively know to remove a potentially harmful item from our children (e.g. a knife) rather than first waiting to see if it causes them harm. And yet this is exactly the opposite of what school boards would be doing by allowing Wi-Fi now, having been warned repeatedly that it is potentially harmful.

As school board members, whose laudable goals are to *better* the welfare of children, we ask you, in light of what you have read:

- ♦ Is Wi-Fi safe enough?
- ♦ Is the cost and convenience of Wi-Fi worth the undeniable risks we are placing on the health of innocent students and valued teachers?

- ♦ Is it appropriate to wait for government to conclude Wi-Fi is unsafe, before a School Board takes precautionary measures?
- ♦ Years from now, what would the children of today have wanted you to do: act for the sake of monetary savings and unproven educational benefit, or rather, to err on the side of caution to safeguard their well being and quality of life?

These are questions that everyone can answer for himself or herself. However, as trustees, your answers have the power to change future outcomes, in a meaningful way, for the 750,000 students and staff of this Board, as well as for all others who will follow your lead, if you take it.

You can choose to implement Wi-Fi now, and then wait for government to change its exposure limit once 'consistent' proof comes in (possibly decades from now), and irrefutable damage has been done to the health of children and others in the long run.

Or you can choose to be a School Board that leads the way for others to follow. *This* route will require a School Board unafraid to step off the wireless technology bandwagon, to resist the industry marketers and technocrats, to ignore the status quo. It will be one that is willing to move boldly forward on a path of its own making... a path of leadership, wisdom, compassion and moral responsibility, for those deserving young people under its charge.

On behalf of informed and concerned parents everywhere, I ask you to consider what path you and this School Board will take.

Sincerely,

Malini Menon
On behalf of
Kawartha Safe Technology Initiative
www.kawarthasafetechnology.org