

STANDING COMMITTEE: **TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORTS**

DATE OF MEETING: Monday, April 24, 2017

ITEM: Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Colorio/Miss Biancheria (September 7, 2016)

To discuss the impact of radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation from wifi and cellular towers on students and staff in schools, potentially including neurologic impairment and malignancy, and to consider means of minimizing any such risk within the Worcester Public Schools by changes as to practice and policy.

PRIOR ACTION:

- 9-15-16 - Referred to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports.
Mr. Monfredo made the following motion:
Request that the Administration invite Dr. Castiel, Director of Public Health, Dr. McGovern, Director of School Nurses and a member of the IT team when the item is discussed at the Standing Committee level.
On a voice vote, the motion was approved.
It was moved and voice voted to suspend rules to allow Leslie Saffer to address the item.

BACKUP:

Annex A (1 page) contains a copy of the Administration's response to the item.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

10-17-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORTS

Mr. O'Connell made the following recommendations:

- continue to involve the Department of Public Health in the research and the information in connection with the actions of the Standing Committee
- look into possible replication and use of the Best Practices in the Use of Wireless Technology
- obtain the document of the Ashland Public Schools and
- Staff Development initiatives regarding instruction on the dangers of using wireless devices

Mr. Monfredo made the following motions:

Request that the Administration study the feasibility of utilizing expanded ether net connectivity for all schools in place of wireless, if feasible.

Request that the Administration provide information on how to shut off wireless in the schools.

Request that the Administration place on the website the two handouts entitled "Best Practices in the Use of Wireless Technology" and "Exploring Wireless Safety for Our Children" and share them with the principals who in turn will forward them to staff and students.

On a voice vote, the motions were approved.

Mr. O'Connell requested that the following documents be included as backup:

- Best Practices in the Use of Wireless Technology
- Exploring Wireless Safety for Our Children
- Learn About Wireless Radiation
- Open Letter to the Superintendents of the School Districts of the United States

and make the book entitled "Wireless Wise Kids" available in the Clerk of the School Committee's Office.

Miss McCullough made the following motion:

Request that the Administration get the actual policy from the Ashland Public Schools.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

HOLD the item for the meeting in December.

10-20-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as amended.

Miss McCullough made the following motion:

Request that the following motion be held for more information and further study:

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

10-20-16 - Request that the Administration place on the website the two
(continued) handouts entitled “Best Practices in the Use of Wireless
Technology” and “Exploring Wireless Safety for Our Children”
and share them with the principals who in turn will forward them
to staff and students.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Ms. Colorio recommended that the School Committee conduct a fair
and balanced presentation so that an appropriate decision can be
made in the best interest of all students.

Mayor Petty indicated that this discussion should be at the Standing
Committee level.

Mayor Petty made the following motion:

Request that the Administration obtain the reports on this topic from
the City Council.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. Monfredo made the following motion:

Request that a representative from the IT Department with expertise
in this field and a representative from the medical field be invited to
the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

12-5-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON TEACHING, LEARNING AND
STUDENT SUPPORTS

Mr. Walton made a presentation with respect to the impact of
radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation from wifi and cellular
towers.

Ms. Doucette provided the following links to information regarding
wireless and cell phone technologies:

- Harvard University's Law School Center for Ethics report,
[Captured Agency: How the Federal Communications Industry is
Dominated by the Industries it Presumably Regulates](#). This
provides information on why our government has not informed
the public that wireless and cell phone technologies are
biologically hazardous.
- The [U.S. National Toxicology Program study](#) finding DNA
damage, brain and heart tumors in 2016; more findings will be
reported out in 2017. Please remember that although this is a cell
phone study, cell phones and wi-fi all operate off of
radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation in the [microwave
spectrum](#) so the hazard applies to all wireless technology. Dr.
Joel Moskowitz of U.C. Berkeley has included information in the
link above to help separate fact from industry spin for those of us
new to the conversation.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

12-5-16 - (continued)

- The [BioInitiative Report](#) contains peer-reviewed studies that indicate evidence for damage to sperm and reproduction, children are more vulnerable, fetal and neonatal effects, effects on Autism (Autism Spectrum Conditions), Alzheimer's, electrohypersensitivity, blood-brain barrier opening, brain tumors, genotoxicity, neurotoxicity, childhood Leukemia, adult cancers, melatonin, and more. In mainstream media we generally hear only about cancer risks, which can take decades to develop during which time the industry makes great profits. The other shorter-term effects are seldom reported on and so the public is unaware.
- In this 16-minute lecture, Dr. Martin Pall explains what electromagnetic radiation is doing to our bodies and why it is causing illness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kQQyU8NHv8>.
- The World Health Organization list of classifications: [This link](#) shows the five categories. [This link](#) shows how they determine which agents to evaluate: "Agents are selected for review on the basis of two main criteria: (a) there is evidence of human exposure and (b) there is some evidence or suspicion of carcinogenicity." [This link](#) shows Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields are a Group 2B Possible Human Carcinogen. Feel free to sort by Group to see what else is a 2B; I could understand Lead, Chloroform, Welding Fumes, BHA, Diesel Fuel, Engine Exhaust, Gasoline, HIV and HPV but there are many others. More research has come through since the 2B classification was made in 2011, and some of the scientists who served on the review committee are now asking that Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields be raised to a Group 1 Human Carcinogen.

Mr. Monfredo made the following motions:

Request that the Administration place on the WPS website the handout entitled Best Practices for Mobile Devices from the Ashland Public Schools leaving out the following bullet:

- ❖ Turn wifi on only when needed.

Request that Dr. Knorr be invited to a meeting in February.

On a voice vote, the motions were approved.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as amended.
Ms. Colorio made the following motion:
Request that the Administration develop its own Best Practices for Mobile Devices and discuss the pros and cons of this issue prior to posting anything on the website.
On a roll call of 4-3 (nays-Miss Biancheria, Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell), the motion was approved.
It was moved and voice voted to invite Dr. Knorr to a Standing Committee meeting in February.