The KPRD School Board’s recent announcement to purchase monitoring equipment to test microwave radiation levels in schools does nothing to address parental concerns about the safety of Wi-Fi. The equipment is supposed to measure the strength of the electromagnetic radiation of Wi-Fi after it is installed, to ensure it does not exceed Health Canada’s Safety Code 6 guidelines.

But it is already known that Wi-Fi does not exceed Safety Code 6 guidelines. It would not be permitted if it did. The School Board is missing the point.

There is serious scientific controversy about the safety of this technology, and mounting evidence which concludes that low level radiation (well below Safety Code 6 limits) poses significant short and long-term health risks, particularly to children. Why force Wi-Fi exposure on children when hard-wiring would do?

For the School Board to claim it must rely on the advice of health officials is an untenable stance, and makes their repeated mantra: “safety is our first priority” sound hollow at best. Health Canada’s standards are a maximum limit of what is acceptable. There is no law prohibiting going below the limit. The City of Peterborough in 2006 chose to ban the pesticides that government health regulations still allow to this day. City Council obviously agreed that the health of our citizens was worth much more than the mere convenience of bug/weed-free lawns.

I do not doubt that the School Board and Administration care about the children in schools. But perhaps in their zeal to enhance and provide new tools for learning, they are overlooking a more important aspect of student well-being, namely their health. Our School Board needs to understand that the safety and quality of life of our children *are* good enough reasons to exercise caution and keep Wi-Fi in abeyance until it is proven to be safe.

Surely, the convenience benefit of being able to move computers around in class is not worth more than protecting our children’s health.