

Draft resolution for EGUSD on cell antennas near schools

September 10, 2020

Proposed by Mark Graham

Resolution No. 2020 - \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS,

- The Elk Grove Unified School District, its Board of Trustees and staff seek to provide and maintain a healthy, safe environment for all students and teachers; and
- The May 6, 1994 California PTA resolution on electromagnetic fields, reviewed by Board of Managers in April, 2005, resolved, “That the California State PTA educate and inform its districts, councils and units about the potential hazards of EMFs and encourage school districts and schools to develop risk reduction policies and continue to disseminate information on the subject as it becomes available”; and
- An increasing number of public agencies at all levels are raising concerns about and taking action to protect against cell antenna radiation, a sampling of which is included in Exhibit A; and
- The desire of wireless companies to market new wireless services has led to wireless infrastructure such as new 4G and 5G cell antennas being approved in residential neighborhoods and near schools in Elk Grove; and
- There has been limited community awareness of and discussion about the deployment of new 4G and 5G cell antenna networks in residential areas and near schools; and
- The City of Elk Grove has approved wireless cell antenna sites on City light poles in the public right of way near schools without notification to the Elk Grove Unified School District, school officials, staff, PTAs or parents; and
- In early June in response to a request from parents the District wrote to the City saying that the approved but not yet permitted new cell antenna site at Laguna Creek High School was within 50’ of the science classroom building and that the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) could be problematic for the students in the classrooms on the second story; and
- In response to the District’s request, the City discussed with the applicant, AT&T, the possibility of withdrawing that new cell antenna site and the one at Monterey Trail High School and Edward Harris Middle School from its permit application, and other options; and
- In response to these discussions AT&T agreed on July 21, 2020 to withdraw the new cell antenna at Laguna Creek HS from its application, to revise and resubmit that application for a new pole across the street, and refused to make any change on its new cell antenna at Monterey Trail High School and Edward Harris Middle School; and

- The City’s Master License Agreement with AT&T (C-19-534, approved August 28, 2019 by the City Council) provides in section 4.2(a) that the City Manager may amend or supplement its list of approved new cell antenna sites; and
- The City Manager may amend or supplement said list by approving more new cell antenna sites at or near EGUSD schools and in the absence of any District input may do so; and
- That the City, AT&T and Verizon have already agreed on new 4G and 5G cell antennas near Franklin High School, Cosumnes Oaks High School, and Elizabeth Pinkerton Middle School, all without notice to the District, PTAs, schools, or parents.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ELK GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES THAT

- The Elk Grove Unified School District Board of Trustees (the “Board”), in order to prevent students from being distracted from their classes and extracurricular activities and to ensure that individuals, especially children, are protected from the negative health effects of long term cell antenna radiation exposure, opposes the siting of future new cell antennas in close proximity to schools; and
- The Board requests that the City and City Manager not amend or supplement its list of approved new cell antenna sites by the addition of a new cell antenna site within 1,500 feet of a school; and
- The Board supports the City of Elk Grove immediately establishing a local municipal code zoning setback rule of 1,500 feet or more between an operating wireless transmitter or new cell antenna and a school site; and
- The Board requests that City provide timely notification, without delay, to the District Superintendent and the Principal(s) of affected schools when new cellular permit applications are filed for new cell antennas within 1,500 feet of a school; and
- In light of the City’s failure to provide timely notification to school officials and the local school community, and to prevent harm to the education of students and biological effects of cell antenna radiation the Board requests that City take appropriate action to request the applicants to cancel plans for the approved new cell antenna sites at or near Laguna Creek High School, Monterey Trail High School, Edward Harris Middle School, Cosumnes Oaks High School, Elizabeth Pinkerton Middle School, and Franklin High School and to reject or delay consideration of other applications near school sites until appropriate regulations and approval criteria are in place.

Approved by the Board on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of October, 2020.

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Beth Albiani, President of the Board of Trustees

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Attorney for the Board

## Exhibit A

### Summary of Recent Public Official and Agency Actions

- Many cities internationally [have taken action](#) to restrict cell towers near homes and schools, including the California cities of Petaluma, San Anselmo, Fairfax, Hillsborough, Piedmont, Rancho Palos Verdes, Mill Valley, and Ripon. The City of Elk Grove prohibits new cell antennas immediately adjacent to residential front yards but does not prohibit them at or near schools, nor does it have any minimum distance from schools.
- France has banned smart phones in schools. The ban on smartphones as well as other kinds of internet-connected devices, such as tablets, applies to schoolchildren between 3 and 15 years of age, and was passed by lawmakers in July, 2018.
- During a February 6, 2019 U.S. Senate Commerce Committee hearing, when asked by Sen. Blumenthal how much money the wireless industry had spent or committed to spend on studies of the health and safety of 5G waves the industry responded that it is not aware of any such studies nor are any planned.
- On December 3, 2018, U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal and Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo co-authored a [letter](#) to FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr that requested the FCC provide them studies informing the FCC's 5G safety determination, and while they did receive a letter from the FCC on December 17, 2018, it had no mention of 5G safety testing.
- On December 13, 2017 the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Issues Guidelines on How to Reduce Exposure to Radio Frequency Energy from Cell Phones.

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/NR17-086.aspx>

CDPH wrote, What about children?

Children may be more at risk for harm from exposure to RF energy because:

RF energy can reach a larger area of a child's brain than an adult's brain.

A child's brain and body grow and develop through the teen years. During this time, the body may be more easily affected by RF energy and the effect may be more harmful and longer lasting.

A child who uses a cell phone will have many more years of exposure to RF energy in his or her lifetime than someone who started using a cell phone as an adult.

- The full Parliament of the European Union has said that children exposed to EMFs are especially vulnerable and that there are continuing uncertainties about the possible health risks, particularly to young people whose brains are still developing.

Therefore the Parliament adopted on April 2, [2009](#) a resolution encouraging, among other things,

- 1) that wireless cell antennas and other electromagnetic field emitting devices to be set within a specific distance, determined by scientific criteria, from schools and health care institutions,
- 2) laying down EMF exposure limits for residents and consumers, and
- 3) recommended a wide-ranging awareness campaign to familiarise young Europeans with good mobile phone techniques, such as the use of hands-free kits, keeping calls short, switching off phones when not in use (such as when in classes) and using phones in areas that have good reception; and to familiarise young Europeans with the health risks associated with household devices and the importance of switching off devices rather than leaving them on stand-by.

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009-0216+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

- On June 27, 2000, the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District adopted a resolution opposing the siting of cellular facilities on or in close proximity to schools to ensure individuals, especially children, are protected from the potential health effects associated with exposures to extremely low frequency electromagnetic and radiofrequency radiation. On May 26, 2009 the Board reaffirmed this with a resolution requesting local jurisdictions to provide timely notification when new cellular permit applications are filed and directed the Office of Environmental Health and Safety to provide comment on the health risks from cumulative exposures to EMF.