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Parents push for school photos; more money coming for tech, infrastructure

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Bobcaygeon area trustee John Byrne told fellow trustees at the recent Trillium Lakelands District School Board meeting that parents are pushing schools to carry on with school photos this year.

Outsiders, like photographers, have been restricted from school property to help contain the COVID virus.

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Infrastructure, Tech

Hahn told trustees that director of finance Tim Ellis is pleased that the province of Ontario has promised \$700 million in school infrastructure funding in its most recent budget statement. The only caveat put on the money is it must be spent in 2021.

“I see our share of this money being spent on small projects that can get done easily this year,” Hahn said.

“I can see projects like HVAC improvements and water stations being the kind of project we would spend our money on.”

The announcement of funding for broadband Ontario-wide and Canada-wide last week was greeted positively by the board as a whole.

“We are thrilled,” Hahn said.

“There is a rumour that there is more money coming for technology,” Hahn shared, “and we are hopeful because we have spent every penny that we have up to this point.”

The board hopes spending like this will help improve equity and access to technology.

Hahn also announced a board focus on equity that will begin with the striking of what appears to be at least a semi-permanent equity task force made up of parents, the public, staff, and students. The scope and breadth of the task force is

“Families want these pictures,” Byrne said, “and I wonder if they can be taken virtually.”

Byrne also said that pictures are being taken in the Kawartha Pine Ridge School Board and parents are wondering why it is not happening locally.

“I understand that families want to have them because they are part of their memories,” said Wes Hahn, director of education.

“Public health is working on a protocol for photographers in schools and if one can’t be safely worked out the board will try to figure something out regarding graduation pictures,” Hahn said.

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“expected to grow from year to year.”

In answer to a question posed by student trustee Ryder Lytle about school sports, Hahn effectively brought the curtain down on school athletics for this school year.

“The most recent update we have from the Ontario Federation of School Athletics,” Hahn said, “is that winter seasons have already been cancelled. We have every expectation of spring sports being cancelled also.”

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