



# Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools

**Mission: to protect children and youth from commercial influences at school**

Vol. 4 No. 3

August 2001

## president's message

### Voting: the tip of the iceberg

Most people running for Seattle school board are not professional politicians, nor do they have deep pockets. If we want to elect responsible, responsive school board members, we need to support candidates who offer an alternative to the current corporate model of public education.

Successful school board campaigns in Seattle can cost from \$20,000 to \$30,000. While contributing financially helps with literature and mailing costs, volunteering your time significantly aids a campaign. Every hour you put in translates into hundreds of votes.

Not sure how you can help? You can invite your friends to meet a candidate in your home, drive yard signs around town, phone people to remind them to vote, distribute fliers, march with a candidate in a parade, stuff envelopes, or write thank-you notes.

CCCS now has over 850 supporters. This year we have a chance to elect three strong anti-commercialism candidates, which will move us one step closer to a majority on the School Board. Let's make our schools commercial-free zones.

—David Wall

## The Long-Awaited Policy

By Brita Butler-Wall

In May, the School Board's Policy and Legislative Committee handed CCCS members a draft of the long-awaited policy on commercialism in Seattle Schools. This 29-word policy and 5-pages of accompanying procedures will be circulated to principals and teachers this summer. The final draft will be presented at a public hearing in early fall, followed by a vote of the entire School Board (date TBA).

During the five years it has taken the School Board to formulate this 29-word policy, over 65,000 children's minds have been diligently learning the hidden curriculum of today's corporatized Seattle schools.

Unfortunately, the new, long-awaited policy does nothing to address the wholesale take-over of our schools. In fact, the policy encourages marketing by the very corporations that have bled public schools dry in the first place.

The accompanying 'Procedures' are also problematic. After a page of noble rhetoric about the "integrity of the learning environment", the Procedures allow for astonishing amounts of corporate sponsorship 'recognition' in the form of logos and wall plaques. Other than gradually phasing out the laughable time-waster known as Channel One by the year 2005, the policy

leaves most current marketing schemes and scams safely in place.

Each subsection in the document starts with a strong statement opposing commercialism in schools, but goes on to include a loophole big enough to drive a Coke truck through. (The loopholes exist in part because of the District's convenient fiction that a logo is not a type of advertising and therefore permissible under their new policy). To see the entire draft document

including procedures, go to our website at <http://www.scn.org/cccs>.

Even worse, the appended 5 pages are completely unenforceable. Only the policy is enforceable, and it is a sieve which allows virtually every type of commercialism to permeate our schools.

Seattle children deserve better than a dissembling school board

*(Continued on next page)*

### New Draft Policy

*It is the policy of the Seattle School Board to promote positive partnerships with the private sector, and to guard against commercial partnerships that allow advertising targeted at children.*

### inside .....

School Board Races.....	2
Updates .....	2
Killing Us Softly .....	3
What's happening .....	3
Nuts & bolts .....	3
Calendar .....	4

*(continued from previous page)*

that takes 5 years to come up with 29 words – words that guarantee that marketers will continue to prey on them.

CCCS will take to the streets with our annual counter-rally on Tuesday, August 28 coinciding with the District's 'Back-to-School' rally. Bring your signs and your children. We need to let the district, the public, and the media know that 29 words in 5 years is **NOT** good enough.

## Seattle School Board Races

Three Seattle school board positions are on the ballot this fall, with strong anti-commercialism contenders in each race. (Primaries are by district, followed by city-wide elections in November.)

### SE Seattle

Incumbent **Jan Kumasaka** voted for the Coke contract and now serves on the Policy and Legislative (PAL) committee. In four years, Jan has shown no leadership on this issue.

**Charlie Mas**, a financial consultant has two children in the Seattle public schools. Mas questions bringing George W. Bush to Kimball school for a photo op with kids, and bringing Mariner players to school assemblies, asking "how is this different from selling our kids as a backdrop for commercial interests?" Says Mas, "The School District has turned its back to parents and the public." He questions why the School District is selling exclusive contracts to anyone and why we are selling Coke in schools at all.

**Garry Breitstein** (no info yet)

### Central Area (open seat)

**Michael Preston** is stepping down after 20 years on the School Board.

**Dana Twight**, a Certified Financial Analyst, is former president of the American Association of University Women and a longtime CCCS activist with a child in the Seattle public schools. "Commercialism in

schools is just plain wrong," she says. "Our children are compelled to be in school to learn, not to serve as a captive focus group for the highest commercial bidder. I am disturbed by one Seattle high school's official Educational Specifications book which indicates that a Kinko's, will be located on-site at the high school, along with bakeries from their neighborhood."

**David Barfield, Mary E. Bass, Juan J. Cotto, Tyson Vo, and Patrinell Wright** (no info yet).

### Ballard/ Magnolia (open seat)

Pro-commercialism millionaire businessman **Don Nielsen** is stepping down after the media published information about a possible conflict of interest. He recently started a new company which sells teacher-training packages to school districts.

**Pat Griffith**, veteran PTA volunteer, owns a small business which sells promotional merchandise to schools and other entities. Pat wants to "axe Channel One immediately" and says she is "not wild about the Coke contract but recognizes the reality that we don't have enough funding." Pat says she doesn't like the idea of ads in schools but has "no problem with sponsorships if the content fits teaching and learning goals." She supports increased media literacy.

**Dick Lilly**, former education editor for the *Seattle Times*, is the PR spokesperson for Mayor Paul Schell. "I am absolutely opposed to Channel One and advertising on the district's Internet interface for kids," Dick says. "I am equally opposed to product placement in curriculum, proprietary or product-branded curriculum and product-

branded displays or posters in schools." He continues, "However, the district needs policies that allow for exceptions, permitting the district to be a partner in community activities or, in some cases, to promote its own programs through involvement with business, government and non-profit groups."

**Sally Soriano**, former educator from University of Wisconsin, is a well-known activist who heads the 'People for Fair Trade' movement. Sally is a vocal opponent of corporatization of public

space, and is a supporter of CCCS. **Larry Soriano** (no info yet).

For interviews and CCCS ratings of all candidates, see the CCCS website at <http://www.scn.org/cccs> later this summer.

## Killing Us Softly

**By Karen Strickland**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of June I leafleted at a fund-raiser for Reel Grrls, a program offered to teenage girls through 911 Media. The speaker was filmmaker Jean Kilbourne, ([Killing Us Softly](#), [Still Killing Us Softly](#) and [Killing Us Softly 3](#)).

Dr. Kilbourne provided an entertaining and thought-provoking look at the portrayal of girls and women in the media. A perfume ad was particularly gut-wrenching. The picture showed a bottle of perfume that had the face and neck of a woman. The copy read, "douse liberally on your neck so he can smell the scent as you shake your head no." Is it any wonder that even with rape prevention education and public service announcements about date rape the victimization of girls and women continues at alarming rates?



*Teacher Mary Ellen Cardella links commercialism of schools to Neoliberal ideology at workshop.*

Kilbourne demonstrated how advertising influences the self concept and self-esteem of youth and adults as well as how perceptions of masculinity and femininity are shaped by media. This is one of the reasons why it's critical that our schools be commercial-free.

### News from Abroad: What about Europe?

There is currently no European Union legislation concerning commercialism in schools. Where rules exist, they are the responsibility of Ministries of Education in Member States. Such rules tend to ban all "commercial practices" in schools. However, there is no precise definition of "commercial practices." Advertising in schools is authorized in Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In theory, it is banned in Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg and Portugal.

For a summary of the study on commercial practices in schools conducted at the request of the European Commission, see [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg24/library/surveys/sur03\\_en.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg24/library/surveys/sur03_en.html).



*CCCS youth activist Alexandra graduates from highschool*

### Updates

#### RBCA Supports CCCS

The Ravenna-Bryant Community Association voted to oppose advertising in schools at their May meeting. Thanks to Dave Wall for making the presentation.

#### Green Party Opposes Ads

In May, the Green Party of Washington State overwhelmingly passed a resolution opposing advertising in schools (see the text at <http://www.scn.org/cccs>). The Green Party is a rapidly-growing

political party, with locals in all 39 counties in the state.

### CCCS Opposes Signage at Schools

CCCS has appealed two DCLU decisions granting development standard departures for signs. The signs are designated for at Aki Kurose and Eckstein Middle Schools.

The hearing is set for Monday, August 27, 2001 at 9:00 AM, at the Office of Hearing Examiner, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor of Alaska Building, 618 Second Avenue. CCCS members are urged to attend and show your support.

### CCCS nuts & bolts

#### Activist Cum Laude

Alexandra Bradbury, who graduated from Garfield in the class of 2001, is heading off to college at Swarthmore this fall. She has been invited to be part of the prestigious Eugene Lang scholars program. Alexandra serves on the board of the Seattle Young People's Project and is a founding member of Student Activists for Multi-cultural Education.

Alexandra has been a passionate spokesperson for anti-commercialism movement, speaking before the school board, the media, and at public rallies.

CCCS will miss her energy and wishes her the best as she pursues her activism in college!

#### We Couldn't Do it Without You

Thanks to the following for recent donations to the CCCS. CCCS is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization. Send donations to 3724 Burke Ave. N., Seattle WA 98103.

Michele Anciaux, Laura Appell, Ann Baldwin, Susan Bolton, Karen Farnsworth, Thomas Goldstein, Laura

*(See donors, next page)*

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Deadline for next newsletter:  
October 15, 2001

# Campaign for commercial-free schools!

## Calendar

- CCCS Candidate Endorsement meeting
- Aug. 15 School Board meeting, A&S Center (815 4<sup>th</sup> N.), 2 PM
- Aug. 24 Summer Gathering (see side bar)
- Aug. 27 City Hearing on School Signage, 9 AM
- Aug. 28 Back-to-School Rally, Westlake Mall, 12 PM
- Sept. 5 School Board meeting, A&S Center (815 4<sup>th</sup> N.), 7 PM

*(donors continued)*

Grow, Steve Hankin, Blake Hughes, Jeremy Kahn, Keith Keller, Mary Kennedy, Daniel Leahy and Bethany Weidner, John Lombard, Sarah Luthens, David Marshak, Minnie Orr, Brita Reed, Celissa Richards, Will Rose, Thomas and Anastasia Samuelsen, and Dana Twight

## PTA Programs

Every CCCS parent can help by calling your local PTA president and asking to make a brief presentation about commercialism in schools at their first meeting this fall. We can provide literature and someone to accompany you to help answer questions. Call 206-523-4922 for more information.

## Upcoming event- CCCS Summer Gathering

Find out how advertising harms girls—and how Seattle schools are part of the problem!

### **Killing Me Softly (3)**

a film by

**Jean Kilbourne**

Wednesday, August 24  
7:00-8:30 PM

New Hope Baptist Church  
124 21st Ave  
(one block north of Yesler)

*(Free - Open to the Public)*

Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools  
3724 Burke Ave. N.  
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