



Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools

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

Vol. 4 No. 4

October 2001

president's message

Closing in...

Victory—can you smell it? Can you taste it? And how do you measure victory? In the next few days the effort we have put into ridding our children's schools of commercialism may finally pay off. The Seattle School Board will be introducing and voting on a new commercialism policy. It is good news that they are finally moving, but will the final result be good news? Although it is too soon to tell, it is not too soon to take a few final actions. All of your interest, time, effort, and money so far should be rewarded by a strong policy. Take a little more time now to call and write to School Board members to demand a strong policy with no loopholes and to insist that they pass a district-wide policy NOW! Let's finish this campaign strong, celebrate better schools in our city, and move on.

— David Wall

School Board to discuss final policy on October 24th

By Brita Butler-Wall

If you haven't lobbied the school board by phone, email or letter, **do it now**. If you have helped before, do it **just one more time**. And whatever else you do, please come to one or both of the VERY critical School Board meetings: October 24th (afternoon) and November 7th (evening).

CCCS has been giving the School Board detailed input on the draft commercialism policy, and the Policy and Legislative (PAL) committee has actually incorporated a surprising number of our recommendations.

The draft which the PAL committee brought to the School Board on October 10th was fairly good, except for three key areas: logos, timeline for removing Channel One, and Coke machine signage.

Thanks to the many CCCS supporters who have been phoning

school board members about these three key points during our recent five-day phone campaign!

One step forward, two steps back

Message 1: We demand a district-wide policy. When the entire School

Board discussed this draft at a special two-hour work session on October 10th, however, Don Nielsen forcefully urged the Board to weaken the policy. Both Don Nielsen and Steve Brown argued that commercialism, including Channel One, should be a site-based (i.e., principal's) decision.

This stance is a total cop-out and maintains the status quo.

Many principals who stand to bring in dollars or materials have already demonstrated that they cannot be trusted to 'just say no' to market-

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Revised Draft Policy

It is the policy of the Seattle School Board to prohibit commercial advertising targeted at children. Corporate support that protects the welfare of children and the integrity of the learning environment is permitted, provided it is in accordance with the accompanying board procedure.

Call the swing votes!

Jan Kumasaka	760-4747	Steve Brown	524-9339
Barb Schaad-Lamphere	933-5327	Barbara Peterson	366-2652

Michael Preston and Nancy Waldman are seeking a strong commercialism policy, and Don Nielsen wants to gut it. Save your phone energy for the four directors listed above.

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Politics

Vote Lilly, Bass, Breitstein for School Board

Three Seattle school board positions are on the ballot this Fall. Those who sought our endorsement filled out a 20-item questionnaire and were rated on a 1-5 scale (5 is anti-commercialism).

District 4 OPEN SEAT

Pat Griffith Please see our previous newsletter for a description of Griffith. CCCS gave her a 1.8.

Dick Lilly Please see our previous newsletter for a description of Lilly. CCCS gave Lilly a 2.9.

District 5 OPEN SEAT

Mary Bass was rated "sympathetic," because her answers showed an understanding of commercialism in schools and agreement that it should be curtailed. She would have been rated higher had she more convincingly demonstrated her commitment to leadership and action. CCCS gave her a rating of 3.3

Juan J. Cotto Our endorsement team rated Cotto as "confused and unaware" on commercialization in schools. He received a rating of 1.9.

District 7

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. She is currently unrated on this issue, but the CCCS rating committee recommends voting against Jan, based on her record.

Garry Breitstein, former teacher says he is opposed to commercialism in schools. UNRATED.

To see candidates' responses to the CCCS questionnaire, go to our website at <http://www.scn.org/cccs>.

What other candidates say

"Logos are the 'advertising virus' if we don't prohibit them. It is a very

subtle form of advertising especially to people who don't know much about advertising. If we permit logos as the proposed policy currently exists, that will become the advertising battleground. Logos are advertising—that's why they exist."

—*Michael Preston*
City Council, Position 2

"Corporate advertising has no place in the education environment. Public and private education is critical in shaping the personality and knowledge base of our youth. Our youth should graduate with open, curious minds—free to pursue all levels of choice. School based commercials are contrary to that goal".

—*Curt Firestone*
for City Council Position 4

"I oppose all advertising in schools, including all 'donated' resources such as Channel One and textbooks with pro-corporate agendas. Children's minds should not be a place for ad campaigns to do their ugly business. Neither should adults', but that's another story...."

—*Grant Cogswell*
for City Council Position 8

"Make no mistake, corporations are eyeing our public school system to capture it as a profit making endeavor. What's most unfortunate is that our government is ready to deregulate it. Neither the government or corporate interests have our children's education in mind."

—*Christopher R. Cain*
For Port Commissioner

Regional news

Join the national ad slam contest!

On October 15th, Commercial Alert launched the National Ad Slam Contest, which is a nationwide contest to award a \$5,000 prize to the school that makes the best and most creative effort to expel advertising and commercialism from school premises

during the 2001-2002 school year.

"The Ad Slam is a civic contest to throw the hucksters out of school," said Gary Ruskin, executive director of Commercial Alert. "We're going to have plenty of fun as we rid the schools of Channel One, Coke, Pepsi and the other marketers."

Anyone in any school community is invited to participate in the contest, including students of all ages, parents, families, teachers, and other school employees.

For information about the contest, or to find out how to participate, see Commercial Alert's website at www.commercialalert.org or call 503.235.8012.

The National Ad Slam Contest is endorsed by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, Adbusters Media Foundation, Center for Media Education, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools, Consumers Union, Mothering Magazine, Organic Consumers Association, Public Citizen, and the TV-Turnoff Network.

Updates - letters

From elected officials

The following current and former elected officials have recently signed a letter to the Seattle School Board, urging them to adopt a strong commercialism policy that includes a prohibition on logos of 'corporate sponsors.'

Brian Derdowski, former King Co. Council

Maggi Fimia, King Co. Council
Amy Hagopian, former School Board director

Dawn Mason, former state legislator
Cynthia Sullivan, King Co. Council
Kip Tokuda, 37th Dist. Rep.

Sharon Tomiko Santos, 37th Dist. Rep.
Velma Voloria, 11th Dist. Rep.

From educators

On October 8th, 65 educators signed a CCCS letter to the Seattle School Board, urging them to adopt

a strong anti-commercialism policy (see text on our website). The letter urges the School Board to prohibit exposing kids to corporate logos at school, and was signed by faculty from a wide variety of local institutions including:

- Edmonds Community College
- Green River Community College
- North Seattle Community College
- Seattle Central Community College
- Seattle Country Day School
- Seattle Public Schools
- Seattle University
- Seattle Vocational Institute
- South Seattle Community College
- The Evergreen State College
- University of Washington

Recent Media

Both the *Seattle Times* and the *Seattle P-I* editorial staff have recently come out against Channel One and other forms of commercialism in schools. (Lose the TV: Gain a Brain, *Seattle Times*, Sept. 26 and End Channel One Commercialization, *Seattle P-I*, Sept. 29)

Also the October issue of the *Sound Consumer*, newsletter of the Puget Consumer Coop, had a feature article on Coke machines in schools (see www.pccnaturalmarkets.com/sc/0110/index.html).

KUOW has scheduled a show on commercialism in schools 9–10 am on Tuesday, October 23. Call in with questions for Dan DeRose (President and CEO of DD Marketing, the company which brokers school soda deals), Nancy Waldman, School Board member, and Brita Butler-Wall from the CCCS. Phone number is 206.543-2710.

What's happening Commercialism forum

CCCS has been invited to participate in a forum on October 24th at Stadium High School in Tacoma. This event is being organized by Green Party member and teacher Jon Perotti.

Fall gathering for CCCS

Help CCCS plan a well-deserved party to celebrate past and current victories on November 28! Meet our coalition partners, our allies in the community, and the CCCS members who have made this happen. There will be music, food, and great people. Call Brita at 206.523.4922 if you want to be in on the planning of this historic event. See web for details.

CCCS nuts & bolts Thanks for running

CCCS thanks Dana Twight and Sally Soriano for running strong campaigns for Seattle School Board. Neither candidate got through the Primary, but both used every opportunity to put the commercialism issue in front of the media and the public. They received our highest rating of '5—Activist' and impressive endorsements by other organizations as well.

Dana and Sally plan to pass on what they have learned to others. Dana is teaching a course in leadership in the Women's Studies Program at the U.W. next quarter, and Sally is preparing a handbook for people running for School Board.

Thanks to our phone tree

Thanks to our hardworking phoners who drop everything to get action alerts to you, our supporters! They are: Karen Farnsworth, Coordinator, Max Beery, Sarah Luthens, Natalie Konzen, Tom Mage, and Katherine Hanson.

If you would like to help the campaign by phoning from time to time, call Karen at 206.935.5313. Not all members have email to receive our action alerts, so the phone tree is an important part of the campaign.

Thanks to recent donors

Thanks to David and Carol Lawrence, Diane Williams, Katherine Hanson, and Eric Cohen for supporting CCCS.

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Deadline for next newsletter:
January 20, 2002

Campaign for commercial-free schools!

Calendar

Oct. 24 School Board meeting, A&S Center (815 4th Ave N) 2 PM

Oct. 24 Stadium High School Forum, Tacoma

Nov. 6 Election Day—REMEMBER TO VOTE!

Nov. 7 School Board meeting, A&S Center (815 4th Ave N) 7 PM

Nov. 28 CCCS Victory Party! (Place TBA, see website)

(continued from page 1)

ers and make decisions in the best interests of children. Just as the district bans weapons, alcohol and drugs in all schools, they need to prohibit commercialism. (Note also that many forms of commercialism, such as Coke machines, N2H2 ads,

and 'Corporate sponsor programs' are district-wide decisions.) The school board promised Seattle a district-wide policy **five years ago**; it is time to keep that promise.

Message 2: The parents, teachers, and citizens have spoken. Jan Kumasaka and others used anecdotal evidence from a neighbor or friend or 'a teacher I know' to argue for a less restrictive policy, arguing that the "silent majority" wants ads.

Remind the School Board that democratically-elected bodies, the Seattle Council of PTSA and the Seattle Education Association, representing thousands of parents and teachers, have taken very strong, clear stands against commercialism in schools. The city-wide student organization, the Seattle Young People's Project, has also condemned advertising in public schools. Through CCCS, hundreds of Seattle citizens, including prominent elected officials, educators and

community leaders, have also taken a strong stand against commercialism in schools. In contrast, not one single organization has come forward on the other side.

This is a serious question of democracy. If our elected School Board persists in ignoring the wishes of parents, teachers, students, and citizen organizations, who are they listening to?

To see the accompanying 6 pages of Procedures, go to our website at <http://www.scn.org/cccs>.

We need a big turnout!

NOW is the time for large numbers to turn out! Bring your mother, your knitting, a good book, your neighbor, papers to grade, your check-book balancing activities, your kids, whatever it takes, but come to one or both of the upcoming School Board meetings!

Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED