



Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools

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

Vol. 5 No. 2

April 2002

president's message

Howdy Partner!

How many times have you heard about partnerships lately? Around our public schools, the concept of 'partnerships' with business is so common that many people accept it as the norm and believe that schools couldn't succeed without these arrangements. People seldom examine the big picture. If they did, they might find that school funding problems have fostered partnership arrangements, and that—ironically—the decreasing portion of taxes paid by corporations is one of the chief causes of the school funding problems.

'Partnerships' usually put business in the driver's seat to influence school activities, curriculum, reform structures, and, of course, bring logos and other commercialism into the schools.

Let's each become a 'partner' in the education our young people deserve. Let's partner with our elected officials to get schools properly funded rather than watch the backsliding of the state legislature. Let's partner with our principals, teachers and school boards to keep all commercialism out of schools. —Dave Wall

Reckless Endangerment

by Brita Butler-Wall

Five years ago, the CCCS formed to fight advertising and commercial activities in schools. Since then, it has become clear that some of the most egregious commercial messages involve food and nutrition. Unlike ads for Nike, Disney, and Washington Mutual, in-school marketing of food and beverages goes beyond advertising to direct sales inside the school buildings.

There is a plethora of types of ads in schools: Coke and Pepsi machines, sales of junkfood in the school lunchroom, fundraisers based on selling high-fat donuts and candy to kids at school, Channel One commercials for high-fat, high-salt foods, bookcover ads for potato chips and sugar drinks, 'curricular' materials from Hershey's touting the role of chocolate chips in the food pyramid, freebies distributed by Godfathers' pizza reps in elementary schools, Starbucks carts in high schools...the list goes on and on.

School nutritionists are well aware of the problem but are often not part of the decision-making process at all. Health teachers fight an uphill battle when their message is contradicted by the rest of the school environment.

In fact, with virtually no systematic media literacy or health and nutrition curriculum in Washington schools, the incredible push for kids to eat and drink

patently unhealthy things at school is a serious problem. Absent a policy prohibiting or greatly restricting commercialism, marketers are promoting and selling junkfood and sugary soft drinks to thousands of kids in our state at school every day. The Surgeon General's recent call to action is chillingly clear about the price children pay for our negligence. The sharp rise in obesity increases serious risks to children's health and mortality.

In the long run, commercialism in schools is literally killing our children. The CCCS has a workable plan for stopping this right now, but we need every person reading this newsletter to help in some way. Please call us and discuss how you might be able to plug into our efforts, given the time you have available.

For background, see the March 2002 Report on Overweight and Obesity in King County prepared by health educator Pat Manuel and her colleagues at <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/datawatch>.

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Goals for 2002

A dozen core members of the Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools met in two retreats during March to do strategic planning for 2002 and beyond.

Our goals for 2002 are **enforcement** of the new Seattle policy and **building statewide awareness** and education on the issue. We will focus on the theme of food and nutrition, and will concentrate our efforts on middle schools.

Achieving these goals will also require building our **organizational capacity** primarily in the areas of member involvement, media strategy, and fundraising.

Each of us can do something concrete to decrease commercialism in schools. CCCS volunteers are actively working on many projects as part of our overall campaign, and you can help! Please pick a project that appeals to you and contact Brita today at (206.523.4922) or by email at bbwall@drizzle.com.

Thanks to the following people for taking time from their busy schedules for this important planning work: Brita Butler-Wall, John Garibaldi, Sylvia Haven, Ted Lockery, Pat Manuel, Mary Anne Mercer, Diane Morrison, Kurt Sahl, Karen Strickland, Dana Twight, Dave Wall, and Leslie Wall.

Enforcing the policy

Coke bust

In November, the Seattle School Board passed the new commercialism policy which called for replacing the advertising facades on all the Coke

machines found throughout the 100 schools with generic facades. As of April, some facades had been replaced, but not all. This 6-month lag is a striking contrast with the speed with which the district moved to replace the Pepsi machines only a few days after the exclusive district-wide contract with Coke was signed.

You can help! Go to your nearest middle or high school, get a Visitor Pass from the main office, and find out if the facades have been replaced yet—if not, take a photo and/or call Nancy Waldman, Seattle School Board president, at 206-729-3340. Let us know what you find.

Spring walkthroughs

The CCCS will be doing commercialism walk-throughs of two Seattle middle schools in May, with more to follow in the fall. The walk-throughs will show how far the district is coming in enforcing their new commercialism policy. We need 4 volunteers for May 29 or 30, sometime between 8 am and 2 pm.

Building awareness

Shareholder action

The CCCS is exploring doing a shareholder resolution for the Coca-Cola Corporation annual meeting in 2003. Our resolution will ask the shareholders to stop direct marketing and sales of Coke products in middle schools. If you are interested in becoming involved, let us know.

Community support packets

We are increasingly being asked for advice and help by

other communities around the state. We need clerical help in compiling packets to send out. We need one volunteer (he or she may work from home).



Only some of the Coke machines have new facades like this one.

Candidate questionnaire

We are developing a short questionnaire for candidates for Washington State Senate and House of Representatives about commercialism and school funding. The questionnaire will also be a means of educating elected officials and will be a basis for rating candidates. We will be developing questions in May and will rate candidates in August. Let us know if you would like to help out (the time commitment

will be two evening meetings).

Outreach

We have many opportunities for presentations, workshops and tabling at community events and conferences this year. We **need volunteers** to help us get the word out about commercialism in schools. Activities include distributing fliers at community events, setting up literature tables and talking with people about the issue, and making presentations or leading discussions at meetings of other community organizations.

Our priority is to have a presence at meetings of statewide organizations as well as Seattle events that draw people from outside the city. We hope to build a list of 20 volunteers whom we can contact to help and will work around people's schedules. Times may vary, but usually these activities take place evenings or weekends. This is a fun way for you and your best friend/partner to make a difference.

CCCS 2002 Survey

Name _____	
Phone (daytime) _____	Evening _____ Cell _____
Address: _____	Email _____

PART I - INTERESTS

Which of our 2002 Goals would you be most interested in becoming involved with?

- Enforcing Seattle Commercialism Policy
- Increasing awareness statewide
- Building organization of CCCS

PART II - HELPING

What might you be willing to do to help make schools commercial-free?

- helping organize events
- fundraising
- leafleting/tabling at events
- mailing parties
- making presentations
- meeting with elected officials
- phoning
- clerical help
- research an issue relating to commercialism
- testifying
- writing letters to newspapers, elected officials
- Other...

PART III - SPECIAL SKILLS

Which of the following areas do you have skills in?

- facilitating/chairing a meeting
- fund-raising
- graphics, artwork

- grassroots or union organizing
- legal
- listserv manager
- lobbying
- media/publicity
- organizing social or educational events or programs
- public speaking
- research
- teaching/leading workshops
- web design
- writing/editing
- Other...

PART IV - LOCAL SCHOOLS

What is your relationship to schools?

- Community member
- Parent
- School or District Staff
- Student
- Teacher
- Other

Which local schools have you been involved in, if any?

Which of the following might you be willing to do?

- Attend parent or staff meeting and distribute CCCS literature/
make presentation
- Meet with principal or others to discuss commercialism
- Help organize a commercialism walk-through in your school

**Thank you for your responses. Please mail the completed survey to:
3724 Burke Ave. N. Seattle WA 98103**

School funding

Of course business should help pay for schools—but they must pay up front via taxes, letting communities and educators decide how to spend the money where it is most needed—not by paying for only the programs and activities they prefer to subsidize (while splashing their logos around the kids for good measure!).

We don't buy into the scarcity myth. The money is there—the issue is whether our lawmakers have the political will to use it for educating children.

CCCS is working with the League of Education Voters to develop an education funding plan that will be ample, stable, equitable, straightforward, and accountable in our state.

For more background, see www.educationvoters.org

News

Coalition news

On March 10th, CCCS signed Commercial Alert's coalition letter to the top 50 U.S. advertising agencies, asking them not to place ads on CNN Student News. For background, see <http://www.edweek.org/ew/newstory.cfm?slug=20cnn.h21>

We also signed a coalition letter to Dr. Richard Henry Carmona, the U.S. Surgeon General nominee, asking for his views on child health issues related to television, media violence, alcohol, tobacco, and in-school marketing.

On March 5th, Precinct 2314 of the 46th District Democrats passed a resolution opposing

commercialism in schools and brought it forward to the 46th District Caucus in April. Thanks to Sylvia Haven for taking the initiative on this.

State news

Olympia

On March 26th, the Olympia School Board sponsored a public forum on commercialism in schools, at the initiative of Russ Lehman, newly-elected School Board member. Over 70 citizens attended the meeting. Panelists included CCCS Director Brita Butler-Wall and the Pacific NW Regional Direc-

New walkthrough form

People wanting to find out how much and what kinds of commercialism are present in their own schools can now download and use the newly-updated walkthrough form available on our website at www.scn.org/cccs. The form is easy to use by individuals or teams and is adapted from that originally developed by the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education in Oakland, California (there is a lot of information on their website at www.commercialfree.org).

tor of Youth Marketing for Coca-Cola Corporation as well as two high school students. Over 40 people testified, including parents, teachers, students and other citizens.

CCCS supporters in Olympia have been holding meetings and forums and are now planning to do a walkthrough of their schools as preparation for developing a commercialism policy within the next 6 months. The next meeting is scheduled for May 7th. For more info, contact Stephanie Johnson at greenthumbs@olywa.net.

Bainbridge Island

Parents Karen Ahern and Charlotte Rovelstad are organizing supporters of commercial-free schools to educate their community and school board about issues of commercialism and, in particular, sponsored educational materials. Over 100 people attended a recent District budget meeting to discuss a new plan to develop corporate foundation support, and the Bainbridge Island Review took an anti-ads position in a recent editorial. School Board members are interested in developing a commercialism policy and are all opposed to at least some forms of commercialism in schools. For information, contact Charlotte at 206.780.0786 or milagrosx@earthlink.net

Friday Harbor

Former School Board candidate Bryn Barnard is raising the issue of commercialism in schools throughout San Juan County. Rebecca Barnard recently organized an 'consciousness raiser' alterna-

tive to the Heart Association 'Fundraiser', believing that students should not be used to raise funds. The Journal of the San Juan Island reported that many students were involved in the alternative 'Run for Their Lives', which involved letting students take shelter dogs for a walk. For more information, call the Barnards at 360.378.6263 or contact artists@rockisland.com

Correction

In our February newsletter, we incorrectly listed the name of the Society of Key Women Educators—the correct name is Delta Kappa Gamma.

Who we are

The *Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools* is a non-profit organization registered in the state of Washington. A grassroots organization, CCCS formed in 1996 with over 1200 supporters in 70 communities throughout Washington State. For info and links, see our website at www.scn.org/cccs.

President

DaveWall, 206.523.4922
btlrwall@drizzle.com

Treasurer

Diane Morrison
206.632.1349
dmm@u.washington.edu

Executive Director

Brita Butler-Wall
206.523.4922
bbwall@drizzle.com

Communications Newsletter

Leslie Wall, 206.527.2357
velouria@eskimo.com

Phone Tree

Karen Farnsworth,
206.935.5313

Web Master

Joel Bradbury,
206.632.1349
bp950@scn.org

Data Base

Dave Jette, 206.789.8660
Dave@lanzl.com

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3724 Burke Ave. N.
Seattle WA 98103
cccs@scn.org

Email article submissions to Leslie Wall at velouria@eskimo.com. The deadline for next newsletter will be July 20, 2002.

Updates

CCCS represents you!

February 15 – Community and Environmental Planning Program, U.W.

March 2-3 – Vegfest, Seattle

March 2 – Workshop for K-12 Teachers, U.W.

March 25 – Washington Citizen Action

April 20 – WakeUp Washington Rally

April 21 – Amnesty International National Conference

April 22 – Michael Moore book tour

April 23 Olympia Freskool forum

April 24 Michael Albert talk, Seattle Central Community College

April 25 ORCA PTA Meeting

Thanks to all the CCCS volunteers who have been tabling, leafleting and doing presentations recently: Joel Bradbury, Brita Butler-Wall, Sylvia Haven, Eileen Macomb, Diane Morrison, Kurt Sahl, Jonathan Stansell, and Dave Wall.

In the news

TCTV

Thurston Community Television did an hour-long show on commercialism in schools with Olympia School Board member Russ Lehman and Brita Butler-Wall.

The News Hour (Ch. 9)

CCCS Brita Butler-Wall and former Seattle School Board member Michael Preston were interviewed recently.

KWJZ (98.9) and KKNW (AM 1150)

CCCS is featured on Esther 'Little Dove' John's half-hour show on May 6.

CCCS nuts & bolts

Fundraising

The CCCS budget in 2001 was \$4,000 and funds came entirely from donations by individuals. Our goals for 2002 are set higher but cannot be reached without increased financial support. Every dollar helps.

Thanks to our donors

Thanks to those who have contributed to CCCS so far in 2002: Karen Baker, Clare and James Driscoll, Katherine Hanson, Sylvia Haven, Greg Katz, Sarah Luthens, Debra Morrison, Diane Morrison, Laura Strandin, Dana Twilight, Leslie Wall, and Sarah Waterman.

Thanks also to Dave Jette for donating a large filing cabinet to CCCS. We also need a fax/copy machine, if anyone has one to donate.

To make a contribution, please send a check to 3724 Burke Ave. N. Seattle WA 98103.

Get the newsletter

Due to our rapid growth, we no longer can afford to mail this newsletter to all supporters. To continue to receive a copy in the mail, please send a donation to cover costs (\$5 or more).

The newsletter is also available at www.scn.org/cccs.



Ads in the Eckstein cafeteria

Campaign for commercial-free schools!

Calendar

May 7	Olympia CCCS meeting
May 22	NW Ethics Institute presentation
May 18-19	University District Streetfair leafleting
May 24-27	Folklife Festival Tabling, Seattle Center
May 29-30	Seattle Walk-throughs
June 3	Seattle CCCS meeting
August	Seattle Seafair activities (tabling)

What's happening

Green Party Convention
 Leslie Wall and Brita Butler-Wall are presenting a workshop on grassroots activism at the convention of the Green Party of Washington State, in Ellensburg May 3. The workshop features CCCS work on commercialism in schools.

NW Ethics Institute
 On May 22, Brita Butler-Wall is giving a presentation on commercialism in schools at the monthly meeting of the NW Ethics Institute in Seattle.

SOPHE Conference
 Next October, the CCCS has been invited to participate in the Pacific Northwest Regional conference of the Society of Public Health Educators. If you would like to help, call 206.523.4922

ference of the Society of Public Health Educators. If you would like to help, call 206.523.4922

Upcoming Events

CCCS meets on the first Monday of every month from 7-8:30 PM at the Uncommon Grounds Coffee House and Wine Cafe (6708 Roosevelt Way NE) in Seattle to share information, ideas and write letters, do mailings, etc. Find out what you can do and find out what is going on! For info, call 206.523.4922. Please join us with your ideas and concerns about commercialism in schools.

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