

# Just Schools

Protecting the Right of Washington Children & Youth to a Commercial-Free Education

VOL. 5 NO.4

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## Weighty Matters: Developing a Junk Food Bill

**F**or the next three months, the Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools will focus its resources on developing a bill to prohibit the marketing and sales of junk food and soda in public schools throughout the state. We are working in partnership with The Children's Alliance, a statewide advocacy organization. State Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles (D-36<sup>th</sup>) has offered to sponsor a bill, and we are working closely with her staff to develop appropriate language and a strategy to get it passed.

We believe a statewide bill is needed because local school districts have let their school nutrition environments deteriorate. Left on their own, many districts neglect to protect children from food and beverage marketers who exploit them as a captive audience.

Schools have become increasingly dependent on the marketing and sale of junk food and soda to bring in revenue for student activities instead of noncommercial fund-raising alternatives.

As things now stand, learning about nutrition in a health class has too often

become a laughable, academic exercise, contradicted by a myriad of in-school marketing messages that encourage kids to buy and consume high-fat, high-sugar, and highly-salted snacks and

*Junk Food Bill  
continued on page 4*

## Anti-Commercialism Conference a Great Success

**O**n Sept. 21, 2002, CCCS hosted the first state conference on Commercialism in Schools in the country. Gary Ruskin, executive director of our national ally, Commercial Alert, gave a moving keynote speech, and noted that by marketing and selling junk food in schools, ours "is the first society to intentionally destroy its own children." Our conference drew 50 people from

a dozen different communities including Bainbridge Island, San Juan Island, Mercer Island, Lynnwood, Kirkland, Snoqualmie, Olympia, Sammamish, Bellevue, Mukilteo, Lopez Island, and Skagit Valley.

Participants included teachers and parents from elementary, middle and

*Conference  
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Howard Pellet shares Skagit Valley Herald article at Commercialism conference.

## Money Matters (Oh, boy does it!)

*Diane Morrison, treasurer*

**E**ver wonder why an all-volunteer organization needs money, where we get it, and what we spend it on?

Since its founding in 1997, CCCS has received and spent about three thousand dollars every year. Every penny of it came from individual contributions from our members and supporters — people like you. Most comes from small, one-time or annual donations. Checks for \$5, \$25, and \$50 are given by folks requesting mailed copies of the newsletter, responding to a fund appeal, or donating at an event. Some comes from a small group of stalwarts who contribute to CCCS regularly (you know who you are — you're the folks who get emergency phone appeals when the coffers are empty!).

What do we spend it on? Primarily, newsletters, leaflets, and packets of information sharing what we've learned with folks across the state or to brief the press and policy makers. Written materials account for over half of our budget. Then there's the postage for mailing those newsletters, fund appeals, and notices of events and actions. The final category is event expenses like room rentals, tabling fees, display materials, coffee cups and felt markers and the like.

Donations to groups like CCCS work on the "pay for the folks next in line" system. If you became aware of this movement from one of our leaflets, found useful information in the newsletter, or learned and networked at an event, then you reaped the benefit of contributions from others for those things. Now it's your turn to ante up for some new leaflets so we can spread the word to someone else. Please send an occasional contribution if you can.

### Support the Parents' Bill of Rights

CCCS has just endorsed Commercial Alert's Parents' Bill of Rights. We urge you to download it from their website at [www.commercialalert.org](http://www.commercialalert.org) and spread the word throughout your community.

## CCCS Halts Coke Contract Negotiations

**O**n Sept. 10, CCCS was told that Seattle administrators were already in the middle of negotiating with Coca-Cola on an extension of the current five-year 'exclusive pouring rights' contract. We drafted a letter to the Seattle School Board and within 48 hours got 60 signatures from a wide cross-section of community leaders. We sent E-mail to mobilize our supporters, and Karen Farnsworth activated her 20 volunteers on the phone tree. On Sept. 18, six CCCS supporters testified at the School Board meeting, including a surprise visit from Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles. The Coke incident was covered in the *Seattle Weekly* and *The Stranger* (details at [www.scn.org/cccs](http://www.scn.org/cccs)).

Contrary to original reports, the Seattle School District is now saying they are NOT negotiating with Coke (just "having conversations,") and that the decision will be a model of public process. Whether they would be talking this way without the pressure from us, we will never know, but thanks to all of you who mobilized quickly to shine a very bright light on this Coke contract renewal.



*Media activist Joe Katroschik poses by a generic beverage machine to show our school Coke and Pepsi administrators that Another World is possible.*

## ...CCCS in the News...

### *It Plays in Peoria*

(multiple radio stations) "Opposing Commercialism in Schools" (Sept. 15)

### KING-5 TV

"News" (Sept. 3, 02)

### KEZX

'Teen Talk Time' (Sept. 15, 02)

### Network X

"Junk food in Schools" (Sept. 17, 02)

### Pirate TV

"Gary Ruskin: Selling our Children" (Oct. 1, 02)

### Seattle Weekly

"Things go better without Coke" (Sept. 25, 02)

### The Stranger (Sept. 25, 02)

### A Real Life Magazine (Aug. 02)

### Seattle Post-Intelligencer

"Organic produce makes the grade at one school in Olympia" (Oct. 16, 02)

# News from Supporters Around the State

## Kitsap County

*Holly Morton, teacher*

I teach at Fairview Junior High School in the Central Kitsap School District, in Silverdale. Three other teachers and I are embarking on a History Day project for our 7th and 8th grade students. Right now we're doing class research to teach students research methods. Our topic question: "What are the rights of Central Kitsap School District to profit from vendors to enhance school funding vs. their responsibility to ensure proper nutrition for their students?"

We are finally ready to write a rough draft, and the students are really into the subject! There are varying opinions on the rights and responsibilities of the School District to profit from soda and junk food vending machines and the student store. We have researched nutrition, the state of obese children in our society, and banning junk food. We interviewed parents and grandparents about food their schools offered, the head cook to find out rules for our snack bar, the A.S.B. advisor to find out how much profit was made there and where it went, and students who run the student store. Students shared information and opinions, and then wrote a thesis statement. Their final papers are due next week.

## Seattle

*Jeanette Norris, parent*

Some battles seem almost too easy. I went to the Hamilton Middle School Site Council meeting yesterday. I gave my spiel on why the ASB fundraiser was a bad idea. Everyone — all parent reps, the principal, and assistant principal — agreed wholeheartedly. (The teacher rep came late. But she was a parent on the Site Council at Washington when it switched to an "ask once, write a check" type of fund-raising, so I don't foresee a problem there.)

I made three proposals. First, that Site Council should oversee and coordinate all fund-raising. Second, that all school fundraising be "noncommercial" in nature, that is, not involve outside companies whose purpose is to make profit from kids' labor. Finally, I recommended that Site Council should make sure all fund-raisers are in compliance with District policy and devise a policy for Hamilton that suits the culture of the school. A motion was made to that effect, and it was passed unanimously.

*Pictured at right: Bryn Barnard gives update from Friday Harbor at Commercialism conference.*

## Friday Harbor

*Bryn Barnard,  
former School Board candidate*

I'm encouraging other parents to come to our school board meeting on Oct. 30th when I'll be talking about adopting a commercialism policy. I'll pass on some of what I learned at your conference. I'm also trying to track down a local doctor and dentist to talk about health effects of soft drinks. Our little high school has three machines.

I'm being interviewed this Thursday by our local public access cable station and will talk about the Commercialism Conference, the problem of school participation in branding, and the nutritional impact of soft drinks and other sugared foods on kids. It's a tiny station only available in Friday Harbor, but every little bit helps.



## New State and Local Allies

Since July, these organizations have taken a stand against commercialism in schools:

Cascade Media Alliance	No Spray Zone
Community Alliance for Global Justice	Public Interest Associates
Green Party of Spokane	Ravenna United Methodist Church of Seattle
Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington State	The Children's Alliance
	Washington Food and Nutrition Council

## New National Allies

Community Food Security Coalition  
Action for Media Education  
Center for Science in the Public Interest

## Junk Food Bill

continued from front

caffeinated sugar water. Teachers tell us that kids are literally buying and consuming 20-ounce Cokes and Snickers candy bars for breakfast at school every day.

But this is no laughing matter. Junk food and soda are foods of minimal nutritional value. Not only are they fattening, but they're a poor substitute for healthy snacks that contain the nutrients kids need to grow, learn, and enjoy life. To make matters worse, participation in physical education is rapidly declining. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the risks to children are enormous: an epidemic in child obesity and type 2 diabetes, future risks for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease and stroke, and even certain kinds of cancers.

We must act now — before we harm any more children. The bill we are drafting will focus on the foods and beverages regularly offered to kids at school through vending machines, student stores and deli/snack bars. These are in direct competition with the school lunch and breakfast programs. Right now, there is no regulation of these competitive foods, and schools have become a Mecca for marketers seeking to make profits by appealing to kids' tastes and shaky self-image.

We're working out the language of the bill right now, and will be working closely with our coalition partners to get it passed when the legislature convenes in January. The Children's Alliance lobbyist will be working hard on this bill, as will lobbyists from other coalition partners, but as a grassroots campaign we know that the real win will depend on your action.

## How You Can Help

We expect the opposition will be tough and will put major resources into defeating this bill. A similar bill (SB 19) in California was opposed by the food and beverage industry, but succeeded because of the support of 140 organizations and many individuals. It was signed into law on Oct. 14, 2001.

Our bill goes further than the one in California because we are calling for a ban on junk food marketing (advertising, promotions, etc.) in schools as well as junk food sales. According to *US News & World Report*, 'Big Food' spends \$11 billion a year on marketing snack foods, while the USDA spends only \$444 million on nutrition education. Our bill is an attempt to "clear the decks" to give the health teachers and food service workers a fighting chance.

You can help us! Don't wait until January. Right now is the time to get prepared. Between now and January you can:

- ◆ Ask every organization in your community —no matter how small— to support this bill.
- ◆ Ask every community leader, farmer, and clergy member you know to support this bill.
- ◆ Volunteer to set up a phone tree in your community of CCCS supporters (E-mail [cccs@drizzle.com](mailto:cccs@drizzle.com) to find out how).
- ◆ Ask your own state senator and representatives to support this bill.
- ◆ Contact the editorial board of local media and ask them to support this bill.
- ◆ Tell us which individuals and organizations you have recruited in support of our bill.

## Survey Results

During October 2002, CCCS informally surveyed our supporters for their opinions on junk food and soda in schools, as part of the process of gathering input on a bill in the Washington state legislature.

Based on the 66 responses we received, the strongest support would be for a bill that includes the following planks:

- That all food served or sold by anyone to students in any public school throughout the school day be healthy food, meeting or exceeding USDA guidelines, with vegan/vegetarian options available
- That whenever available, all food served or sold in schools should be fresh, local, non-rBGH, non-GM, certified organic and certified fairly traded
- That brand name marketing of foods or beverages (product/company/trade association) be prohibited in schools
- That all students have universal access to free, fresh drinking water at school
- That students have access to healthful beverages through food service and/or independent vending machines
- That school groups be encouraged to use noncommercial fund-raising alternatives that do not constitute a tax on students themselves

# Citizens' Campaign Reaches Out at Rolling Thunder

In August, CCCS helped sponsor the Rolling Thunder Down-Home Democracy Tour, a one-day festival of community organizations brought together by Jim Hightower. Our CCCS workshop was one of the most popular, drawing 75 people. Thanks to Eileen McComb for coordinating our tabling at this event—we added 380 supporters that day, including community activists from all over the state.



Above: Former Seattle children's librarian Gayle Richardson tabling at Rolling Thunder.



Pictured at right: Former CCCS President Dave Wall tabling at Rolling Thunder.



Above: Ross Kryzco, Syd Fredrikson and Brita Butler-Wall tabling at Rolling Thunder.

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## CCCS Director on Food Security Panel

CCCS Director Brita Butler-Wall participated on a panel at the recent two-day national conference of the Community Food Security Coalition. Other panelists included Maggie Masch, Director of the Center for Food and Justice, which succeeded in getting soda banned in over 600 public schools in Los Angeles, the second largest school district in the nation, and Adam Drewnowski, program director of Nutritional Sciences in the departments of epidemiology and medicine at the University of Washington.

We gained over 100 new supporters, including leaders from around the state and country in the areas of anti-hunger, sustainable agriculture, food & nutrition, farm-to-cafeteria, and school food services.

### ATTENTION PTA MEMBERS!

Regional PTA Director Sandy Livingston is developing a resolution asking the Washington State PTA to oppose commercialism in schools. (To find out how your local PTA can support her efforts, contact [sandra.livingston3@verizon.net](mailto:sandra.livingston3@verizon.net))

## Who We Are

The Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools is a state-wide, non-profit grassroots advocacy organization registered in the state of Washington. We formed in 1997 and now have more than 1800 individual supporters in 85 communities throughout Washington State as well as 30 local and state organizational allies. For details and links, see our website at [www.scn.org/cccs](http://www.scn.org/cccs).

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# NUTS & BOLTS

## People for Positions

As we move into high gear on the junk food bill, we need people to take on three key positions for the next six months:

Fundraising Coordinator  
Outreach Coordinator  
Media Coordinator

To find out what is involved, contact Brita at 206.523.4922 or [bbwall@drizzle.com](mailto:bbwall@drizzle.com)

## Welcome CCCS Interns!

Nicole Sievers, Lucy Ferdon and Aaron Jones are dietetic interns at Bastyr University who will be doing research for our junk food campaign in October. We welcome interns from other schools as well. Contact Brita at 206.523.4922 for more info.

## Upcoming Junk Food Bill: It's Your Call



To do List: walk the dog, kiss your mother, tell your state representative to vote YES for healthy foods in schools! When the legislative team presents a junk food bill to the state legislature, we need to back up their efforts with phone calls to representatives. Can you help with the phone tree? I would like to organize early and by district. It's a fun and rewarding contribution you can make. Please call Karen Farnsworth at 206 935-5313.

## Your Contribution Helps Keep Junk Food Out of Our Schools!

Every donation made to the CCCS supports media campaigns, action alerts, and outreach to communities, education packets and workshop materials. Gifts directly affect the research and development of local commercialism policies and our upcoming statewide bill. Please mail a check today to: CCCS, 3724 Burke Ave. N., Seattle WA 98103.

## Five bucks gets you four newsletters

Because we're growing so quickly, we no longer can afford to mail this newsletter to all of our supporters. To continue to receive a copy in the mail, please send \$5 to CCCS, 3724 Burke Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98103. The newsletter is also available on our website at [www.scn.org/cccs](http://www.scn.org/cccs).

## Wish List (used is fine)

Presentation easel for 2x3 foot pads  
Scanner  
Digital camera  
Photocopy machine  
Six-or eight-foot collapsible table  
Tabling canopy

# THANK YOU • THANK YOU • THANK YOU

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## Many Thanks to our Recent Donors:

Marty Ofsowitz  
Jennifer Yogi  
Elese Lebsack  
Sara Waterman  
Leslie Wall  
Greg Katz  
Sharon Lee  
Emily Paddison  
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Lawrence Pratt  
Marnie Glickman & Gary Ruskin  
Shelley Curtis  
Karin Engstrom  
Karen Strickland  
Ted Lockery  
Kari Fisher  
Clayton O'Brien  
Susan McComb  
Suzanne Carlson  
Amanda Michel  
Vicki Schoettle  
Martin King  
And many generous others  
at the conference



## Thanks to:

Annika Butler-Wall for designing and creating our new CCCS table-top display  
Becky Pashelinsky, for coordinating leafleting at farmers' markets in Seattle  
Deborah Fay, for graphic design services  
Eileen McComb for organizing tabling at Rolling Thunder  
Joe Szwaja for fundraising  
Karisa Butler-Wall for layout on July issue of the newsletter  
Debbie Graham for outreach in PTA  
Scott MacGowan and Shelley Curtis for TV appearance  
Ted Lockery for presentation at Health & Fitness conference



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*“Corporate marketing — especially of junk foods — in schools is one of the most pernicious influences on our children. Parents around the country are energized by the successes of Citizens’ Campaign for Commercial Free Schools in Washington. Keep up your great work!”*

Michael E Jacobson, Ph.D.  
Executive Director,  
Center for Science in the Public Interest

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## Conference

continued from front

high schools, educators from local universities and colleges, and community leaders working in the areas of health, environmentalism, child advocacy, social justice, media education, and labor.

In keeping with our focus on junk food marketing this year, nutritionist Adrienne Dorf from Public Health gave a chilling description of the current epidemic of childhood obesity and its effects on children’s health. Shelley Curtis, nutrition outreach coordinator for ‘The Children’s Alliance’ explained ways in which grassroots organizations like CCCS can affect nutrition policy.

Participants then got practical training for taking action. Our workshops included: “Media” by Geov Parrish and Sarah Luthens; “Doing Commercialism Walkthroughs” by Dave Wall and Stephanie Johnson; “Developing and Enforcing a Commercialism Policy” by Dave Westberg and Diane Morrison; and “Fund-raising Alternatives” by Ted Lockery and Marnie Glickman

Four more people volunteered to serve as CCCS Community Contacts in their area (see community contacts), and many others offered to become active in educating their own community. They’ll help with networking, media, writing letters, getting endorsements from organizations, writing and research, and putting our issue on the agenda of upcoming meetings and classes.

# What's Coming Up?

## CCCS ROCKS!

Citing our 'outstanding work', Pearl Jam has selected CCCS to be among this year's concert beneficiaries. The Seattle band is performing a benefit show to raise money for their favorite nonprofit organizations on December 8th at the Key Arena in Seattle. CCCS is thoroughly amazed!

## JUNK FOOD MEETING

The next CCCS junk food meeting will be held at the Children's Alliance office in Seattle, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Wed., Nov. 13. Scott and Craig MacGowan will be reporting on their efforts to infuse junk food awareness into the science curriculum. For details, see our website.

Visit our website at  
[www.scn.org/cccs](http://www.scn.org/cccs)

## CCCS ANNUAL AWARDS PARTY

Join new and long-time CCCS supporters for an evening of fun, food and music as we celebrate the first anniversary of the Seattle commercialism policy and honor the heroes of the commercial-free school movement! It's on Thursday, Nov. 21, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., location to be announced on our website. Children especially welcome. Details are on our website at [www.scn.org/cccs](http://www.scn.org/cccs).

## Calendar

Nov. 13 ..... Junk food meeting

Nov. 21 ..... CCCS Awards Party

Dec. 8 ..... Pearl Jam Concert

## UPDATES CCCS

### Represented You!

- Aug. 24 Rolling Thunder, Renton
- Sept. 13 Reclaim the Media, Seattle
- Sept. 15 Cascade Media Alliance  
Media Mixer, Seattle
- Oct. 4 National Farm to Cafeteria  
Conference, Seattle
- Oct. 6-7 National Community Food  
Security Coalition  
Conference, Seattle
- Oct. 8 Washington State Food &  
Nutrition Council, Seattle
- Oct. 17 Deborah Meier Lecture,  
U.W., Seattle
- Oct. 18 PTA Legislative Assembly,  
Ellensburg
- Oct. 21 Association of Washington  
School Principals, SeaTac
- Oct. 26 Washington Alliance for  
Health, Physical Education,  
Recreation and Dance,  
Shoreline

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