
A Commercialism Walk-Through

This survey is designed to be done by teams of three or more. Remember that the information you are asking for is all **public information**, and people should be happy to give you the information that you cannot obtain by walking around your school and talking to other parents and teachers. The walkthrough will take 1-3 hours.

Things to observe

1. Inside the building, are there posters, signs, or other materials which include corporate logos or ads?
If so, how many? **Please note names** of products, companies, or trade associations.

...in hallways Yes No

...in the main office or the attendance office Yes No

...in social studies classes Yes No

...in science classes Yes No

...in other classrooms (which?) Yes No

...in the computer lab Yes No

...in the library Yes No

...in the gym Yes No

...in the nurse's office or health center Yes No

...in the lunchroom Yes No

2. Does your school rent out display cases to advertisers, or do advertisers 'sponsor' the displays?
 Yes No

If there are corporate-sponsored displays, what is the stated educational purpose of the display?

3. Are there vending machines for beverages in the lunchroom or other student areas? Yes No

Are ads (including logos) displayed on the machines? Yes No

If so, for which companies or products? _____

Are there vending machines for snacks/candy in the lunchroom/student areas? Yes No

Are ads (including logos) displayed on the machines? Yes No

4. Outside your school, are there billboards or readerboards? Yes No

If so, how many? Who owns and operates them? What is being advertised?

Questions to ask students

1. Have you ever been offered prizes or other ‘freebies’ for selling things, or being involved with a project sponsored by a company? Yes No

If yes, can you give some examples?

2. Is Channel One shown at your school? Yes No

If yes, what commercials are shown?

3. Have you studied media literacy, or how companies and governments use TV, radio, and print to influence people’s ideas? Yes No

4. Does your school distribute or make available book-covers? Yes No Don’t know

Do they have ads or logos on them? Yes No Don’t know

If yes, can you give some examples?

5. Have you ever participated in contests or activities with corporate sponsors in school? (Examples are the Seattle Times stock market ‘game’ or sponsored essay contests). Yes No

If yes, can you give some examples?

6. Does your school have an ASB? Yes No

If so, does the ASB engage in fundraising? Yes No

Can you give some examples?

7. Is there a student store in your school? Yes No

What kinds of things does it sell?

Who runs it?

Who keeps the profits, and what are they used for?

Questions to ask the principal

1. Does your school or school district have an official policy about commercial activities and advertising in schools? Yes No (If yes, ask for a copy of the policy)

Does your school or school district have a fund-raising policy? Yes No (If yes, ask for a copy of the policy)?

If not, how do you make decisions about what fund-raisers to participate in?

Does your school or school district have a policy about corporate-sponsored materials (books, videos, materials donated by companies)? Yes No (If yes, ask for a copy of the policy)

If not, who decides which sponsored materials to use?

2. Does your school or school district have any exclusive contracts with companies? Yes No (If yes, ask for a copy of the contracts)

Does your school have a contract with Channel One? Yes No

If so, for how long has your school had a contract with Channel One? _____

Expiration date _____ When is the program shown during the day? _____

3. Does this school have any corporate partners or sponsors? Yes No
If so, with which companies? What are the terms of the sponsorship or partnership?

Do the corporate partners or sponsors receive tax write-offs or tax exemptions for their contributions to your school? Yes No

How is the corporate sponsor recognized in your school and/or in the community?

Do the sponsors distribute 'freebies' to students (e.g. t-shirts, coupons, bookmarks) with company names and logos on them? Yes No

4. Does the school or school district athletic program receive donations of equipment or supplies by corporations? Yes No

If yes, do these items have a product or company logo? Yes No

What are some examples?

5. What is the monetary value of corporate participation in your school? _____

Cash In-Kind (What kind of donation?)

What other benefits does your school get from corporate partners, if any?

6. Does your school provide students with book covers for textbooks? Yes No

If so, do these book covers contain advertisements or company logos? Yes No

7. Does your school participate in any contests or programs in which students sell or buy products to raise money for the school? Yes No

Which programs?

What percent of the revenue from the sales comes to the school?

8. Does your school offer a media literacy or propaganda unit? Yes No

If yes, what does it cover?

Is this unit required for all students? Yes No

9. Does your school have a computer lab? Yes No

If so, what do the students use the computers for?

Are they supervised by teachers during their computer lab time? Yes No

What companies, if any, are advertised to the students through the computers?

Are students required to enter their ages and home addresses into the computer in order to register themselves on any computer software or program? Yes No

Does your school use electronic/computer products that show advertising to students?

Yes No

Does your school use a computer system for posting school information that parents and students can access at home? Yes No

If so, does it advertise products or companies? Yes No

Questions to ask teachers and other staff

(Ask several teachers and other staff such as the librarian, nurse, or counselor)

1. Have you ever received any unsolicited supplementary curriculum materials that are sent by companies or trade associations? Yes No If yes, can you give some examples?

2. Is there a school review board that reviews these materials or do individual teachers get to decide about whether or not to use them in the classroom? _____

3. Has any equipment or supplies in your classroom been donated by corporations? Yes No
If yes, can you give some examples?

4. Do you receive materials, free samples, or clothing items to distribute to students? Yes No
If so, what kinds and from what companies or organizations?
Do these have company names or logos on them? Yes No

5. Are you offered prizes or other 'freebies' as part of fundraisers, or sales of books, for being involved with a project sponsored by a company, etc.? Yes No
If yes, can you give some examples?

6. Do you distribute book covers with ads on them to students? Yes No
Which products or companies are visible?

7. Have you been asked to participate in fundraising activities sponsored by companies (e.g., McDonalds McTeacher Night)? Yes No
If yes, can you give some examples?

8. Have you offered a media literacy or propaganda unit to your classes? Yes No
If yes, what did you cover?

9. How much of your own money do you spend in a year for supplies for your classes? _____

10. Do you receive posters or fliers to post in your classroom or work area where students may see them?
 Yes No
Do these have company names or logos on them? Yes No
From which companies or trade associations?

Questions to ask parents

1. Do you receive materials from your school about Scout groups, Campfire groups, or other after-school and summer programs? Yes No If yes, can you give some examples?
2. Were you notified by your school or district before the decision was made whether or not to sign an exclusive contract with a vending machine such as Coke or Pepsi? Yes No
3. Were you notified by your school or district before the decision was made whether or not to sign a contract with Channel One? Yes No
4. Does your school have an active PTSA or other parent group? Yes No
5. Does the PTSA/parent group involve students in fundraisers? Yes No If yes, can you give some examples?

How much money do the PTSA fundraisers raise? Gross _____ Net profits _____•
6. Are there parent booster groups for specific programs/departments? (e.g. music, art, etc.) Yes No

Does the booster group involve students in fundraisers? Yes No If yes, can you give some examples?

How much money do the booster groups raise? Gross receipts _____ Net profits _____•
7. How much money do parents contribute directly to your school (donations, auctions, etc.)? _____

Identify yourselves here

SCHOOL NAME _____ District _____ Date _____

Walkthrough participants (Name, relationship to the school, e.g., teacher, PTA member/parent, etc.):

The Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools is a non-profit coalition of parents, students, teachers, and citizens working for commercial-free public education in Washington State. CCCS has adapted this walk-through sheet designed by the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education, with permission.

Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools

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