



WINTER 1999

not for sale!

The Center for Commercial-Free Public Education is a national coalition of students, parents, teachers and community members working for commercial-free public education.

Get Active... Join our School Watch Team!

What's happening in your school district?! Are students being forced to watch \$200,000 Reebok advertisements during class time? Does their math book use McDonald's menus or Nintendo games in word problems? Is your principal adding new Pepsi machines around school to meet a sales quota? It's time to find out!

The School Watch Team is the eyes and ears of the Center. Teachers, students, parents – anyone who wants to expose commercialism – is invited to participate! It's easy. Just keep your eyes peeled for commercialism in the classroom, on school buses, in textbooks, in the lunchroom – *and let us know!* You can join the School Watch Team either as an individual or a group.

Our goal is to both support your efforts to keep schools commercial-free and to share your findings with others, thereby drawing greater national attention to the overall issue. We in fact rely on people like you to keep us and the general public aware

of what is happening around the country.

For example, a parent in San Antonio, Texas, alerted us to a kindergarten curriculum that asked children to "Learn to Read through Recognizing Corporate Logos." We then informed constituents

nationwide and succeeded in generating press coverage mentioning the curriculum. Let us know what you find!

As a School Watch Team member, you can:

- Complete a commercialism walk-through of your school or district. Call the Center to receive your free walk-through form.

➤ Call the Center's

School Watch Team Hotline

at 1-800-867-5841 to report instances of commercialism found in your school.

- Send us any sponsored educational materials or advertising "freebies" you receive (COD if necessary; please check with us first).

- Send photographs or slides of in-school advertising to the Center. Please be sure to label them!

Just keep your eyes peeled for commercialism in the classroom, on school buses, in your textbooks, in the lunchroom – and let us know!

If you are interested in joining the School Watch Team or simply want more information, call us at 1-800-UNPLUG-1. We'll send you an introductory packet with more information and tips on what to look for. Every two months, team members will receive a letter recapping findings from around the country. We're looking forward to working with you! ✕

Seeking Volunteer Coordinators!

As the movement for commercial-free public schools continues to grow, so too does the need for local leadership. We need dedicated volunteers to help the Center's staff spread the word about classroom commercialism and build a national network.

Specifically, we are looking for **Regional Volunteer Coordinators**. Coordinators will receive training from the Center and then be asked to complete a number of outreach efforts. Over the course of a year, a coordinator might speak at a local PTA or school board meeting about in-school commercialism. He/she may also recruit other activists to build a local network, speak to local newspaper reporters, and promote national campaigns such as the Commercialism Walk-Through and upcoming Classroom Integrity Pledge.

All coordinators will be in regular contact with Center staff and receive outreach materials as well as regular coordinator updates. Coordinators will also stay in touch with each other to share ideas and resources. Previous experience working on the issue of commercialism in schools is helpful, but not necessary. The most important qualifications sought are the ability to work well with others and the desire to make a difference! Please call us at 1-800-UNPLUG-1 if you'd like an application or more information. ✕



*All of the Center's work is based on a model of community information, education and action.
The goal of our work is leadership development at a community level.*



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BECOME A MEMBER

Membership Levels:

☐ \$15 ☐ \$35 ☐ \$60
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Send to:

The Center for Commercial-Free
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*Donations are tax-deductible to
 extent provided by the law.*

Introducing our new Exec Direc...

The Center is pleased to introduce **Walt Hanna** as our new Executive Director. Walt brings to the Center a variety of strong skills and experience. While the Executive Director of the Los Angeles based organization, Aid For AIDS, he increased their annual income from \$300,000 to \$4,300,000! He also implemented innovative programs which garnered the organization national recognition.

A graduate of the Harvard Business School, Walt spent many years in the banking world and was the President of the Barbary Coast National Bank and the Executive Vice President of the Sacramento Savings and Loan Association. The Center will greatly benefit from his leadership, fundraising, business and political skills as he leads the Center into its next phase.

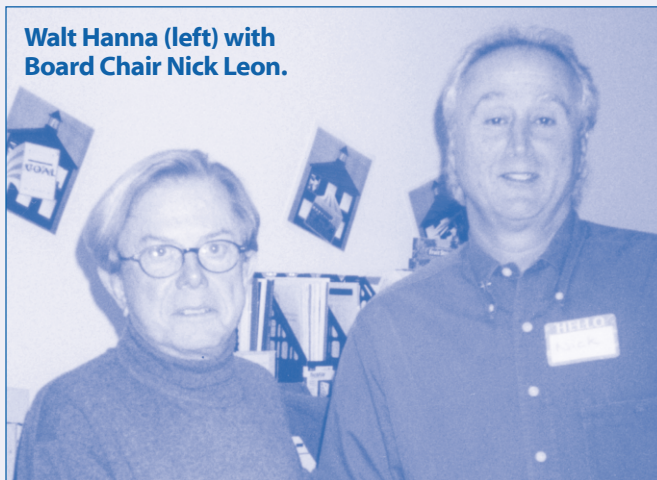
As we welcome Walt we

also say goodbye to Marianne Manilov. Marianne is one of four young women who founded the Center just over five years ago and Marianne has served as Executive Director for the past three years.

Through her leadership and dedication she helped transform the Center from a small non-profit into a

nationally recognized organization. Her vision of community leadership for commercial-free schools formed the foundation that shapes the Center's mission and values. All of us are eternally grateful for the opportunity to have worked with Marianne and are privileged to be able to carry on the efforts she helped start.

**Walt Hanna (left) with
 Board Chair Nick Leon.**



New measures intend to curb commercialism in California schools

Thanks in part to the Center, two exciting new bills were introduced to the California State Assembly Education committee just after the first of the year. Assemblywoman Kerry Mazzoni of San Rafael has put forward ABs 116 and 117, both of which would curb the rising tide of commercialism in public schools.

AB116 prohibits the new disturbing development of commercialism in state-approved textbooks (see accompanying article on back page). AB117 would make it illegal in California for a school board to enter into a contract that "grants exclusive advertising rights to a person, business or corporation". AB117 goes on to include contracts for electronic products that "require the dissemination of advertising to pupils."

AB117 therefore would effectively outlaw Channel One, exclusive Coke-Pepsi deals, and also the new ZapMe corporation from operating in California. ZapMe, for those who haven't yet heard offers "free" computers to schools as long as they use their advertising-laden internet software a minimum of four hours a day.

A front-page article in the *San Francisco*

Chronicle which quoted a Center staff member on the value of ZapMe originally prompted Assemblywoman Kerry Mazzoni's office to call us. We are most pleased that the information we provided resulted in the creation of this groundbreaking legislation.

The Center continues to work closely with Mazzoni's office. Now we need your grassroots support. We are asking our members, especially those who live in California, to make calls and write letters to:

► The Honorable Kerry Mazzoni,
 California State Assembly, PO Box 942849,
 Sacramento, CA 94249-0001, (916) 319-2006

► The Honorable Antonio Villaraigosa,
 Speaker of the Assembly, State Capitol Building
 Room 219, Sacramento, CA 95814,
 (916) 319-2045

Let them know you strongly support ABs 116 and 117 by simply specifying at the top of the letter "Re: AB 116 and AB 117- SUPPORT". Then add a line or two about who you are and why you oppose commercialism in schools! ✕

School administrator calls for district principals to increase Coke sales

Schools across the nation are signing exclusive contracts with either Coke or Pepsi in order to earn money for their schools. In Colorado Springs' District-11, if students buy 70,000 cases of Coke products per school, the district will receive revenue equaling \$32.59 per student. In September of 1998, the Colorado Springs

District-11 director of school leadership, John Bushey, sent a letter warning schools that unless they significantly increased sales of Coke to students, they risked significant loss in revenue. The letter outlined a list of ways by which principals and teachers could increase sales, which included allowing students to drink Coke during class. This is in clear violation of the USDA guidelines on school nutrition. The letter also asked school principals to review a "list of promotional activities" and to furthermore "do whatever it takes" to triple Coke sales in District-11 schools.

John Bushey is the first known school official to actively turn principals, teachers and

the school into promoters of Coke. This effectively changes the schools priority from education to soda consumption.

The trend is not limited to high school students either. The elementary schools have contracts with Coca Cola which stipulate they must sell a certain

number of "juice" products, such as Minute Maid and Fruitopia (which contain only 5% real fruit juice), to students in exchange for cash. The sale of beverages containing high levels of sugar and little or no nutritional value undermines lessons on healthy eating habits.

Over the last year alone, The Center has tracked over 100 exclusive contracts signed by districts or schools with Coke or Pepsi. The good news is that every day there are more and more people who resist these contracts. The work of our members is truly inspirational.

If you would like more information and to learn how you can become involved call us at 1-800-UNPLUG1. X



MRS. MEYER'S CLASS-1998

FACTS ON COLA CONTRACTS

- **In the last six months, the number of cola contracts nationwide has doubled.**
- **Cola companies are spending well over \$100 million on exclusive rights contracts.**
- **Cola contracts ask schools to maximize cola consumption.**
- **Through the cola contracts, caffeinated beverages have become more accessible to young children.**
- **Cola deals pave the way for more in-school advertising**

ACTION ALERT

Since its founding, the Center has claimed that it is nearly impossible for the general public to access tapes of actual Channel One programs, based on input from parents. At a Capitol Hill meeting sponsored by the Association for Curriculum and Design (ASCD) last December, the President and CEO of Channel One, Kevin McAiley, took issue with this claim.

McAiley asked us to have individuals call the following phone number to request tapes of the program. We tried and, not surprisingly, have received nothing to date. We therefore encourage you to call as well and let us know what, if anything happens! Be sure to ask for Channel One tapes with commercials. X

Call Kevin McAiley at:
212-508-6828

or email him at:
kmcailiey@channelone.com

The Center welcomes new board members

The Center for Commercial-Free Public Education is extremely pleased to introduce you to our three new members of the board of directors. Their experience and passion will greatly enrich our work.



Dr. Larry Giacomonio teaches science at Mills High School and actively works to keep his school and district commercial-free. His accomplishments include successfully

defeating a Pepsi contract being negotiated on his campus! Last summer, he pub-

lished an article in USA Today on corporate influence in the classroom. Larry is also a Podiatrist and lives in Montara, California with his wife and three children.



Dr. Diane Morrison is a social science researcher specializing in youth issues at the University of Washington. She is a founding member of the Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free

Schools in Seattle. Diane lives in Seattle with her husband and daughter. Her

daughter, Alexandra, is a high school student actively fighting to keep her school commercial-free.



John Carne is a lawyer in Oakland. He specializes in commercial litigation with an emphasis protecting First-Amendment rights and media litigation. John has taught at UC Berkeley and is a frequent guest lecturer for various journalist groups. John lives in Oakland with his wife and new baby daughter. X

New nationwide math book found to have commercialism

Another line has been crossed by advertisers intent on commercializing our public schools. A middle school librarian in Albany, CA called the Center in December to report a new 6th-grade math textbook that includes blatant commercial images. Story problems in the textbook, *Mathematics: Applications and Connections* (Glencoe/McGraw-Hill), have students determine what fraction of pieces in a bag of M&Ms are brown, and how many weeks' allowance they would need to save to buy a pair of Nike shoes.

Just as shocking is the fact that *Mathematics: Applications and Connections* has been added to California's list of official-

ly approved textbooks. Advertising in the textbook now has the official endorsement of the state. "In the past, no matter how much commercialism we saw in corporate-sponsored educational curriculums, we could at least say that officially-approved textbooks were advertisement-free," said Andrew Hagelshaw, Senior Program Director at the Center. "We can't say that any longer."

Center research uncovered that the textbooks are used by at least one school district in every state of the country. The publisher proudly describes the commercialism as "real world applications." Apparently these "real world" situations include measuring the diameter of an Oreo

cookie and comparing the caloric differences between Big Macs and Quarter Pounders with Cheese. It is also important to note that the math problems come with "real world" corporate logos!

What you can do:

➤ Call your school board office to find out whether the books are used in your district. If they are, make an official complaint, raise the issue at a meeting, and let other parents in your community know!

➤ Join the Center's School Watch Team and conduct a commercialism walk-through of a school in your district. Call 1-800-UNPLUG-1 for more information.

➤ If you live in California, call to support AB116, a measure that intends to stop state-approved textbook advertising. If passed, AB116 will set a precedent for the entire country to follow. (See article on Page 2 for more information.) ✕

CHANNEL ONE UPDATE...

In 1990, the Senate's Labor and Human Resources Committee held initial hearings on Channel One, a 12-minute commercial TV show broadcast daily to over 40% of American students. At the conclusion of these, the committee decided to revisit the issue several years later. In August, 1998, the Center campaigned for the Senate to re-examine Channel One, focusing on its cost to taxpayers in lost classroom time.

The Center sent out alerts to nearly 10,000 people asking them to urge the Senate to hold hearings. Our efforts resulted in hundreds of calls and letters. Despite our success in reaching out to and activating the public, the committee head was unresponsive.

The good news is that our efforts have inspired other organizations, including Ralph Nader's *Commercial Alert*, and the Alabama based children's advocacy group, *Obligation*, to join the call for hearings. A broad-based coalition of organizations is now continuing the effort in Washington, DC. We will keep you updated on their efforts and progress. ✕

L-R: Gary Ruskin, Jim Metrock, Brita Butler-Wall, Henry LaBalm, and Andy Hagelshaw at Capitol Hill briefing about Channel One.



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