

not for sale!

THE
CENTER
FOR **COMMERCIAL-FREE
PUBLIC EDUCATION**

SPRING 2000

*Establishing School Board Policies
on Commercialism...*

San Francisco Passes the Commercial- Free Schools Act

On June 22nd 1999, San Francisco became the largest school district yet to approve policies on commercialism in schools. The "Commercial-Free Schools Act," co-authored by two members of the San Francisco Board of Education, was passed to set limits on in-school advertising.

The Act calls for all long term corporate sponsorships to be directly approved by the Board of Education, and strictly forbids teachers from using curriculum that includes unnecessary brand name advertising. This includes electronic media such as Channel One and ZapMe. The Act also forbids San Francisco from entering into a district-wide exclusive contract with a soda or snack food company.

"This policy is among the strongest protective measures we've seen taken by any district in the country," said Andrew Hagelshaw, Executive Director of the Center.

San Francisco now joins the list of schools that have passed policies to address

**Branding a
new generation:
General
Mills sends
its henchmen to a
public school.**



issues of commercialism. The Center for Commercial-Free Public Education believes that such policies will be more and more necessary for school districts as they deal with increasing levels of commercialism.

Policies, if written well, can be a preemptive measure that determines what a school district will and won't accept before they are confronted with a contract that calls for advertising. Policies give the school district the opportunity to create guidelines that emphasize positive school-business partnerships, and protect students from marketers that would take school time to advertise brand name products.

"All too often school districts haven't thought the issue through, or haven't discussed the issue thoroughly. A lack of policy leaves districts vulnerable to a sales pitch that makes financial promises at the expense of the kids," said Dylan Bernstein, Senior Program Director at the Center. "Commercialism policies can also be written to ensure there will be a public process for these contracts, in which parents and students are fully informed and given every opportunity to present their opinion to their school board."

The policy in San Francisco was supported by community members, parents, teachers and students who spoke before the

*New Wave of State Bills Against
School Commercialism...*

California Passes AB116 and 117, Bans Advertising in Textbooks

In September 1999 two state bills to halt commercialism in schools were passed into law in California. Assembly Bills 116 and 117 may start a new national trend of state laws that look to curb product advertising in schools. "AB 116 and 117 both see school commercialism for what it is: taking advantage of a captive audience of students to promote brand name products during school time," said Andrew Hagelshaw, Executive Director at the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education.

The legislation represents an enormous victory for the Center, whose work initially inspired California Assemblywoman Kerry Mazzoni to author the bills. The

continued on page 3

continued on page 3

To obtain a copy of the recommended school commercialism policies packet, contact the Center at 510-268-1100, or call 1-800-867-5841. We may also be emailed at unplug@igc.org



THE
CENTER
FOR
**COMMERCIAL-FREE
PUBLIC EDUCATION**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Namane Mohlabane

Board Chair

Kristen Keniray

Vice President

Nick Leon

Treasurer

Dr. Diane Morrison

Secretary

Dr. Brita Butler-Wall

John Carne

Sarah Church

Arnold Fege

Larry Giacomino

Mark Louie

Carrie McLaren

STAFF

Andrew Hagelshaw

Executive Director

Dylan Bernstein

Senior Program Director

W. Doug Serrill

Program Associate

BECOME A MEMBER!

*and help us fight commercialism
in public schools*

Membership Levels:

☐ \$15 (student) ☐ \$35

☐ \$60 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$_____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State, Zip _____

Phone # _____

Send to:

The Center for Commercial-Free
Public Education

1714 Franklin Street, #100-306

Oakland, CA 94612

*Donations are tax-deductible to
extent provided by the law.*



Introducing Our New Executive Director

The Center is excited to introduce Andrew Hagelshaw as the Center's new Executive Director! Andrew had been serving as our Senior Program Director since July of 1998, and before that spent six years as the Bay Area director of CISPES, the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. Andrew, a graduate of the University of Michigan, has been our primary public spokesperson since the fall of 1998, and his media savvy landed the Center onto the front page of the *New York Times* in March of 1999. He has also brought the work of the Center to the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post* and *TIME* magazine. He has debated the issue of commercialism on countless radio and TV shows, including *MSNBC* and *Good Morning America*. The Center will benefit from Andrew's leadership, vision and imagination. ✕

Center Portrait

Three Generations Working Together Against Commercialism in Schools!

It's inspiring to see what a tremendous difference one family can make: three members of the Morrison family are actively involved in keeping schools commercial-free! Marie Morrison in New York State, her daughter Diane Morrison, and granddaughter Alexandra Bradbury in Seattle are all involved in different community efforts.

Diane Morrison is a founding member of the Citizen's Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools (CCCS) in Seattle, WA. CCCS was founded by parents who were appalled by the Seattle school district's proposal to sell advertisements in schools. CCCS's first success was to have a policy rescinded which actively encouraged increased commercialism. The school board later did approve an exclusive cola contract, but CCCS plans to take action to have Channel One removed from the district based on the current policy. Diane Morrison is also a member of The Center's Board of Directors. She says "For me it's natural to be an actor - and not just a consumer - in the arena of governmental regulations. We are also role models



for our children - if we don't fight back against injustice, what does that teach them?"

Learning her lesson well, high school junior Alexandra Bradbury is already an experienced grassroots activist. While being exposed to Channel One for three years in middle school, she became increasingly concerned, and co-founded a student newspaper where she could voice her opinions. Together with her mother, she worked on the campaign of a school board candidate opposing school commercialism. Although losing the primary, the campaign succeeded in making this issue an important election topic, and in getting other candidates to speak against advertising in school. Now in high school, Alexandra actively raises awareness of the issue, building a strong student

base ready to fight off commercialism. For the future, Alexandra sees herself addressing the broader issue of "capitalism as an inequitable and undemocratic system".

When Diane Morrison heard about legislative efforts to curb commercialism in New York State schools, she asked her mother, Marie Morrison, to get involved. With lots of experience in New York State's government, Marie Morrison is a great help in developing and tracking legislation in her state, coordinating actions between The Center and local activists. "It's not right that advertising should gain a foot in the door at schools" is one of the many reasons for her to be involved - and "the joy at having a project that the three generations of women in our family can work on together!" ✕

California

continued from page 1

Center was later able to generate the public pressure that forced the state legislature to pass them on a bipartisan basis. "We are extremely enthusiastic that we have been able to pass these bills," said Hagelshaw.

AB 116 is especially powerful, as it bans commercial images from appearing in textbooks used in public schools. The law was inspired by a sixth grade math textbook currently distributed nationwide by McGraw-Hill. The book, *Mathematics: Applications and Connections*, is laden with advertising and has been approved for use in at least one school district in every state, according to the publisher. Story problems in the book ask students to figure how much money they need to save to buy a pair of Nike shoes. Students are also taught fractions through counting M&Ms.

The Center first became aware of the McGraw-Hill textbook in December of 1998, when Albany (CA) parent Joe Stein noticed his child using the book and began calling local officials to complain. We immediately recognized it to be a new step in the progression of in-school commercialism. Instead of being a curriculum entirely sponsored and distributed by an advertiser, the book was state-approved and purchased with taxpayer money. This meant that taxpayers would be paying directly for the advertising that would be disseminated to their children. And as a required textbook, the book defined the phrase "captive audience" just as clearly as Channel One or ZapMe.

The Center then sprang into action. At the start of 1999 we worked with Assemblywoman Mazzoni to promote the bills she had authored. Then, at a key moment in March of 1999, we launched a media effort that landed the story of the textbook onto the front page of the *New York Times* and into most major newspapers in the US. A national AP story followed, along with stories in *TIME* magazine and on *Good Morning America*. The media strengthened the case for AB 116 and forced McGraw-Hill to call off their lobbyists in Sacramento.

Removing the California market for these type of books should force McGraw-Hill and other major publishers to rethink making textbooks with advertisements. California, New York and Texas are the three largest markets for school textbooks, and every publisher counts on selling their books in those three states if they are to be successful. New York and Louisiana are among other states that are already considering laws similar to AB 116.

AB 117, signed into law September 15 by California Governor Gray Davis, addresses the issues of Channel One, ZapMe and exclusive cola deals. AB 117 requires school districts to hold public meetings to establish policies regarding exclusive cola contracts before they can sign any such deals. School Districts must also prove publicly that any electronic product or service that contains advertising is integral for the school's education and that the district can't afford the product or service in any other way. "We see AB 117

Simone French Ph.D. was the first person to register for the School Watch Team. She is an Associate Professor of Epidemiology at the University of Minnesota. Simone joined to "take an active role in promoting greater awareness among parents and school people (teachers, principals, etc.) about commercialism in schools."



as an important first step toward what is really needed to protect children- a ban on all advertising in public schools," said Hagelshaw.

Other states have taken steps to address advertising in schools. New York has in place a statewide ban on Channel One, while Wisconsin is currently considering legislation to eliminate exclusive cola deals from state schools. Rhode Island put its foot down in October regarding specific types of commercial promotions in school, while New York recently outlawed ads on school busses. Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts and Texas have also made first attempts at laws concerning commercialism in schools. State education superintendents in California and Nevada have also made official statements strongly discouraging schools from signing up with Channel One. ✕

San Francisco

continued from page 1

school board. Sarah Lipson, a San Francisco first grade teacher, showed the board members a curriculum developed by the Jelly Belly (jelly bean) Company that she had been sent unsolicited in the hopes she would use it in her classroom. "I chose not to teach the curriculum," she said. "School is the only place left where children are not bombarded with advertisements."

The majority of the San Francisco Board of Education agreed with her. "More and more school children are viewed as markets rather than as the future resource of the nation," said Jill Wynns, one of the board members who co-authored the policy. "It's our responsibility to make it clear that schools are here to serve children, not commercial interests."

In order to provide schools with a starting point, the Center is releasing sample commercialism policies. The policies are being compiled from five already existing school board policies on commercialism, with a few added clauses that reflect some of the newer trends we have discovered. The policies will also include a "how-to" section to help community members effectively work with their school boards. ✕

School Watch Team Blasts Off

A national network of concerned citizens is forming to keep an eye on commercialism in our schools. People from all walks of life are registering themselves with the School Watch Team. These are folks who will advise the Center on any in-school commercial activity that they find. A lot of these Team members are also getting ready to perform Commercialism Walk-Throughs in local schools, where they'll seek to gauge the level of marketing present.

The very first School Watch Team member came to us from Minneapolis, Minnesota, but people all across the country are jumping on board. We currently have members from 12 states and one Canadian province and hope to soon be able to receive reports from any region. Any one who wants to be actively aware of advertising in public education should join!

Members receive any of our informative and organizational materials at absolutely no cost! They also will receive the School Watch Team Bulletin with all sorts of ideas, strategies and news. In addition, the Center provides over-the-phone training and offers to connect local members with one another.

We expect the Team to become a very important project as new forms of commercialism pop up in our public education systems. Any one who would like to join or receive more information should call the Center at 1-800-UNPLUG-1 (1-800-867-5841). We hope that you'll take the step and let us know what you come across! ✕

Local Highlights *Actions Against Classroom Advertising*

Mt Sterling, KY

Community members Martha Payne and Kenn Johnson organized to keep Channel One from entering Montgomery County High School! After winning that battle, they now are looking to take on Coke advertising that exists on school signs and vending machines.

Boulder, CO

Community members united to prevent their school board from signing an exclusive cola contract with Pepsi! The Center received three separate community assistance requests - from a student, a teacher and a parent - all opposed to the contract. At the right moment, the school board was presented with 250 completed petitions with signatures from citizens opposing the contract.

Bloomfield, NJ

The Center supplied information to parent Michael Doyle that helped him keep Channel One out of his school district. Michael led a citizen effort that passionately expressed their point of view to their school board- one parent even said they would move their family out of the community altogether if their children were subjected to Channel One. After testimony like that, the school board had no choice but to vote against advertising in schools!

Ames, IA

School Board member Steve Ringlee contacted the Center about our sample

school board policies. Steve's goal is to implement commercialism policies in Ames, and then spread a draft policy through the Iowa Association of School Boards.

Greenwood, PA

Greenwood school board member Charlie Beaver led an effort to reverse a vote for an exclusive contract with Coke. Initially the board approved a contract 6-3, but things didn't sit right with certain board members. Feeling like things "had been pushed through like some people's palms had been greased," Charlie asked to raise the issue again at their next meeting. Two weeks later, after more thought and deliberation, the board voted 6-2 to rescind their previous decision, and vowed to keep an exclusive contract out of their district!

Houston, TX

The Center shared a table with Obligation, Inc. at the Texas School Board Assoc. and Texas School Administrators Assoc. joint conference in October. Representatives of the Center, including Texas PTA Legislative Action Chairman Karen Miller, spoke with several Texas school board members who are ready to work to get Channel One out of their schools.

Denver, CO

Channel One has been working hard to break into the Denver Public Schools system. The Center has been working with

community members, such as parent Cathy Garbini, to keep their schools free of advertising in the classroom. Economics teacher Alan Chimento has even used Center materials to teach his high school students about the issues surrounding commercialization of the classroom at George Washington High School. The fight to keep Channel One out of Denver schools continues!

San Jose, CA

Lincoln High School's Students for Justice and other concerned citizens adamantly opposed an exclusive Pepsi contract. The contract was passed despite a strong effort from the community, which saw the student group write their own press release and hold their own press conference outside the school district offices! Citizens are continuing despite the setback to demand strong policies on commercialism in schools.

Carson City, NV

Channel One tries to break into Nevada! Concerned parents and teachers called for further review of Channel One at Eagle Valley Middle School, where it has been broadcast since September without parent or school board consent. The Center was invited by Nevada PTA and the Nevada Education Association to debate Channel One Exec VP of Education Paul Folkemer before the Carson City school board in October. The discussion now moves to the PTSA group of Eagle Valley, the first school to show Channel One in the history of the state. ✕



www.commercialfree.org

email: unplug@igc.org

fax: (510) 268-1277

(800) 867-5841

(510) 268-1100

Oakland, CA 94612

1714 Franklin Street, #100-306

THE
CENTER
FOR
PUBLIC EDUCATION
COMMERCIAL-FREE



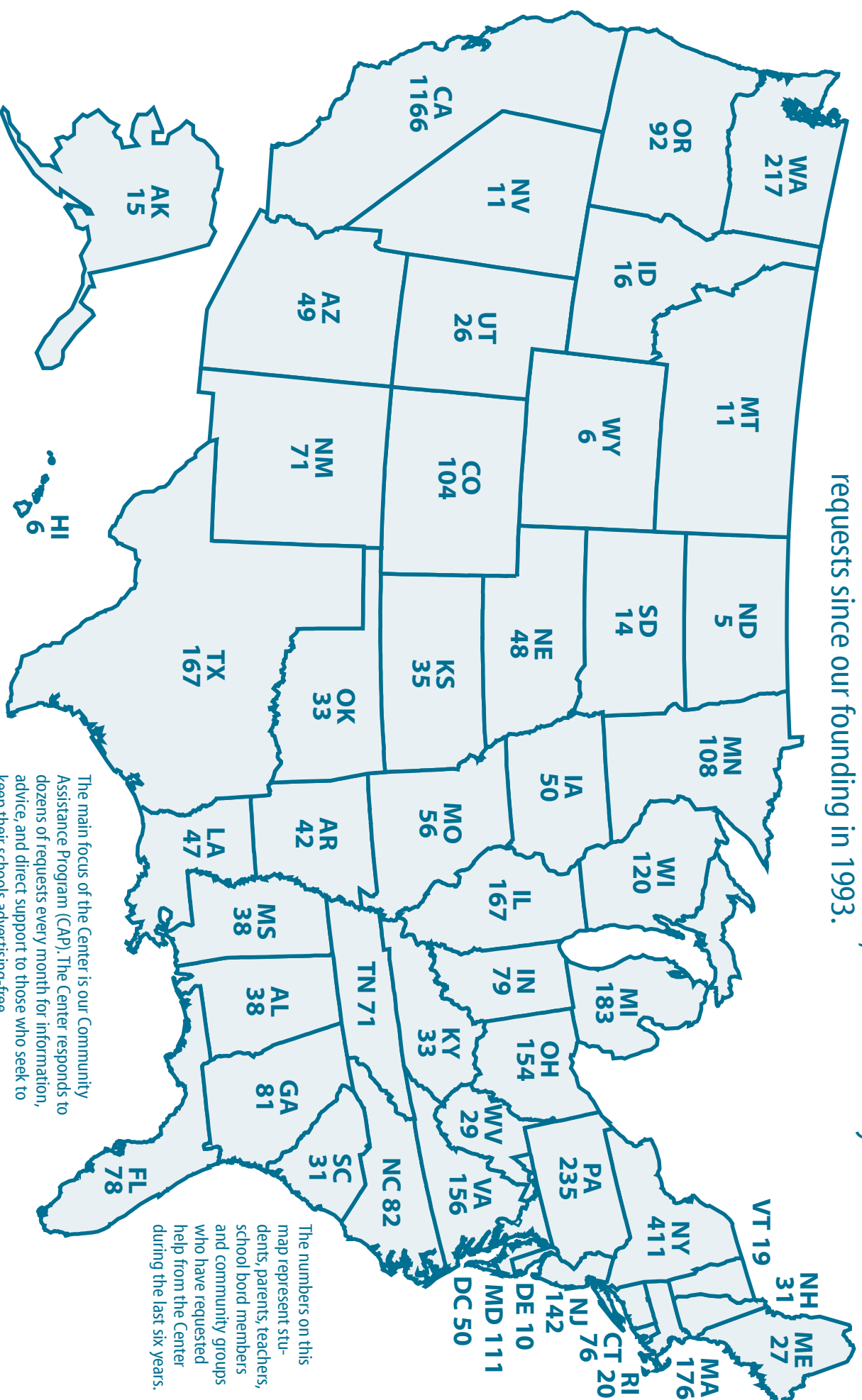
NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Berkeley, CA
Permit No. 213



THE
COMMERCIAL-FREE
CENTER
FOR
PUBLIC EDUCATION

Community Assistance Requests handled by the Center since 1994...

The Center has answered more than 5,125 community assistance requests since our founding in 1993.



The numbers on this map represent students, parents, teachers, school board members and community groups who have requested help from the Center during the last six years.

The main focus of the Center is our Community Assistance Program (CAP). The Center responds to dozens of requests every month for information, advice, and direct support to those who seek to keep their schools advertising-free.



just some of the

Victories & Actions

from across the country in 1999

Seattle, WA

The Citizens for Environmental Education forms to ward off the big industry financed threat to EE in Washington state.

Sacramento, CA

The Center works with members of the California legislature to pass Assembly Bills 116 and 117, both of which address commercialism in schools. AB 116 outlaws textbook advertising!

San Francisco, CA

School Board member Jill Wynns leads effort to pass the Commercial Free Schools Act, which sets policy to oppose many forms of advertising in SF schools. The Center has exhibition table at antinatal ASCD and NSBA conferences. At school boards convention, the Center leads a panel discussion about commercialism in schools.

Portland, OR

High school student Troy Pickard organizes a petition drive that helps fight off Coke from Portland public schools.

Carson City, NV

Concerned parents and teachers call for further review of Channel One at Eagle Valley Middle School, where it was being broadcast without parent or even School Board consent.

Buffalo, WY

Community members organize to oppose Channel One.

Salem, OR

High School science teacher John F. Borowski publishes "Schools with a Slant", an editorial piece in the New York Times exposing the bias of Sponsored Educational Materials. He is also working to remove Channel One from North Salem High.

San Jose, CA

Lincoln High School's Students for Justice and other concerned citizens adamantly oppose the Pepsi contract. Though it was passed, community members now demand strong policies on commercialism in schools.

Denver, CO

Economics teacher Alan Chimento teaches high schoolers about the issues surrounding commercialization of the classroom at George Washington High School, where the fight to keep Channel One out continues!

Boulder, CO

Community members united to prevent their school board from signing an exclusive cola contract with Pepsi! The board was presented with 250 completed petitions with signatures from citizens opposing the contract.

San Antonio, TX

Parents object to kindergarten curriculum entitled, "Learn to Read Through Recognizing Corporate Logos."

Houston, TX

The Center shares an exhibition table with Obligation at the Texas School Board Assoc. and Texas School Administrators Assoc. joint conference.

Pulaski County, AR

Entire county rejects exclusive cola contracts.

Chicago, IL

Amy Aidman represents the Center before several large midwestern public school food service officials at a USDA conference.

Alpena, MI:

Teachers organize to fight Channel One.

Madison, WI

An ongoing citizen effort continues to keep pressure on the Madison school board, who likely will exit their Coke contract in August 2000. Also, State Representative Marlin Schneider makes second attempt at state bill to prohibit advertising in schools.

Albany, NY

State Senator Montgomery introduces two bills to address school advertising. The state outlaws ads on school busses.

Pennridge, PA

Community member Connie Seager convinces a majority of the Pennridge school board to reject a Coke proposal. Parents in several other Philadelphia area schools become extremely active as their districts pass cola deals without their prior knowledge.

West Greenwich, RI

Principal bans cola sales in schools.

Bloomfield, NJ

The Center supplied information to parent Michael Doyle that helped him keep Channel One out of his school district.

Washington, DC

Hearings are held before the US Senate education committee to investigate the value of Channel One. House Rep. George Miller introduces legislation to stop invasion of privacy through school commercialism. Also, Center Exec. Dir. speaks at Dept. of Agriculture forum on nutrition in schools.

Durham, NC

School District rejects exclusive cola contracts and decides to stay with local vendors.

Mt Sterling, KY

Community members Martha Payne and Kenn Johnson organize to keep Channel One from entering Montgomery County High School.

Ames, IA

School Board member Steve Ringlee contacted the Center about implementing commercialism policies in Ames. Steve then intends to spread a draft policy through the Iowa Association of School Boards.

Greenwood, PA

Greenwood school board member Charlie Beaver led an effort to rescind and reverse a vote for an exclusive contract with Coke.

Urbana, IL

Urbana school board decides to reject a sales pitch from ZapMe!

Greenwood, IN

Anti-commercial School Board member Joyce Hall helps to convince her board to choose not to contract with ZapMe.

Baton Rouge, LA

Louisiana state school officials explore legislation to ban advertising in textbooks.