

Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools

Highlights: April/May 2014

Bruce Forsyth
President, CCFS

Many thanks to *Education Action* for your interest in our non-profit. We are proud of the work we are doing and greatly appreciate the opportunity to share ideas and generate meaningful dialogue with so many highly engaged stakeholders. Here are a few current items of interest:

1. We are very interested in establishing partnerships with teaching and support worker unions. Several of our board members recently presented a professional development proposal to a PD subcommittee of the Elementary Teachers of Toronto (ETT). We asked for support in offering a PD opportunity for elementary teachers to explore existing school board and provincial fundraising, naming rights, and food advertising policies as they apply to school spaces. Our suggestion was that we run moderated workgroups on a rotating schedule in either a full or half-day session. Our proposal was accepted, and a date should be set shortly in late-May or early-June. All interested ETT members will be welcome to attend.
2. One of our board members recently offered no-cost school-based sessions at Jean Vanier CHS and John A. Macdonald CI on the topic of how to be a good citizen. These sessions were very well received, with pictures and brief descriptions available on Twitter @CCFSCanada. Further school outreach is currently being planned for September/October 2014.
3. We are reviewing and considering the implications of some recently-published US research by the National Education Policy Centre. The NEPC annual report on school commercialism largely validates many of our current concerns about the proliferation of advertising exposure to children through various forms of media. In particular, the use of “pop-ups” and online polling is increasingly taking advantage of students’ trust in pseudo-educational online resources to promote their private agendas. Oversight mechanisms in Ontario will certainly need to be reviewed in light of these new threats to the sanctity of our children’s educational space.