



June 1, 2012

Re: Board Policy # 4237

Seattle School Board Members,

On behalf the Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition, a state-wide coalition with 46 member organizations dedicated to protecting our children from the obesity epidemic, we are writing to express our concerns about the Seattle School Board's proposed changes to policy number 4237, regarding advertising and commercial activities. While we applaud the current draft for prohibiting a number of issues and products that could be dangerous to children, we see a real gap – *namely the absence of a restriction on marketing foods and beverages that do not meet healthy food guidelines*. We understand that this proposed change in policy was precipitated by a lack of revenue; however no amount of money should be worth compromising our children's health.

Young people see more than 40,000 advertisements per year on television alone. They are also bombarded in so many other environments, such as the Internet, magazines, product placement, incentive programs, video games, social networking sites, podcasts, and cell phones. The foods marketed to children generally are high in sugar and fat, and are often inconsistent with national dietary recommendations. The American Heart Association sees no ethical, political, scientific, or social justification for marketing and advertising low-nutrient, high-calorie foods to children.

Advertising and marketing to children in schools is particularly troubling, because the food industry would have the potential to reach children in a closed environment where parents have little or no oversight or consent. All students should be in a learning environment free of negative commercial influence and pressure.

We applaud that Seattle Schools has healthy foods offered and promoted in school meals, other foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria, vending machines, school stores, and fundraisers. Comprehensive nutrition education and promotion, high quality physical activity and physical education have proven successful in improving health and preventing obesity, especially in low income students and are an important part of shaping a healthy school environment.

Let's ensure that the advertising policy at the district level supports, rather than works against the overall goal of maintaining a healthy school environment that is most conducive to learning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victor Colman".

Victor Colman, JD  
Director, Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Culp".

Lucy Culp  
Senior Governmental Relations Director, AHA

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### COALITION MEMBERS

ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD COALITION  
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS – WA CHAPTER  
AMERICAN ASSOC. OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS -- WA CHAPTER  
AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION  
AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION  
AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION (WA CHAPTER)  
ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION  
BICYCLE ALLIANCE  
CAMP FIRE USA CENTRAL PUGET SOUND COUNCIL  
CASCADE BICYCLE CLUB EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
CASCADE LAND CONSERVANCY  
COALITION FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH IN EARLY LEARNING  
COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION FOUNDATION (C.H.E.F.)  
CHILDREN’S ALLIANCE  
COMMUNITY CHOICES (CLARK COUNTY)  
FEET FIRST  
GROUP HEALTH COOPERATIVE  
HOPE HEART INSTITUTE  
LET’S MOVE CHENEY  
MULTICARE HEALTH SYSTEMS  
NUTRITION FIRST  
ODESSA BROWN CHILDREN’S CLINIC  
PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON  
PUBLIC HEALTH ROUNDTABLE  
SCHOOL’S OUT WASHINGTON  
SEATTLE CHILDREN’S  
SEATTLE AND KING COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH  
SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION  
SKAGIT COUNTY HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PROJECT  
SPOKANE REGIONAL HEALTH DISTRICT  
TACOMA PIERCE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
TRANSPORTATION CHOICES  
TREE SWING  
WASHINGTON ASSOC. OF COMMUNITY & MIGRANT HEALTH CENTERS  
WASHINGTON COALITION FOR PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY  
WASHINGTON DENTAL SERVICE FOUNDATION  
WASHINGTON HEALTH FOUNDATION  
WASHINGTON RECREATION & PARK ASSOCIATION  
WASHINGTON SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION  
WASHINGTON STATE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS  
WASHINGTON STATE DAIRY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON STATE PTA  
WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
WASHINGTON SUSTAINABLE FOOD & FARMING NETWORK  
YAKIMA COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
YMCA – GREATER SEATTLE