

Question Three

(Suggested time —55 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

**Directions:**

The following prompt is based on the accompanying six sources.

This question requires you to integrate a variety of sources into a coherent, well-written essay. *Refer to the sources to support your position; avoid paraphrase or summary. Your argument should be central; the sources should support this argument.*

Remember to attribute both direct and indirect citations.

**Introduction:**

An association between corporate and educational institutions could have many benefits, from technological improvements in the classroom to needed upgrades in athletic facilities. Such assistance could be especially beneficial to districts with limited economic means which otherwise might not be able to effect such improvements. But will the benefits that come from such association outweigh the drawbacks, such as schools exposing their students to a morally questionable sales pitch?

**Assignment:**

Peruse the following sources (including any introductory information) carefully. **Then, in an essay that synthesizes at least three of the sources for support, take a position that defends, challenges or qualifies the claim that corporate sponsorship could have a positive effect in American high schools by providing resources that schools otherwise might not be able to afford.**

(It is recommended that you spend 15-20 minutes of the allotted time examining the sources and devote the remaining time to writing your essay.)

Document A

Farahmandpur, Ramin and Peter McLaren. "Corporate Sponsorship Threatens Quality of Education." *Daily Bruin Online*. <http://www.dailybruin.ucla.edu/db/issues/00/04.19/view.farahmandpur.html>.

The growing privatization and corporatization of public education come at a time when the welfare state and civil society are increasingly under attack by the private sector, and when class polarization is widening. Public schools and universities across the nation are in desperate need of financial assistance, particularly those schools serving working-class and minority students.

Many are turning to corporate philanthropists such as Bill Gates for financial help. Gates has offered \$1 billion in scholarship funds to economically disenfranchised students of color [ . . . ].

The corporate-sponsored curriculum is finding its way into schools that are willing to sacrifice critical citizenship for the creation of consumer identities. Corporate lessons-in-a-box and free technology seem to be an appropriate reward for transforming school premises into a youth-oriented Times Square [ . . . ].

The Center for Commercial-Free Public Education reports that public schools are signing contracts that allow corporate sponsors like Burger King and Sprite to place advertisements on school buses. In New York City, the board of education recently signed a nine-year, \$53 million contract with an advertising agency that allows it to advertise on the district's buses. But considering the school district's annual \$8 billion budget, the estimated \$5.9 million a year the district receives seems rather trivial.

In another case, Exxon provides free educational videos to classroom teachers in a concerted effort to restore its much tainted public image after the Valdez oil spill in Alaska. Exxon's propaganda depicts the company as an environmentally-friendly organization helping to protect the wildlife in Alaska.

The Hershey corporation teaches the nutritional values of its chocolate candies to students and suggests how it can be an integral part of a balanced daily diet. Finally, Nike provides teachers with "sneaker-making kits" that teach students how Nike shoes are assembled as part of a classroom lesson that focuses on protecting the environment [ . . . ].

*The Daily Bruin, UCLA*

## Document B

Manning, Steven. "Students for Sale." *The Nation*. 27 Sept 1999. Online  
<http://www.thenation.com/doc/19990927/manning>.

[ . . . ] Nowhere is the convergence of schoolhouse need and corporate greed more apparent than in Colorado Springs High School. At Palmer High School, students walk through hallways dotted with signs for national brands and local companies, eat in a snack bar sporting brand-new vending machines, use computers with ad-bearing mouse pads and play basketball in a gym decorated with banners of corporate sponsors.

"This was the first school district in the nation to offer advertising opportunities, and the results have been great for our students," says Kenneth Burnley, superintendent of Colorado Springs School District 11. Burnley dreamed up the district's advertising and corporate-sponsorship program in 1993, after years of coping with harsh budget cuts. When Burnley took over in 1989, the school district was \$12 million in the red. Although Colorado Springs, located about sixty miles south of Denver, is best known for its beautiful weather and tourist attractions like Pike's Peak, it's also the state's second largest city, and its schools suffer from ills common to urban school districts: overcrowded classes, lack of extracurricular programs and crumbling school buildings. There's also the problem that until 1996, city voters had not approved a tax increase for education in more than two decades. (In a 1999 survey by *Education Week*, Colorado was ranked forty-ninth in the nation in the adequacy of resources devoted to education.)

"Our taxpayers have challenged us to be more creative and businesslike in how we finance the schools, so we decided to take a page out of a business's book," says Burnley. "I realized we could sell for cash something we always had, but never knew we had" — access to students. So far, some fifty companies have signed up as corporate partners, at a cost ranging from \$1,500 to \$12,000. Top dollar buys advertising rights on school buses, in all schools and four public-address announcements at every basketball and football game, among other benefits. A \$1,500 check buys a 2 feet x 5 feet sign in one school and tickets to attend school athletic events. District 11 officials say the advertising packages bring in about \$100,000 in revenue annually [ . . . ].

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Document C

“Channel One in a Nutshell.” Online <http://www.obligation.org/ch1.html>

[ . . . ] The Channel One deal is this: School boards would be loaned a TV network for each 6-12th grade schools if the board agreed to show the 12-13-minute in-school TV show called “Channel One News” at least 80% of all school days in, at least, 80% of all classrooms and when they did show the program the school agreed to show the program in its entirety [ . . . ].

Each school is loaned a satellite dish (that can only pick up Channel One’s signals), two VCRs, and a 19” TV set for each room. They receive, via satellite the daily “news” show and also can receive several hours of documentaries that contain no commercials. This is called the Classroom Channel.

The TV show starts out with a piece of art that a student has sent in. Each artwork must contain the Channel One logo somewhere in the picture. (This makes children into unpaid graphic artists for Channel One’s advertising department.) Then several one sentence headlines are flashed on the screen. Then a quote for the day, usually tied into a story on the show. The anchors introduce themselves. Then a MTV-styled introductory segment with music and graphics. The top story is read. Maybe another one and then the first batch of commercials, usually one minute and either two or three commercials. Another story, not necessarily hard news, but a teen feature. One minute of commercials followed by a “Pop Quiz” that may have nothing to do with the stories reported on. The anchors sign off and the program appears to come to an end, but usually one or two more commercials are featured after the “end” of the show. Total time is usually 13 minutes.

School boards have to sign a contract before they receive Channel One. The contract is for three years and renews automatically. Schools can end the contract at any time without any extra penalty being incurred.

## Document D

"Captive Kids: A Report on Commercial Pressures on Kids At School." Online  
<http://www.consumersunion.org/other/captivekids/evaluations.htm>

Group	Position:In-School Commercialism		Position:SEMs	Position:Ad-Bearing Materials	Comments
<b>American Federation of Teachers (AFT)</b>	Has no formal position.	Is opposed to television commercials in the classroom and districts being forced to obtain equipment "with...learning time."	Has no formal position but as a general philosophy does not endorse for classroom use.	Has no formal position but is not inclined toward it.	Many AFT locals have been vigorous opponents of <i>Channel One</i> . AFT does not endorse sponsored educational materials for use in the classroom considering the implicit, and often explicit, commercial and political targeting of children involved. AFT resolved at its 1990 convention that it "opposes television commercials in the classroom and condemns the lack of economic resources that puts school districts in the position of buying television and other electronic equipment with the valuable learning time of children. AFT understands the decisions regarding such arrangements some locals might nevertheless make out of a pragmatic need for television and other electronic equipment." It endorses the guidelines developed at the Milwaukee Conference in 1990.
<b>National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP)</b>	Has no "broad" formal position on in-school commercialism.	Opposes <i>Channel One</i> , specifically the idea of forcing students to watch commercials.	Has no formal position. Advises teachers and principals to review SEMs on a case-by-case basis.	Has no formal position.	Dr. Tom Koerner, Deputy Executive Director, states that NAASP's criteria for opposing <i>Channel One</i> is that "it forces students to watch commercials" as opposed to ad-bearing materials, which are more passive. "Scoreboards, billboards...no one is forcing students to view these." Regarding SEMs, it is NAASP's position that while there are some good and many poor ones, they are best handled by a teacher and principal on a case-by-case basis.
<b>National Parent Teacher Association (National PTA)</b>	Strongly opposes required viewing/usage of commercial materials; will seek and support legislation to protect children from required usage.	Is opposed and would support government limitations; opposes "any provision which requires children to watch TV commercials as a condition of their instruction."	Has no specific position on classroom materials outside of its general position on commercialism.	Is opposed to the concept of requiring students to "read advertising as a condition of corporate donations to schools."	Opposes "any provision which requires children to watch TV commercials as a condition of their instruction." Suggests that corporations with the same concern for enhancing the education of children as PTA has could serve students better if they'd "provide technology and high quality programs without demanding direct commercial return on the investment" and that "as a marketplace for ideas, the school should offer a balance...of views, not free access for those who pay entrance." It endorses the guidelines developed at the 1990 Milwaukee Conference.

"Captive Kids: A Report on Commercial Pressures on Kids At School" © 1995 by Consumers Union of U.S., Inc., Yonkers, NY 10793-1057, a nonprofit organization, approved with permission for educational purposes only. No commercial use or reproduction permitted. [www.ConsumerReports.org](http://www.ConsumerReports.org)

Document E

“Cash-strapped schools look for sponsors.” CNN.com/Education. 15 Aug 2002.  
<http://cnnstudentnews.cnn.com/2002/fyi/teachers.ednews/08/15/school.sponsors.ap/>.

At Vernon Hills High School, the new football stadium will bear the name of a paint maker and the \$80,000 scoreboard will be sponsored by a computer company.

In Naperville, an announcement will be made each game naming equipment manufacturer Under Armour as the official sponsor of the hometown Redhawks—in case fans missed the company’s two banners hanging in the high school stadium.

Commercialism in sports is hardly new, even at the prep level, but it’s a route cash-strapped schools are taking with greater frequency to pay for new athletic facilities [ . . . ].

Marty Hickman, executive director of the Illinois High School Association, said he knew of no other high school district in Illinois to make a naming rights deal. He said he doubts this will be the last.

“I think part of it reflects the kind of economic situation we’re in,” he said. “People are looking for creative ways to fund programs, and this is certainly a creative way to do that.”

Vernon Hills athletic booster Richard Friedenberg, who helped secure several corporate donations for the school, said it had no other option, other than asking voters to approve a tax increase to pay for the construction costs.

“We worked very hard to make sure we weren’t exploiting these kids,” he said. “They probably won’t sell one more can of paint because of this, because if I didn’t tell you where (the stadium) is you couldn’t find it. There is no intrinsic value to them other than giving back to the school.”

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Document F

Anderson, Kirk. "Corporate Sponsorship Invades Educational System." Online  
<http://zone.artizans.com/product.htm?pid=281567>. 23 Dec 2003.

