Last week, I posted an item about Scholastic, Inc.'s partnership with the coal industry to produce "The United States of Energy," an energy curriculum that promoted coal without disclosing its considerable public-health and environmental drawbacks. The controversy over this partnership, publicized widely by the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, went as far as a chiding editorial from the New York Times. Now, after a firestorm of publicity, Scholastic has announced that it has "no plans to further distribute this particular program." The company's overall program of corporate marketing – including promoting SunnyD, an artificial alternative to juice, water, or other drinks — is going strong, however.

Here's the company's full statement:

> Scholastic's children's books, magazines, reading programs and website content are used in most American classrooms – a responsibility and trust that we built through painstaking work through 90 years of service to teachers and schools. A tiny percentage of this material is produced with sponsors, including government agencies, non-profit associations and some corporations. This week, Scholastic came under criticism for an 11″ x 16″ poster map which displays different sources of energy – coal, nuclear, hydroelectric, solar, wind and natural gas – not so much for the content of the poster but primarily its sponsorship by the American Coal Foundation. We acknowledge that the mere fact of sponsorship may call into question the authenticity of the information, and therefore conclude that we were not vigilant enough as to the effect of sponsorship in this instance. We have no plans to further distribute this particular program. Because we have always been guided by our belief that we can do better, we are undertaking a thorough review of our policy and editorial procedures on sponsored content, and we will publish only those materials which are worthy of our reputation as "the most trusted name in learning."

The company's recap of the controversy is not entirely accurate. The content, not just the sponsorship, was controversial (and rather disturbing), as this article describes in detail. Scholastic has also been under fire for other aspects of its corporate partnership program, including a campaign that encourages teachers to reward schoolchildren for bringing in labels from the drink SunnyD (also known as Sunny Delight), by offering 20 free Scholastic books in exchange for a sufficient

quantity of labels. SunnyD's manufacturer and Scholastic partner in motivating schools and teachers with limited book-purchasing budgets to market the product to kids through this program.

Here's the product's nutritional information (which I found with a well-crafted Google search and buried on the sitemap for the site, but was unable to find as a link from the product's main website other than through the sitemap):

> SunnyD® Tangy Original Style CONTAINS: WATER, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP AND 2% OR LESS OF EACH OF THE FOLLOWING: CONCENTRATED JUICES (ORANGE, TANGERINE, APPLE, LIME, GRAPEFRUIT), CITRIC ACID, ASCORBIC ACID (VITAMIN C), THIAMIN HYDROCHLORIDE (VITAMIN B1), NATURAL FLAVORS, MODIFIED CORNSTARCH, CANOLA OIL, SODIUM CITRATE, CELLULOSE GUM, XANTHAN GUM, SODIUM HEXAMETAPHOSPHATE, SODIUM BENZOATE TO PROTECT FLAVOR, YELLOW #5, YELLOW #6.
>
> SunnyD Tangy Original Style is available in 6.75-, 16-, 64-, 128-ounce and 333-milliliter bottles.
>
> CONTAINS 5% JUICE

64 OZ LABEL
NUTRITION Facts
Serv Size: 8 fl oz (240 ml)
Servings Per Container: 8
Amount Per Serving:
Calories 120

| | % Daily Value |
|---|---|
| Total Fat 0g | 0% |
| Sodium 190mg | 8% |
| Total Carbohydrate 29g | 10% |
| Sugars 27g | |
| Protein 0g | |

Vitamin C 100%
Thiamin 15%
Not a significant source of calories from fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, dietary fiber, vitamin A, calcium, and iron.

The product's FAQ page does have this question/answer pair, however.

> What is SunnyD?
>
> We're glad you asked! SunnyD, or SunnyDelight®, is a refreshing fruit-

> flavored beverage that contains Vitamins B1 and C. It's a great drink for summertime fun all year long! How much of these vitamins does SunnyD have? One serving (8 oz.) of SunnyD provides 15% of the daily value of Vitamin B1 to help convert food to energy. One serving (8 oz.) of SunnyD also provides 100% of the daily value of Vitamin C to help maintain healthy gums and teeth.

No mention there of the high fructose corn syrup (27 grams of sugar, or the equivalent of about seven or eight teaspoons of granulated sugar), modified cornstarch, canola oil, sodium citrate, cellulose gum, xanthan gum, sodium hexametaphosphate, sodium benzoate, yellow #5, or even yellow #6.

I find it interesting that the Center for a Commercial-Free Childhood's publicity about the coal curriculum attracted the attention of the New York Times and motivated Scholastic to do damage control almost immediately, while the SunnyD campaign — also a target of CCFC's efforts — is still going strong.