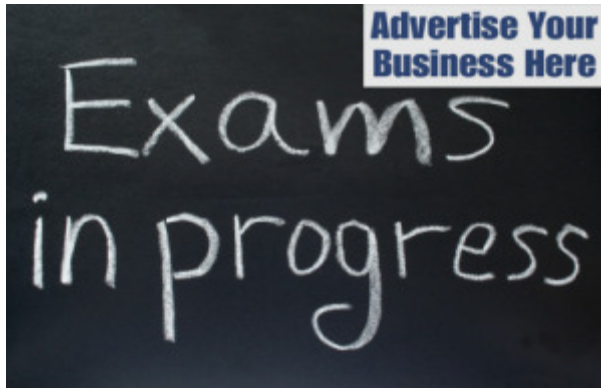


Teacher Selling Ads on Exams to Raise Money

June 1, 2009



In recent years, controversies have raged about permitting advertising in schools, from billboards to Channel One, an educational program that featured ads. But one calculus teacher in a cash-strapped San Diego area high school has taken this hot potato issue to a whole other level. Tom Farber, who teaches at Rancho Bernardo High School, is now selling print advertisements on his examinations.

Farber came upon the idea for parents and local businesses to “sponsor” his exams after budget cuts sliced his test printing expenses down to \$316. His examinations for his 167 students easily exceed \$500.

Farber had never asked for money from parents before, but he was in a serious quandary. So, he pitched his idea to parents during a September back-to-school night. The ad rates are \$10 a quiz, \$20 a test, and \$30 for the presumably prime space of the final exam. Advertisers are free to print thing such as traditional ads for a business to inspirational quotes.

Parents, students, and administrators have reacted positively to Tom Farber’s unusual fundraising idea. “It raises money for the teachers and it’s amusing for the kids, so it seems like a win-win,” said Luke Shaw, 18, a student at the high school. Luke Shaw’s father, Jay Shaw, said he wants to sponsor a test next semester. While Mr. Shaw thinks Farber’s idea is a good one, he says, “It’s just sad it came to the point where he needs to do that.”

So far, Farber has raised more than \$300, and he believes he’ll make more than \$1,000, as there is currently more demand for ads than there is ad space on the tests. Farber is happy to report that his fundraising stunt will pay for printing costs for him and his colleagues.

However, Farber does not want his advertising scheme to become standard practice. “My intention is, [selling ads] is a stopgap measure,” said Farber. “I don’t want to be doing this year after year.” Farber hopes his ad sales will convey a deeper message. “Teachers shouldn’t have to scrounge for funding,” he added. “To me, this is what our government is for, to provide necessities, and that’s why we pay taxes.”