

Vending machines benefit school funding

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Features reporter

Footsteps echo through the hallway as senior Molly Sobieski walks up to the hum of the vending machine. She pulls her crumpled dollar bill out of her backpack pocket. She slips the dollar into the machine and does not have another thought about where it goes as her drink travels down to her. But the dollar is off on another adventure.

FC has multiple vending machines used by both students and faculty. There are several events and activities like basketball games, football games, and programs held by the arts that require the use of vending machines.

These machines acquire a lot of money throughout the year, but once the money leaves the consumer's hand, it is often a mystery to them as to where it will end up next.

"Honestly I have no idea where the money goes. It should be open knowledge that students have access to. It genuinely makes me wonder where the money ends up," said Sobieski.

FC is abundant in programs and clubs that could be receiving the money. However, many students are not really sure what exactly the



Grace Allen/ The Bagpiper

destination of their dollar is. Others, like Sobieski, question if the money is going to help run the school, if it is going to the company that owns and refills the machine, and some even wonder if it is being pocketed by the faculty.

"Personally, I think money from the machines should be going to funds to make our cafeteria bigger," said Sobieski.

There are only a few FC staff who are responsible for the vending machine money. It is part of their job to make sure all student

used machines hold money that will be spent on student services and activities. The same system is used for the staff machines and concession stands.

"Anything that is student generated must go to an account that will only be spent on students," said bookkeeper Kim Stevens. "Sometimes it

will go to athletics, and other times supplies, but it is always used to fund and support the students.

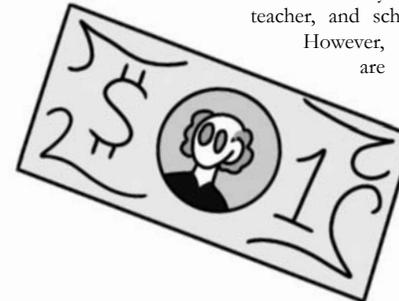
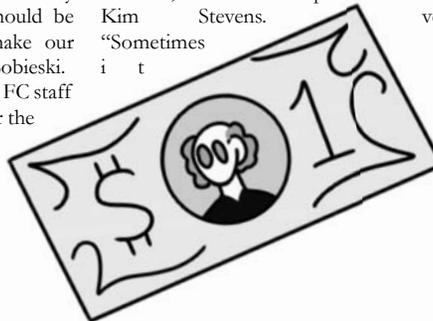
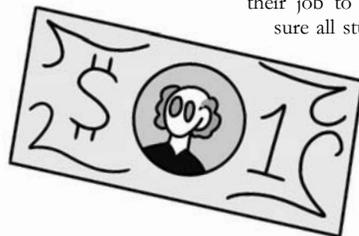
As of right now, the money is being used to fund a new weight room for the student athletes."

Teachers have their own vending machines in the

lounge. Due to the school policy, this money goes back to the teachers in some way. Sometimes it will be used to purchase food and supplies for meetings. Other times, it is spent on paying staff, but it is always spent on expenses for teachers.

Using outsourced machines allows schools all over the U.S. to raise money for student, teacher, and school funding.

However, all schools are different.



Sam Haney/ The Bagpiper

Indiana State Code 20-26-9-19 was enacted in order to protect consumers in 2006 by regulating what can be sold and where the money must go once it is extracted from the machine.

“The Coca-Cola vending machine in the teachers’ lounge is given a check from the company that is given directly to our bookkeeper. She puts it into a fund called the ‘Principal’s Fund.’ It helps pay for teacher days and faculty meetings,” said athletic director Jeff Cerqueira.

“The money that comes from the snack machines is given to me in a check and I give it to the bookkeeper. That money goes into the same account.”

This code also has strict rules that schools must follow. They include nutritional regulations that make it difficult on schools to maintain being profitable. When schools have to follow USDA-approved regulations it is challenging to maintain stable profits from machines.

Schools try stocking machines with content that students purchase the most, so they can maximize their profits. Most schools, like FC, make their money through their commission with their selected contractor.

If the machines are not successful, the school makes less money for funding.

“When I first started working here, we could sell snacks and drink all throughout the school day. Now, with the guidelines we have, we are not allowed to sell anything like Coca-Colas or snacks during school hours. The amount of money has dramatically decreased because we cannot sell like we used to,” said Stevens. “Last year, we made \$4,288.71.”

Many students often have their own ideas of where the

money actually goes and where they believe the money is being used.

Not only are students unaware of where the money goes, but some teachers are also unsure of its destination. They, too, have their own opinions of what should be funded by the vending machines.

“I believe that the money should be divided equally amongst student programs, and that the money should go to keeping those programs active,” said IB coordinator Karen Mayer-Sebastian.

Students and teachers alike agree that when a program is trying to raise money to have an event, purchase supplies for their group, or raise money for a charity, the money should be given to them in order for them to obtain their goals.

“If there is a particular need for money in a program, they should be helped. For example, if Interact is working with a fundraiser, the money should go to help them achieve their goals,” said Mayer-Sebastian.

The use of the machines and concessions allows FC to hold fun events and special activities for the students. It also helps build new areas to improve the school and keep FC a safe and successful environment.

While the vending machine money may not go to fund the places that all students would like, every cent gives the ability to make FC a better place for the students and staff.

“It would be nice for commissions to go toward charities or more educational endeavors, but I’m not sure that’s feasible for the way the school budgets,” said senior Griffin Grannan. “Funding for those snacks and drinks has to come from somewhere.”

Yummy snacks!!

Vending Machine Policies in Indiana Schools

What is covered by the policy?
The interim final rule, the healthy three meal menu rule, applies to all public and nonprofit schools in the state. Vending machines on elementary school campuses that sell food and beverages shall not be accessible to students.

What is the definition of a school day?
The policy does not apply to the extended school day, so after school activities are not subject to these standards.

What are the calories per item?
If food exceeds 210 calories, the following limits the portion size.
1.75 oz for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mixes, nuts, seeds, dried fruit and jerky.
2 oz for cookies and cereal bars.
3 oz for bakery items, including pastries, muffins, and donuts.
3 oz for frozen desserts, including ice cream. 8 oz for non-frozen yogurt.

What are the required ingredients?
If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be either, a whole grain product, fruit, vegetable, or low-fat dairy product.

Source: The Pew Charitable Trust

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