

Back to School- Money Savings Tips!

Amanda Clasen- Community Vitality Agent
August 2024

K-STATE | Southwind District
Research and Extension

According to the National Retail Federation, 25% of back to school shoppers started buying their student's school supplies as early as June this year. 80% of shoppers are planning for inflation on making all supplies more expensive than past years. Finding the right deals and discounts will be most important for families when they start back to school shopping as it is estimated that most shoppers are planning to spend about 10% less than their budget last year. Below are some suggested ways to help create a manageable budget and ways to cut small cost when going back to school shopping for your student's this upcoming school year.



Shop Local Businesses- Small, Local businesses have a smaller overhead than a large box store and are in return able to sometimes offer lower prices and be more willing to negotiate a better price to meet customer needs.

Take Stock- See what you already have and figure out expenses you can delay. For example, your child may not need a new pair of shoes right now. Last year's colored pencils could still be usable.

Set a Spending Budget and stick to it- It's a good idea to pad your back-to-school shopping budget to cover unanticipated expenses. For example, you may need to replenish school supplies or clothes during the school year. Don't forget about surprise costs, such as a class field trip.

Shop the sales- Look for clearance sales on school supplies. Not all items must be purchased immediately. In addition to shopping summer sales, you might also find deals if you wait until shortly after school starts so you can stock up for less. When you're shopping sales, keep in mind that some stores match other stores' prices, which could cut down on time spent running around town, searching out deals.

Buy More Generic or store Brand items- Unless your child's school insists on name brands, parents' money-saving plans include buying less expensive brands, including generic or store brands. However, if you're shopping from a school list, check with the teacher before buying a less expensive brand. If your school expects students to have a specific type of organizer or calculator, don't wait until the last minute. You may pay more or have fewer choices.

Buy in Bulk- You may find per-item costs lower if you buy in bulk versus individual items. Work with other families or neighbors to buy a batch of pens, notebooks, and other supplies, then distribute the purchase.

Back to school shopping comes once a year and it's a guarantee that you will buy some sort of supplies for school. To get ahead of the game for next school year start saving now. Divide the total cost you spent this year by 12 and put away that amount every month. You can create a physical or digital savings envelope or even open a separate savings account and set up automatic monthly transfers.

For more resources to help shop locally, please contact your local chamber or Amanda Clasen, Community Vitality Agent, at amclasen@ksu.edu or at any Southwind Extension office. 4