

# Managing Your Money

## Do The Math: When School Expenses Add Up, A Little Budgeting Goes A Long Way

(NAPSA)—This fall, as millions of children return to school, parents everywhere are grappling with the same thing: how to prepare their kids for school and seasonal activities without breaking the bank.

The fall back-to-school season can be expensive. From buying textbooks to athletic gear, the costs can add up. However, the good news is that having to manage school year expenses provides parents with useful lessons in smart budgeting.

Taking a few minutes to compose a comprehensive expense plan can help organize priorities and explore potential savings.

Whether your child is off to kindergarten or college, a financial plan can help rule out surprises and unexpected costs throughout the year.

Here are a few tips to help keep school expenses manageable:

- Think ahead. When making a budget, remember to include the extras like rental fees for instruments, athletic shoes and school trips.

- Before buying new supplies, take inventory and see what's left over from last year.

- Don't buy all your school clothes before the year starts as some items will go on sale soon after. Consider alternative shopping options, such as thrift stores. And always ask about return policies.

- When using a credit card, make sure it has features to help you manage your finances. For



**A credit card with financial management features lets you select the number of payments that work for you, saving on interest.**

example, families can use products like Chase Slate with Blueprint to decide which purchases they want to pay in full every month, ensuring that they avoid paying interest on necessary items like school supplies, department store purchases and gas. The card also offers a better way to manage larger purchases by allowing you to select the number of payments or monthly payment amount that works for your budget, helping you save on interest and paying down balances faster.

If you purchase a \$500 laptop for your child, you can use the Split feature from Blueprint to set up a plan to pay it off in four months. Chase does the math for you and makes it clear on every statement so you can stay on track to meet your goals.