

RC MacDonald School Supplies (2024-2025)

Buying school supplies for next year may already be on your mind, so we've updated our student school supplies lists and will have them available to you on our website this week. However, we're also providing families a new option when it comes to buying school supplies for their children.

Many elementary schools in our district have gone the route of providing parents the option of buying a school supplies pack directly from the school rather than purchasing packs through other providers as we've done in the past. Of course, parents always have the option of shopping for and purchasing school supplies themselves at local or online stores. But, as a staff and with careful consideration and consultation with other schools, we determined that there are a considerable number of benefits to families, students, classrooms and our school community as whole if we simply purchase all the essential school supplies and ask families to contribute to that purchase with a onetime, per student payment at the start of each school year.

Essentially, all school supplies intended for student use will be purchased by the school through our vendors (Staples, Creative Children, etc) in advance of the coming school year. The overall cost per grade level or grouping is then divided by the number of expected students in the month of September to determine a per student cost. The individual student supplies cost (approximately \$40 to \$50 depending on the grade level) would then be made available to parents to pay for through School Cash Online in September. This way the school can recoup its initial overall cost (without profit) and parents can contribute to building equitable classroom supplies throughout the school.

The option of paying for school supplies through the school in such a way has several significant benefits to families and our school community. A few of which are:

Cost savings

The per student cost for the 2024-2025 school year is currently estimated to be \$40 for kindergarten, \$45 for grade 1, and \$50 for grades 2 to 5. These are significant savings to families when compared to last year's previous option of purchasing 'supply packs' through a local provider. Below is a table comparing 'supply pack' cost for 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.

| Grade Level | 2023/2024 Creative Pack | 2024/2025 School Pack |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

| | Cost | Cost* |
|---|------------------------------|--------|
| kindergarten | \$64.69 | \$40 |
| Grade 1 | \$68.03 (pack part A and B) | \$45 |
| Grade 2 | \$80.23 (pack part A and B) | \$50 |
| Grade 3 | \$88.25 (pack part A and B) | \$50 |
| Grade 4/5 | \$113.05 (pack part A and B) | \$50** |
| <p><i>*These are the current estimates including tax, but may be slightly more or less once the price is set at the start of September.</i></p> <p><i>**Additional class specific supplies may be requested by teachers for parents to purchase or obtain on their own once students are settled into their respective divisions in the second week of September.</i></p> | | |

Reusing supplies to reduce future costs to families

As we continue to provide this option to families, we anticipate that the per student cost will change over the years due to inflation. To help offset cost increases in future years, the school will be asking parents if they would like to donate any of their child's current school year's supplies (like scissors, pencils, sharpeners, rulers, etc.) to the school to help reduce the following year's per student costs. This way, the school is only purchasing student supplies that are needed and costs are more affordable to families here at RC MacDonald.

Please note that if a family pays towards the 2024/2025 supply pack through the school, the family owns those supplies. Should the family move to another school, they have the option of donating their share of supplies to RC MacDonald or taking them with them when they leave.

Equitable quality assurance

By the school ordering student supplies for families, we can ensure that each child has quality supplies. With so many sources to purchase supplies, sometimes a lower price point means a low quality product. For example, items from a dollar store seem very appealing considering their inexpensive price, but the quality of the item is not necessarily conducive for daily use in a school setting and sometimes put kids at a disadvantage to their peers.

Convenience to parents

Not only is the option of purchasing a supply pack through the school inexpensive, it saves parents time from having to go shopping for school supplies and trying to figure out exactly what item they should buy.

Classroom community building and supply access

Most of our teachers already centralize and disseminate student supplies on an as needed basis throughout the year in their classrooms. This ensures that no items are lost, unnecessarily used or broken, and that every child has the necessary supplies for a lesson, activity or project when the time comes. Doing so also helps create a classroom community and culture of shared space, learning and responsibility.

This is a new venture for RC MacDonald Elementary and we will very likely experience some bumps along the way. But with your support, patience and understanding, we'll be able to figure out the pieces that work best or need improvement.

How and when to pay if you choose this option

At the start of the new school year in September, you'll be able to pay for school supplies purchased through us using School Cash Online. You'll receive notification of school forms needing your attention along with school fees needing to be paid, and at the same time, you'll be able to pay for school supplies. If you've purchased your own school supplies, just let our secretary know and we'll remove you from the payment notification and request that is automatically sent from the School Cash Online system.