

Have you noticed how expensive it has become to send your child to public school? It seems like my son and daughter are constantly bringing home notices requesting fees for different activities as well as supplies for classes. I do not remember this from when I was in school. For some classes we needed to have a certain kind of paper or writing utensil, but these were in the upper grades. My children started needing special supplies in elementary school.

When my son was in second grade he brought home information about a school fund raiser that he was going to be involved with to help raise money to buy a computer for their science class. This particular school fund raiser involved selling different office supplies. This made sense because a large office supplier sponsored the fundraiser. The office supplier was going to give them money off of the computer based on how many supplies were sold. There were a variety of things to buy including printer paper, bulk pens and pencils, ink cartridges, address labels and other office supplies. Many of the things were offered at a discounted rate; however I was upset that I was going to have to accompany my seven-year-old son though the neighborhood taking orders, collecting money and then delivering supplies. This seemed like a school fund raiser that would be more appropriate for older students. I also thought that something like a computer for a classroom was the districts responsibility to buy, not the students.

Through the years my children have been involved in selling everything from greeting cards to magazine subscriptions to every kind of candy bar and other food items. Most of the time the money is being raised for extra curricular activities. I made the request to the school for them to include how much of a cash donation would replace the child going from door to door selling things. I no longer wanted our children asking their grandparents and aunt and uncles to buy things. My parents have nine grandchildren; they cannot be expected to buy things from all of them. I told the school I would rather make a cash donation than go through the hassle of selling to neighbors and relatives and then having to deliver the items. I did not feel this was a good use of my time and I was not willing to let my children go in the neighborhood by themselves. It seems that a number of other parents also expressed concerns because in the later years all school fund raiser announcements were accompanied with an optional cash donation amount. I know that fundraising is a learning experience for children; however doing it several times a year seems excessive to me.