



# Back To School

## Back To School—A Good Time To Check Your Credit Report

(NAPSA)—Students will soon be heading back to school, meaning added expenses for school supplies, clothes and computer-related equipment.

The National Retail Federation notes that in 2014, the average family spent \$670 on back-to-school expenses for K through 12th grade students. And these expenses are expected to grow in 2015. The NRF notes that this “is the second biggest spending season of the year,” besides the holiday period.

“With the start of school just around the corner, it’s a good time to review the family financial situation,” says Stuart K. Pratt, president and CEO of the Consumer Data Industry Association. “A good starting point is to get a free copy of your credit report by going to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). This will provide you with an excellent, comprehensive overview of your outstanding debt obligations and, as a result, a more complete and accurate reflection of overall debt before doing your back-to-school shopping.”

Pratt also noted that reviewing your credit report can prevent future financial concerns caused by inaccurate or incomplete information being reported by companies to the credit bureaus. For instance, if you see any accounts or identifying information that you don’t recognize in your credit report, notify



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**Get your family credit report before you send your kids off to school.**

the credit bureau right away. All three of the nationwide credit bureaus can be accessed online, by phone or by mail. Whichever method you choose, the credit bureau will contact the lender that provided the information and ask it to correct it and then notify you of the results. Pratt said that over 70 percent of all consumer disputes are resolved within 14 days.

It’s also helpful to include any documentation you have that can help the credit bureau and lender to resolve the dispute. The credit bureau forwards all material to the lender when notifying it of the consumer’s concern.

“It’s always a good idea to monitor your personal finances, especially at certain times of the year, so that you don’t overextend yourself financially. And back to school is one of those times,” concluded Pratt.

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*Note to Editors: The credit bureaus are implementing a National Consumer Assistance Plan in New York State. It will be going countrywide. While the information is relevant and can benefit people throughout the United States, it may be of particular interest to news outlets in New York State.*