

# The Straits Times INTERACTIVE

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Cashless Transactions In School

## **Gee whiz, why the \$2 charge?**

I AM appalled at Naval Base Primary School's decision to introduce the use of the ez-link card - with a \$2 monthly fee - to pay for purchases at the school's bookshop and canteen (Streets and ST, Feb 19).

Equally appalling is the principal's 'ban on canteen vendors accepting cash' which, in effect, leaves a pupil with no choice but to take part in the scheme.

Will the young children understand the significance of saving without seeing cold hard cash? Are we fostering a future generation of adults who will unhesitatingly use their credit cards to make purchases and run up debt?

What about pupils whose families cannot afford the \$2 monthly fee? Will the principal pack warm meals from home for them?

Other than faster transactions and a potentially huge profit for information-technology provider Chowiz, I fail to see how the service would benefit the pupils.

I urge the 500 parents who have agreed to put their children on the scheme to reconsider their decision to opt in. If the aim was to inculcate the 'values of thrift and frugality' from a young age, surely there are other ways to do so without incurring any fee or causing potential side effects in young children. Whatever happened to the good ol' piggy bank?

### **TAN SHAO YI**

I REFER to the article, 'Ez-link card helps pupils to save' (ST, Feb 19). The truth cannot be farther from what was reported.

Instead of saving their pocket money and earning interest, pupils actually suffer a deficit of \$2 per month in administrative charge paid to the service provider.

Assuming an interest rate of 0.5 per cent, the pupils will need to save at least \$4,800 a year to earn just enough interest to cover the administrative charge.

Maybe the lesson for the pupils to learn is the concept of hidden charges.

### **YAP HWEE KHENG**

I AM quite concerned to learn that the \$2 monthly fee for pupils who are taking part in the cashless payment scheme in school is to be deducted from their Edusave accounts.

What is the primary purpose of the Edusave Account? Has the deduction received approval from the authorities?

If I remember correctly, the Edusave Fund is supposed to be used to enrich the students educationally and socially. How will going cashless do that?

### **CHARLES KANG CHOON HOWE**

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