

Consumer Corner

Closeouts: A Lesson In Shopping For School & Saving

(NAPSA)—Economics 101: Finding top-quality school items at a discount is a terrific way to make sure students have the supplies they need to succeed, without taxing the family budget. An increasingly popular way of accomplishing this is by shopping at closeout stores.

Closeouts are the same first-quality, brand-name products found at a variety of retailers, but at substantially lower prices. Closeout merchandise is acquired from manufacturers who want or need to reduce inventory. Most closeout merchandise is acquired from manufacturers as a result of package changes, cancelled orders, product discontinuation or test market products.

Closeouts offer customers deep discounts on a wide selection of brand-name merchandise, as well as bargain-priced basics and seasonal items. Typically, a closeout store sells merchandise for 20 to 40 percent less than most discount outlets and up to 70 percent below retail prices. A *broadline* closeout retailer sells a broad range of high-quality, brand-name products, including consumables, seasonal products, furniture, housewares, toys and gifts.

America's largest *broadline* closeout retailer, Big Lots, offers these tips on shopping for the school year:

- **Make your home homework-ready**—In order to concentrate, students need a quiet location for homework, along with their own workspace. Affordable desks and tables can help kids stay organized and on-task. Good lighting is important, too.

- **Get back to basics**—Paper,



Closeout retailers offer brand-name merchandise at greatly reduced prices.

pencils and pens are always part of a student's must-haves. Big Lots provides these and other supplies at 20 to 40 percent off, sometimes up to 70 percent.

- **Ease the heavy load**—Help your children avoid shoulder and neck pain by providing them with backpacks appropriate for the amount of schoolbooks and supplies they'll be carrying on a daily basis.

- **Eliminate computer aches and pains**—Studies show that improper seat height can lead to neck, back, arm and wrist problems. Computer desks and adjustable chairs can help students have a healthy work environment.

- **Fuel your student's performance**—What's homework without an after-school snack? Kids and teenagers often need an energy boost at day's end to give them peak performance. Some closeout stores carry snack favorites—from fruit cups and cookies to frozen pizza and ice cream.

Big Lots operates more than 1,300 retail stores in 46 states. To learn more, or to find the location nearest you, visit the Web site at www.biglots.com.