

Ocean State Job Lot to Donate 12,000 Books to New Bedford Public Schools

The Ocean State Job Lot Charitable Foundation is partnering with New Bedford Public Schools and the City of New Bedford to donate 12,000 Spanish and English language scholastic books to the school department's family literacy programs. New Bedford Mayor Jonathan F. Mitchell and New Bedford Public Schools Superintendent Pia Durkin will accept the donation.

Called "Operation: Book Drop," a delivery of 8,000 books will be made on **Wednesday, June 15 at 9:30 a.m. to the Abraham Lincoln Elementary School** located at 445 Ashley Boulevard in New Bedford. A second delivery of 4,000 books will be made to the Hathaway School at a later time.

"I appreciate Ocean State Job Lot Charitable Foundation's generous donation in support of our efforts in New Bedford to foster a true love of reading among our elementary school students," said Mayor Jon Mitchell. "This is a great opportunity for our kids – they can choose their own book to keep and share with friends and most importantly to help them to continue to build their literacy skills during summer vacation."

Book donations are made possible by Ocean State Job Lot, a North Kingstown, R.I.-based discount regional retailer with 122 stores throughout all six New England states, New York and New Jersey. Job Lot's Charitable Foundation covers the cost of the books, warehousing and shipping. Each book has a retail value of \$12.00.

"Expanding access to reading for our kids is a hugely important step in building lifelong learners and lifelong readers," said Superintendent Pia Durkin. "Our Lincoln and

Hathaway students will be thrilled to receive these books and have whole new worlds and stories opened up to them through reading. I cannot underscore enough just how important it is for students to be interested and engaged in reading from a young age, through their academic lives.”

Most of the books, with titles in various science, math, geography, technology and other scholastic genres, will be given to the students to take home and share with their families. The remaining books will be added to the schools’ libraries. The books are library-bound editions, which are unavailable to the general public and are designed to withstand use and handling over time.

David Sarlitto, executive director of Ocean State Job Lot, said the Foundation is aware of the void that often occurs with reading materials because many school systems do not have the discretionary dollars to purchase books. “Operation: Book Drop is a public and private partnership dedicated to giving all students the tools they need to become lifelong learners,” says Sarlitto. “Reading is an essential step in reaching that goal. It is fitting that a school named after one of our country’s greatest leaders and a prolific reader, Abraham Lincoln, is celebrating this gift of literacy. We are delighted to be able to provide these important learning tools to students and their families.”