
BEAT PETE: AN ESTIMATING PROJECT

Kennedy Junior High School

Lisle, Illinois

Kennedy Junior High School has a business partnership with Jackson Moving Services. As a result of this partnership, the teacher of the sixth grade Advanced Math CHAMPS Team was able “to provide students with the opportunity for quality work in the math curriculum through the application of estimation skills, while calculating volume and weight in a real-world situation.” Beat Pete: An Estimation Project allowed the students to work as if they were a salesperson for Jackson Moving Services by providing a customer with an accurate estimate for their moving job.

Beat Pete was a daylong activity in which students went with Pete Nechi, a Jackson Moving Services salesperson, to see his clients. In 2001, he was named the “Most Accurate Estimator” out of more than 2000 salespeople. In 2002 and 2003, he finished second. Students played “Beat Pete” in which they tried to provide the most accurate weight and cost estimations for a moving job. Students who estimated nearest to the weight of the shipment and the final cost were awarded prizes. The project demonstrated real-world applications of classroom lessons and proved how important it is to prepare accurate estimates.

To start organizing the project, Jackson Moving Services found customers willing to allow students in their homes. This was

the greatest challenge to this activity; however, there were many willing families after assurances that the students would adhere to house rules such as no shoes and no food. Next, KJHS arranged bus transportation and parent permission. KJHS Home & School paid for the bus and a substitute teacher for the math teacher’s other classes. As a final pre-planning step, students received printed materials regarding the day’s activities.

According to an internal evaluation performed by KJHS administration and faculty, Beat Pete was a great success. Students were able to participate in a concrete activity that answered the age-old question, “Why do I need to learn math in school?” Students were also exposed to moving services as a potential career choice. In the future, KJHS will explore ways to allow a greater number of students to participate.

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