

September 10, 2024

Dear Parent/s/Guardian/s,

The Best Buddy Chapter had its inaugural year last year here at Marsteller. Staff would like to continue with another year. Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501C (3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships between students with and without disabilities.

What to Expect

- Best Buddies' Friendship Programs offer opportunities for students with and without IDD, SD, and Autism to come together to build meaningful connections while creating a more inclusive school community.
- Within a Best Buddies chapter, students are invited to participate in monthly group activities and will be matched in a one-to-one friendship with a peer without a disability (In our chapter, it will possibly be two friends to one buddy).
- These "buddy pairs" will spend time together and communicate within the school setting. The friends will be encouraged to go to lunch with their buddy and to be available during monthly meetings to engage and communicate.
- Monthly activities will take place after school. There will be an activity bus and specialized transportation for our buddies. The hours are from 3:00 – 4:45 pm.
- The chapter officer team and advisors will determine the times and frequency of meetings and events.

How to Join

All students must complete a membership application to participate within Best Buddies. The form collects contact information and parent/guardian/caregiver consent for participation. The membership application is available online at bestbuddies.org/join.

Learn More

To find out more about Best Buddies, please visit bestbuddies.org/bbu. There you will find an online resource library which provides much information about our mission and programs. If you are interested in becoming more involved, please email LeeAnn Paik (advisor) at paiklr@pwcs.edu or Koen Madsen (assistant principal) at madsekm@pwcs.edu to learn how you can best support the Best Buddies program here at Marsteller Middle School.

Here is a short video that we recommend you watch to better understand our vision for Best Buddies.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPft0oW6MB0>

This letter can also be found on the Marsteller website to access the links.

Thank you for supporting your students' participation in building a kind and inclusive culture at our school!

In friendship,

LeeAnn Paik

Koen Madsen

Best Buddies Advisor

Assistant Principal