Hello!

You are receiving this information because your child has expressed an interest in joining the HMS Best Buddies Chapter.

**What is Best Buddies?** Best Buddies is a non-profit organization established in 1989 by Anthony Kennedy Shriver. The mission of Best Buddies is to establish a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with disabilities.

**What are Best Buddies School Friendship Chapters?** At HMS, our Best Buddies chapter operates as a student-run friendship club, which creates buddy pairs between students with and without disabilities. Best Buddies helps to create an inclusive school climate for students and a community culture of acceptance. #ibelong

**What does it mean to join Best Buddies in school?** By joining Best Buddies, your child will become part of a growing movement of people with and without disabilities, dedicated to ensuring everyone has the opportunity to have a friend and a “social outlet”. Students with and without disabilities are invited to serve as chapter leaders who plan events and engaging opportunities for members. Most importantly, members can be “matched” in a one-to-one friendship with another student from HMS. For those who don’t want to be “matched”, you can become an “Associate Member” and still attend chapter meetings and join in the fun!

**How do you join HMS Best Buddies?** Members must complete and submit an application to Mrs. Burrows in B-1. We are a small club/group. Once a member of the club, you will need to submit an application on Best Buddies Online and sign the agreement to participate (Directions to follow). Once the application is signed by participants (and parents/guardians for participants under the age of 18), Best Buddies staff and advisors will work to match participants with an age appropriate buddy who has similar interests and availability. Those who wish to still join but don’t want to be paired with a “Buddy” can join by becoming an “Associate Member”.

**When does HMS Best Buddies Chapter meet?** HMS Best Buddies Chapter meets once a month on Thursdays- from 2:15-3:15 in E-1. At each chapter meeting we complete an activity and share a snack, while building friendships! We will be meeting on the following dates:

- **October 10**  Chapter meeting E-1, 2:15-3:15 (Interest Meeting)
- **October 24**  Chapter meeting E-1, 2:15-3:15
- **November 26** Family Fun Night HMS cafeteria 6:00-7:30
- **December 12** Chapter meeting E-1, 2:15-3:15
- **January 9**  Chapter meeting E-1, 2:15-3:15
- **February 13** Chapter meeting E-1, 2:15-3:15
- **March 12**  Chapter meeting E-1, 2:15-3:15
- **April 16**  Chapter meeting E-1, 2:15-3:15
- **May**  TBA Very Special Arts Festival
- **June**  TBA End of the Year Event

If your child is still interested in becoming part of the HMS Best Buddies Chapter, please email tporta@bcps.org or complete the attached application and bring to Mrs. Burrows in B-1. **You will then receive an invitation in homeroom to attend the Interest meeting** being held on October 10th in E-1, from 2:15-3:15. Those who wish to continue will receive additional registration instructions at that time. Keith Norris (Mr. Norris)- knorris@bcps.org

HMS Best Buddies Chapter Sponsors: Tiffany Walker Porta Burrows (Mrs. Burrows) - tporta@bcps.org and Keith Norris (Mr. Norris)- knorris@bcps.org
Best Buddies Application/Interest Form

Student Name: __________________________________
Grade/ Homeroom Teacher: _____________________

Parent/Guardian #1: ________________________________________
Primary Phone: ___________________
Parent Email #1: ____________________________________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian #2: ________________________________________
Primary Phone: ___________________
Parent Email #2: ____________________________________________________________________________

Mailing Address of Student: __________________________________________________________________

Student Email: ______________________________________________________________________________

Health Concerns (allergies, asthma, migraines, etc.) Please be specific:
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________

Please answer the following questions:

Why are you interested in becoming a member of the HMS Best Buddies Chapter?
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Would you be interested in becoming a leader (President, Vice President, Secretary) in our Best Buddies
chapter?
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Please return to Mrs. Burrows in B-1