

Best Buddies International is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for mutually enriching one-to-one friendships and integrated employment. In fact, each student with an intellectual disability is paired up with a non-disabled peer. This was the first year for Brownsburg High School to have a Best Buddies Chapter. There were 60 members of Best Buddies this year! The buddy pairs are required to do two activities outside of school each month. For instance, one of activity is a Chapter party held monthly; which included: having a Christmas party, pool party, picnic, scavenger hunt, hung out at a member's house, etc. These Chapter parties are when everyone, students with and without intellectual disabilities, got the chance to hang out together. As a teacher, it is good to know your students are accepted by students who truly care. These were not fake friendships by any means. The buddies would go out of their way to come see the students before school started or would go find them at lunch to sit by them. The smiles generated by the students' faces were something our school wouldn't have seen without Best Buddies. I picked up one of my students to take him to graduation to see his Best Buddy graduate and he told me, "I called him this morning to tell him I would miss him next year." When students say things like that, a close bond has been built between the two of them. For this reason, BHS looks forward to our Chapter to continue to build and improve each year. New buddy pairs will be created at the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year.

** The best buddies chapter at BHS is sponsored by Megan Carter, who was recently recognized as Outstanding Advisor for Best Buddies for the 2007 school year.