
Sample Group Activity Schedule

(from 2010 – 2011 school year)

Date	Event	Location
Tues Nov 2nd	Board Games	Pollard
Tues Dec 7 th	Holiday Party	High Rock
Tues Jan 4 th	Movie	TBD
Tues Feb 1 st	Cooking	Pollard
Tues March 1 st	Arts & Crafts	High Rock
Tues April 5 th (tentative)	Bowling	Needham Bowl-A-Way
Tues May 3 rd	Outdoor Games	Pollard
Tues June 7 th	Ice Cream Social	High Rock

Note About Scheduling: When sign-ups are completed at the beginning of the year, all participants will be polled as to the best day(s) of the week to hold the group events. Whatever day works for the majority of the students is what will be chosen. We find the consistency of having events on the same day of each month (i.e. the first Tuesday of every month) helps improve attendance. Students for whom these dates don't work will still be encouraged to join BB, as they can schedule smaller group and 1:1 meetings that work better for them.



Best Buddies Program

*High Rock and Pollard
Middle Schools*

Best Buddies Program
High Rock / Pollard Middle Schools
Needham, MA
Phone: (781) 455-0480
Email: abigail_taube@needham.k12.ma.us



What is the International Best Buddies Organization?

(From www.bestbuddies.org and www.bestbuddiesonline.org.)

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 intellectual and developmental disabilities. In middle schools, Best Buddies operates as a student-run friendship club, which creates buddy pairs between students with and without disabilities.

In today's middle schools, students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) often enter the same building and walk the same hallways as their peers, but they often feel left out of social activities. Started in 2001, Best Buddies Middle Schools is already active on 145 middle school campuses pairing students with IDD in one-to-one friendships.

What Does This Look Like At High Rock and Pollard?

We recognize that middle school can be a particularly difficult time for students who have difficulty making friends. Our aim is to have the High Rock & Pollard Best Buddies program connect potentially marginalized students ("buddies") with peers who want to get to know them ("peer buddies.") Whether that happens solely in 1:1 friendship pairs or in slightly larger friendship groups depends on the interests and needs of the students who join in any given year.

Best Buddies at High Rock and Pollard is both student and teacher run. The faculty advisor(s) plan monthly events throughout the course of the school year. These vary from year to year but usually include a movie, cooking, bowling, and an outdoor event in the spring.

In addition to the teacher-led whole-group events, buddy pairs are encouraged to meet together between two and four times each month on their own. This can include eating lunch together at school, doing homework together in a teacher's room during the after school homework time, or any out of school activity in which they are both interested. The faculty advisors are available to help facilitate the planning process, but peer buddies are expected to take the initiative to get the planning process started.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the sign-up process?

A: Usually around October notices go out to students about joining Best Buddies. There is an online application* for Best Buddies of Massachusetts that must be completed by first-time BB members, as well as a paper application* that the faculty advisor will need to have to know who is interested. Students who seem to be a particularly good fit for the program may be encouraged to join, but no one is required to join. The program only works if all participants are there by choice.

* Please note: the word "application" is used loosely here. No one is denied entry to the BB program at High Rock or Pollard.

Q: Who would be a good fit for the High Rock and Pollard Best Buddies program?

A: Any student who has an intellectual or developmental disability or other factors that mean he/she has difficulty making friends and is vulnerable to feeling isolated would be very welcome to join as a *buddy*. Any student who is friendly, patient, and enjoys getting to know and appreciate others because of their differences rather than despite them would be very welcome to join as a *peer buddy*.

Q: What kind of commitment is involved?

A: Best Buddies is a full school-year commitment. Participants will be expected to attend as many of the monthly events as possible, in addition to setting up times on their own to meet in Buddy pairs and groups in or out of school on up to a weekly basis.