QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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KENT ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL LAUNCHES FIRST CHAPTER OF BEST BUDDIES INTERNATIONAL

Building Friendships, Promoting Inclusion, and Fostering Community

From left to right: Chase, Mason, Savion, Cole, Kara, & Chloe

Stevensville, MD – Kent Island High School is proud to announce the launch of its first-ever chapter of Best Buddies International, an initiative designed to create and support authentic friendships between students with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. This exciting milestone underscores Kent Island's commitment to inclusion, mutual respect, and the development of meaningful connections within the school community.

Under the guidance of faculty advisors, Dr. Kelly Zimmerman and Ms. Andrea Schulte, students meet weekly with their buddies during advisory club time to participate in a variety of activities and relationship-building exercises. The Buddy pairings have provided buddies with more choice and more independence while also fostering new friendships and broadening students' networks. The overwhelming response from students has been inspiring. "It's been incredible to see so many students eager to develop relationships with all students in the school," said Joeleen Smith, Supervisor of Special Education.

Through the Best Buddies chapter, students participate in structured, inclusive gatherings that celebrate diverse abilities and interests. As this new chapter grows, Kent Island High School looks forward to the positive impacts these friendships will have on students, families, and the broader community.