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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **ASHWAUBENON TO HOLD JAGUAR QUAD EVENT**

**Ashwaubenon, WI – May 16, 2023** – On Friday, May 19th, the Peer Mentor Program of Parkview Middle School, along with the Best Buddies program of Ashwaubenon High School and of Luxemburg-Casco, will be participating in the 5th annual Jaguar Quad event. This event, consisting of running, biking, swimming, and kickball events, is a culmination of the students' hard work both inside and outside of the classroom. Events will kick off on Goelz field at 10:15 A.M. and conclude at 1:45 P.M. with closing ceremonies.

Parkview's Peer Mentor program was founded ten years ago and strives to pair students with special needs with their non-disabled peers for academic and social support. This year approximately 70 students came together for training on how to work with 20 students with special needs. Throughout the school year, staff hosted various after school events, such as house decorating and game night with Gnome Games. This program has helped to shift the culture of Parkview, making sure all students feel included in and outside of the classroom.

The special event pairs up each mentee with special needs with a mentor. All students will participate in the day's events.

Ashwaubenon High School's Best Buddies student group began their first year this school year. Best Buddies is an international organization that was founded in 1989. Their mission is dedicated to providing opportunities for people with disabilities. Their school programs pair students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers to form meaningful one to one friendships. Throughout the year buddy pairs are required to talk on a weekly basis, hangout monthly, and join monthly group events. By the end of the year we have seen 19 relationships flourish. The Jaguar Quad gives our Best Buddies group the opportunity to celebrate those friendships. We are also very excited that another participating Best Buddies chapter will be joining; Luxemburg-Casco!

The Jaguar Quad is modeled after the Goody Duathlon, a community event hosted by the Pulaski school district, where students participate in biking and running. Student athletes participated in the Goody last week Friday in preparation for our Jaguar Quad event.

Physical Education teachers, Kerry Janquart and Kim Treml, along with Special Education teachers, Vanessa Talus and Taylor Curless, have spent a majority of the school year reaching out to sponsors

and planning this event. Various staff members, community members, and parent volunteers will be graciously helping the day of the event.

Thank you to our sponsors Ashwaubenon Optimists, Dick's Sporting Goods, Big Apple Bagel, Advanta Print and Hy-Vee.

For more information, please contact Vanessa Talus, Parkview teacher, at 920-492-2945 extension 4104 or vtalus@ashwaubenonk12.org.

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