

11-Year-Old With Down Syndrome's Friends Go to Bat So They Can Attend Middle School Together

By GENEVIEVE SHAW BROWN May 19, 2016 6:23 PM [Good Morning America](#)

ABC News Videos

Friends Help Boy With Down Syndrome Get Into Their Middle School



When an 11-year-old boy with [Down syndrome](#) was told he would not be able to attend middle school with his friends in the fall, they went to bat for him.

Brady Green's classmates went to a school board meeting to speak about why the boy should attend Blevins Middle School with them in September. Six fifth-graders from Brady's elementary school in Fort Collins, Colorado, took to the podium to speak about how he has enriched their lives.

"He lights up the room whenever he's around, he helps people when they're down and he makes us laugh. To me, it seems unfair," Brady's friend Ella said last month. "If we are

allowed to choose what middle school we go to, why isn't Brady allowed to? Just because he has a disability does not mean he is different than us."

Others agreed.

"If we can choose to go to Blevins, why can't Brady?" a fifth-grader named Dylan asked the board.

Ten-year-old Storm said, "I'm in the same class as Brady. He's changed the whole atmosphere of the school [since he arrived two years ago]. He makes it much better, much more fun to go to school. Why can't he choice into middle school? He has one extra chromosome and that doesn't really mean anything." A person with Down syndrome has 47 chromosomes instead of the typical 46.

The adults were impressed.

"They gave a very effective presentation," Cathy Kipp, president of the Poudre School District Board of Education, told ABC News. "Brady was awesome and his friends are amazing advocates for him."

The same friends nominated Brady for the school's SOAR (Spirit Outstanding Attitude Respect) award, the only peer-nominated award the school gives. His mom found out he won Wednesday and Brady will receive the honor at graduation.

The board meeting took place in mid-April and the final decision about Brady's placement was made two weeks later by the principal of Blevins, Tena Green, Brady's mom told ABC News. The conversation about where Brady would attend school in the fall was a months-long one, and Green was met with many roadblocks along the way.

Ultimately, the decision came down in Brady's favor and he will attend Blevins come September.

Green said that kids on an individualized education program (IEP) are funneled to a different middle school, where they are so segregated from the other students that they have a separate hall.

"No way," Green said of that option.

"I understand the business aspect of this," she said, referring to the way funds are allocated to schools in a district. "I own businesses. But the social aspect of middle school is just as important as academics for Brady. Why would we separate him from his friends?"

Green said she thinks one of the reasons the kids love Brady so much is "because he accepts each one exactly as they are." They in turn do the same for him.

As for Brady, he's very happy to continue on with his classmates next year. "We were driving by the middle school and I told Brady that's where he was going to school next year," she said.

"Me?" he asked his mom. "My friends, too?"

He was thrilled when she told him yes, Green said

"The parents [of Brady's friends] have been amazingly supportive, she said. "And the kids are so wonderful."

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