

In a letter, Hillcrest Elementary Principal, Dr. Jennifer Lynch said:

*"Dear Hillcrest Families,*

*As we close out another school year, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the incredible strength and support of the Hillcrest community. On March 13, 2020 we closed our school doors due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our teachers immediately jumped into action by finding new ways to engage students, communicate with families, and create supportive and loving learning communities in a virtual setting. Our families reciprocated that love and support by creating viral chalk art displays on our building. These art displays not only provided messages of support and encouragement during very unsettling times, but they also created a visual representation of our strength as a community.*

*During these difficult times, our communities of color have not only been disproportionately impacted by Covid-19, but they have also been disproportionately impacted by unjust police practices. These are not easy times in our nation, and yet our Hillcrest family once again demonstrated that love is the way forward. Recently students and families created new viral art messages of love, peace, hope, and acknowledgment of the current struggles to our communities of color as well as messages and love and support to our men and women in blue. From all of us at Baltimore County Public Schools and Hillcrest Elementary School, we would like to thank you for your unyielding support.*

*Our viral art, while beautiful, is just a temporary demonstration of our commitment to equity. We will continue to work with our PTA, community leaders, elected officials, and local business owners to ensure that all voices are heard and respected and to continue our commitment to permanent change. As we move forward with summer cleaning of the building in preparation for the upcoming school year, we will continue to provide other avenues for safe expressions of support and activism. We recognize that at this difficult time in our nation's history, not only are many of our communities in pain, but also that many of those who protect us each and every day are also under unprecedented stress as well. The Hillcrest community will continue to work to build the trust that is critical in keeping our communities and the men and women of our police department safe and secure. At Hillcrest, we will do this by working together and engaging in respectful dialogue. I could not be more proud of our Hillcrest community. We remain committed to ensuring that we are protecting and empowering every student, every day. From our Hillcrest family to yours, we wish you a peaceful and restful summer vacation."*