

Hillside Elementary Goes Red for Gratitude

Hillside Elementary School's safety patrol took to the web on Friday to explain the importance of expressing gratitude and appreciation.

"Gratitude means being thankful, showing appreciation for people in our lives and the things we have," said one safety patrol member during the online meeting. All Hillside students were invited to wear red Friday to show their gratitude.

Safety patrol team members, all of whom are in the fourth grade, are trained by school counselor Juliann Snyder in ways to promote a positive school environment. Normally, these student leaders can be seen in the Hillside Elementary School pickup area and in the hallways during student arrivals, and during recess.

They help younger students walk to class and provide a helping hand whenever needed. With Hillside students on remote learning Friday, there were no students to shepherd to class or assist at recess. But safety patrol members still found a way to set an example for their younger counterparts.

They took the lead by expressing gratitude in an online meeting.

"We thank our teachers who work so hard to make teaching fun in these difficult times," said one patrol member.

The students went on to thank the entire custodial staff for all the work they've done to keep students safe during the pandemic, as well as their special section teachers, security officer, school secretaries and the technology department. The principal and assistant principal received special mention for their efforts as well.

"We are thankful for Mrs. Cazes and Mr. DeKams for being great leaders and working so hard to keep us safe."

The students also made sure to recognize their school nurses, Patricia Feeney, RN, and Gina Kowalski, RN.

"For helping us when we feel sick and reminding us to stay home when we are sick."

After asking their fellow class members to show their gratitude by creating a list, writing a note, or simply telling people that they are thankful for them, members of the safety patrol team left their friends with a message that all can heed.

"Remember, friends, to be kind, to be inclusive, and to be thankful."