

Dear Lafayette Families –

This week we find ourselves in the last full week of March – hopefully “headed out like a lamb”! Over the last two weeks, we were graced with the Kindergarten plays (which we superb), a 5th grade class meeting, an HSA General meeting, and a Coffee Talk. It was great to see so many families last week. Thank you to everyone who joined us for the modernization update at the HSA general meeting. There were great questions asked and a tremendous amount of support shared. DGS will be hosting another Community Meeting on Monday, March 30th at 7:15 pm in the cafeteria. Please join us.

We are also in the homestretch of PARCC testing. So far it has been a relatively smooth venture for 4th and 5th grades. Third grade will begin Math testing on Thursday and Friday, and then finish with their English/Language Arts tests next week. Thank you to the parents that joined me last Friday for the All Things PARCC Coffee Talk. It was an open, honest, and productive dialogue. I fully appreciated the questions and discussion had by all. I think we all walked away having learned something from one another.

Last week I also finalized our budget for the 2015-2016 school year. Unfortunately, the per pupil funding minimum (as established by DCPS) was reduced from \$9,126 per student to \$9,000 per student for the upcoming school year. This resulted in a loss of around \$250,000 for our budget (about 4%) given that we rely almost exclusively on the per pupil funding minimum as our source of allocated funds. Despite this cut to our budget, we will maintain all instructional staff, including adding a 5th grade teacher next year. We were also able to maintain our small class sizes, specialists, counselors, and other positions that support students in our budget. Additionally, we added a Foreign Language Teacher and an Instructional Coach. The Instructional Coach will provide job embedded professional development for our teachers on a voluntary basis and add a level of support for grade level planning and curriculum development. The Foreign Language Teacher will be a great addition for our students. Over the course of the next several months, I will be working with our staff to identify the best approach in utilize the Foreign Language Teacher. While we would have liked to add a Science Teacher, the space issues of next year in the trailers will be prohibitive to establishing that position (and materials) successfully.

On a lighter note, the second session of Recess Clubs started this week. Students continue to be very excited and very involved in the clubs! We have added clubs such as Boys on Toe (ballet for boys) and Croquet. There’s still a crochet club, archery, coding, legos and many more. We’ve also been able to increase the number of teachers on recess duty in anticipation of the nicer weather taking more students outside for recess. This week we also have the honor of hosting an event put on by a troupe of Danish Gymnasts. This will be an incredible in-house opportunity for our students that involve over 70 gymnasts!

I hope to see everyone in the next several weeks at the various events that will bring us together, including the Auction on March 28th. It has been amazing to watch the level of commitment, organization, and passion that has gone into preparing the Auction thus far. A huge shout out to everyone who has been involved. It's been remarkable to watch. I can't wait to see the "curtain go up" and watch the Battle of the Bands. Rumor has it that KISS makeup may be in my future ;-).

See you at the Auction!

Carrie Broquard