

August 28, 2012  
FROM THE PRINCIPAL  
Lynn Main

The weather is starting to cool off. A few of the trees are starting to change colors. The crape myrtles are in full bloom and summer vegetables are fading fast. We've had tax-free weeks and school supplies are flying off the shelves at Target. It looks like it must be time for school to start again. So welcome to the 2012-2013 school year at Lafayette.

It's been a very busy summer this year. The new four-classroom trailer was installed and is all set up for our fourth-grade students. Lots of teachers moved their classrooms in the building as we were able to retire some make shift classroom areas. The office got a new coat of paint and the older than dirt carpet was removed and replaced with a tile floor. Rugs were shampooed, floors waxed and light bulbs replaced. New towel dispensers in the restrooms that we hope are more children-friendly. Lots of patching and repairs in the old building. It may seem like the school quiets down for summer vacation but that is not the case. There is something happening every day.

We welcome some new staff members to the school. Mrs. Allen decided during the summer that she was ready to retire so in Red Base this year we have Lynnea Rice. Ms. Rice is returning to DC after a few years in Minnesota. Before she left she was an early childhood teacher at Eaton. Bridget O'Malley is joining the special education team coming from a DC Public Charter School. Steven King transferred to Lafayette from Shepherd Elementary School. He has been teaching in DC for over 15 years and has a special interest in science education. He is our new second-grade teacher. And on Team Four you will find Janine Jackson who is teaming with Ms. Jean in the fifth grade. Ms. Jackson comes to us from Prince George's County Schools where she most recently was a middle school language arts teacher. We are excited to welcome these new staff members with their special talents and interests.

This summer we were able to significantly improve our classroom reading materials with a generous grant from the Home and School Association and the assistance of Politics and Prose. Each grade level has new sets of novels and nonfiction books to be used during reading time. Small groups of students will be able to have more variety in reading books at their level and discussing them with each other and their teachers. Some additional technology resources will allow us to create a computer lab area in Team 3. The arrival of the trailers has given us some more breathing room on all four teams and new areas where small group work can take place. I haven't heard anything new about the timeline for our building modernization but expect some news around October 1.

A big thank you to all the families who were at the school on Saturday for Beautification Day. The entrance to the school was completely cleared of weeds, bushes were trimmed and fall flowers were planted. Mulch was distributed in several different areas. The vegetable garden now looks ready for some new fall plantings. With all the

work inside a school building, sometimes the yard work gets slighted. We truly appreciate what was done to make the school look so inviting to our students.

And after all the drama of last spring, I'm back. This is the start of my 12th year at Lafayette. My first 6th grade class has already finished college and in some cases graduate school. My first PK students are in the middle of high school. Yes, time really does fly when you are having fun. But the children who came by the school this past week are just the same as those from 2001. Excited about their new teachers. Wondering about making new friends. Working at getting their summer reading done. Full of tales of summer vacation, travel and camp adventures. But mostly eager to get started on the new learning for the year. Making our letters and writing our names. Connecting sounds to letters and then READING. Multiplication and division. Research papers. State fair projects and the DC Theater Café. Deal Buddy Day. And lots more. It's another year of learning at Lafayette no matter if you are in Blue Base or in the 5th grade. Because that is what Lafayette is all about. Learning, with a lot of fun on the side.

Other notes:

\*This year's DC-CAS scores are at the school for students in grades 4 and 5. We are just starting to sort them to get them ready to distribute to you. We will have them ready for pick-up at Back to School Night. Any still at the school on September 7 will go home via the mail.

\*Check out the "One City Action Plan." Read Mayor Gray's comprehensive strategy to create a thriving city for all! Visit <http://onecityactionplan.dc.gov> to learn more.