

It's budget time in DCPS. Schools received their preliminary allocations the first weekend in March. We received a 5 day turnaround to get our budget sheets back to central office. On March 23, DCPS will be presenting the school information to the District Council for final approval and on we will move to staffing for the next school year.

Overall budgeting at Lafayette is fairly simple. Over 95% of our allocation goes to paying for the staff at the school. This includes all teachers, aides, administrators, custodians and office staff. The only people in the school who are not on our school budget are the nurse and the cafeteria staff. Many positions in the school are required in order to provide some equity in programming among DCPS. Others can be negotiated with central office through the use of petitions. We submit a few petitions each year and have those approved. Having Ms. Perll for art, music, and PE for the younger students is a result of the petition process.

Lafayette is one of 7 minimally funded schools. We receive \$8565 for each of our students to provide staff, materials and equipment. Having this minimum funding amount has been a big help. It started last year and it means that we cannot receive less than this amount per student. Up until 2011, Lafayette had been receiving fewer and fewer dollars per student each year. This minimum funding has been enough to allow us to absorb rising staff costs and allow for a few new positions.

One change this year will be finally adding Laurie McLaughlin to the Lafayette school budget and taking this financial responsibility away from the Home and School Association. With some changes in the teacher contract and current policies, it seems the time is right to make this move. The HSA instead will be helping with some equipment purchases. There will be some meetings with the HSA when they develop their budget for next year that will identify what these items may be.

Tomorrow night, March 21, I will be going into this in more detail in a budget overview presentation. Starting at 7 in the cafeteria, you can see what the actual allocation documents look like and what petitions were presented and why, as well as how average salary costs have changed this year and the implications for the school. Come with your questions and I'll try to answer most of them. If you can't come, budgets for all schools will be loaded on the DCPS website this Friday and you can access Lafayette's budget there.

So while we have more than a quarter of the current school year ahead, planning for SY 2012-2013 has started in earnest. Soon we will be updating staffing plans and then interviewing teachers for next year. Sure, we still have spring break, testing and end of school activities on the calendar. Kindergarten plays, arts nights, and field days. The month of May is particularly hectic. But careful planning for next year is one of the secrets to Lafayette's success. Come tomorrow night and see how it's done.