

Lynn Main, Principal
October 1, 2012

If you took a survey of the students at Lafayette asking them what the best time of the school day is, I think quite a few would tell you lunch and recess. Starting about 11:15, the PK and K kids head to the cafeteria. At 11:45, with their special subjects done, in comes the first grade. Out they go at 12:15 and next come in the 3rd and 5th grades. Last about 12:45 come in the 2nd and 4th grades. And around 1:15 the cafeteria is finally empty and the custodians take over to get it ready for any afterschool or evening activities.

That is the basic lunch schedule. Now add in the students who go to band, open art, percussion ensemble or strings. They either eat at 12 or 12:30 depending on the schedule of these activities. Peace Club meets at lunch as well as International Club. Scrabble Club starts when the weather gets colder and soon Spelling Bee practice will start. So while we have a lunch schedule, on some days there seem to be more exceptions than regulars in the cafeteria.

This year Mr. Thurston and Ms. Shapiro have started a lunch walking/running group. As a school we are crossing the United States by completing laps around the school track. Students complete individual laps and then the total is computed and we move the whole school forward on our trip. Last week we made it to Frostburg, Maryland. We've picked some celebration points across the country according to where some of us have lived or have ties to reward the students for their progress. When we reach California we'll probably turn back and return to Washington by another route. Our current route is following the old National Road or the current Interstate 70. Maybe we'll head up the Pacific Coast and take Interstate 90 back. A large U.S. map is almost ready to hang in the Great Hall so our progress can be tracked.

About two-thirds of Lafayette students bring lunch from home. The rest eat the school lunch. Unless a student is qualified for free or reduced meals, students at Lafayette need to pay for their lunches. Mrs. Murphy cannot accept any cash in the lunch line so students just give her their lunch number and she serves them lunch. It's been kind of an honor system. That has dramatically changed this year. If a child eats lunch and there is no money on account, the costs will be taken out of our local school supplies fund. At the end of last school year that amounted to several hundred dollars. So this year we are going to be more vigilant about student accounts and the funds that are in them. You may think that this does not apply to my child. I pack a lunch everyday and school lunch is not my concern. But almost every day we have a lunch catastrophe. A lunch box is left in the back seat of Daddy's car. A water bottle springs a leak and a sandwich is a watery mess. And sometimes the school lunch just looks really good. Since all I've had to do in the past is give Mrs. Murphy a number, these disasters were always easily solved. But this year each lunch without money on an account will cost the school \$2.00 if we are not reimbursed. So you may be

getting a letter from the school this year asking you to add to your child's account or to reimburse us for an emergency lunch. Sometimes things just do happen.

So while they might not know it, lots of learning is going on at lunch and recess at Lafayette. Running across America will teach some geography. Art and music occur every day. Making up games and the rules that go with them is what some students like to do. Most of the time these made up games are incomprehensible to adults watching. Some days we will be forced to have indoor recess. But that happens very rarely at Lafayette. And I'm sure as the school year moves forward, other activities will start. For 90 minutes in the middle of the day we seem to have people coming and going in all directions. But we like it that way. There is just so much to learn that we need lunchtime, too.