It’s registration time at Lafayette for next school year. Each day Mrs. Bright arrives around 7:30 so anyone needing to drop off their forms can do so before work. Most afternoons someone is in the office until at least 5:30, some days 6:00. Forms were mailed to families all ready filled out for the most part in mid April. And now after a month of collecting forms we have met only 41% of our projected enrollment for next fall. Why?

I haven’t heard yet what DCPS is going to do about schools and meeting enrollment targets. Each year we get dire threats about losing teachers and funding if we don’t meet our numbers. I have a website to go to this year which gives me a daily status report. Pretty soon emails will come with the same information. In my time at Lafayette we have never lost a teacher because of an enrollment shortfall before the school year began. One year when we had a large influx of new first grade students, we were able to get a new teacher a few days before school started. But I have heard of other schools having to change their staffing plans during the summer when numbers just didn’t add up.

Not meeting your numbers can have big consequences for the following school year though. We were projected to have 720 students in the fall of2012. The audited enrollment came in at 692. Those missing 28 bodies had a disastrous effect on the budget for this school year. We lost about $500,000 when the budget figures came out in 2013. So to keep the teacher staffing up we made cuts in other areas of the school. The Home and School Association allocated extra money in certain categories so I could use more DCPS money on staff. We’ve just about made it through a tough year. Next year’s principal should have an easier time since this year we made our projection and were given a robust DCPS budget.

So we need your help in getting your registration forms in ASAP. Come by in the morning. Call us and we will stay late in the evening. I will be here all day Memorial Day working on other school business. If that is the only day that works for you, come in then. The front door will be open. Deal staff will be here the morning of June 4th to collect forms from our 5th graders. That is the day the 5th grade goes to Gettysburg. Since almost everyone has a parent saying goodbye, what a great time to do registration, too. And is you have neighbors who will be new to Lafayette encourage them to come on by, too. A goo target for the first of June is about 500 students. Right now we are nowhere near that.

So please be nice to your new principal. Come on up and register now so when he/she arrives Lafayette will be full of children ready to start a new year. If you can’t find your forms we have copies at school. They can also be found on the DCPS website. If you are leaving us we need you to come up and fill out a withdrawal form. No matter what you may have heard, you do not need medical forms right now. Call us if you have any questions about residency verification. Just get registered. Please.