

February 13, 2008

Dear Chancellor Rhee,

The John Eaton Elementary School Local School Restructuring Team (LSRT) has voted unanimously to recommend our interim principal Mrs. Jacqueline Gartrell as Eaton's permanent Principal.

We came to this vote after several months of discussions and a community survey conducted in late 2007. The results indicated strong community support for Mrs. Gartrell. With an estimated return rate of more than 40%, the written survey was comprised of multiple-choice questions with space for written comments. Fully 100% of the faculty respondents and a strong majority of all respondents were in favor of retaining Mrs. Gartrell as Eaton's permanent Principal. And, although 50% of the surveys contained written comments – and some of those quite lengthy – there were no negative remarks about Mrs. Gartrell's performance. Overall, this survey indicates very strong community support for Mrs. Gartrell.

Mrs. Gartrell has done an excellent job as interim principal in several areas. Striving to provide the best instruction for our students, she inspires the teachers to work together. The teachers have demonstrated confidence in her as she works with them during collaborative planning times and visits classrooms on a daily basis. The result is data-driven instruction. As she visits the classrooms, she gets involved by asking students questions and engaging in their learning process. Before school, at recess, and while children travel through the building, Mrs. Gartrell supports the teachers by encouraging appropriate student behavior.

Mrs. Gartrell has improved communication among the staff, faculty, and parents. A visible presence around the school, she greets students, parents, and teachers each day; helps direct traffic in the morning and afternoons; offers a monthly "Principal's Breakfast" and a "Principal's Snack"; and maintains a welcoming open-door policy for parents and faculty. In addition to notes home and "robo-calls," she communicates the latest news to parents in person by participating in the school's monthly parent-teacher association meetings. She recently hosted a community meeting to share her vision for the school and to hear the views of parents and teachers.

Finally, morale in the school has improved dramatically under Mrs. Gartrell's leadership, in part because she treats all members of the community with respect. She listens, shares suggestions, and offers support and guidance when needed. Teachers, staff, parents, and students are all inspired to work toward the same goal: providing the best education possible for our children.

Sincerely,

Noah Steinberg and Laura Broach  
Eaton LSRT Co-Chairs