

Roger Sherman Elementary School

250 Fern Street

Fairfield, CT 06824

Phone (203) 255-8330



Dr. Ian M. Banner, Principal

“Try to be a rainbow in someone’s cloud.”

– Maya Angelou

For: December 2019

Dear Parents and Families:

I want to wish you all a very happy Hanukkah and holiday period, and it remains my hope that you all enjoy the enthusiasm and excitement that this time of year brings.

Learning and Thinking

A note from Mrs. Moreno (Sherman K-2 Language Arts Specialist)

Parents often ask, “Why don’t my kids have weekly spelling tests?”

Contrary to what we might have experienced whilst in school, research has shown that memorization of word lists often does not transfer to a student’s everyday writing. Our goal is for students to learn skills and strategies that will help them spell or read any word, rather than memorizing words in isolation. Students who can internalize basic spelling patterns can make connections among words in many ways as both successful readers and writers.

Our youngest students build their foundations for future reading and writing success by understanding how print works and building their ability to hear and manipulate the distinct sounds in words, also known as phonemic awareness. Students then learn to connect letters or groups of letters to these sounds to begin decoding (reading) and encoding (writing) words. Older students take these foundational skills and apply them to multisyllabic words, and learn to use prefixes and suffixes to both read and write words. Along the way, developing an understanding of word structures and building a vocabulary of high frequency words also contributes to spelling success.

Here at Sherman, we use a developmental spelling inventory, as well as student writing samples, to pinpoint a student’s current placement along this developmental continuum in order to provide them direct instruction and practice with appropriate skills. Building these solid foundations is a key component to creating and supporting successful readers and writers.

Social-Emotional Learning

The feedback from students and staff our SEL day was most positive, and while we will continue to address SEL as part of the health curriculum and as an important functional emphasis through MindUp and Responsive Classroom practices, we will be considering the possibility of dedicating additional shortened days or days close to holidays to further this learning.

Please see an upcoming communication on SEL from Mrs. Ottavio—Sherman’s Elementary Program Facilitator (EPF).

Grit & Perseverance (G&P) and Kindness & Compassion (K&C) Continue...

We feel that Grit & Perseverance and Kindness & Compassion are essential for students to function well and to support their academic and social endeavors. As such, we will begin recognizing both G&P and K&C as part of Proud Board officially starting on Friday, January 10, 2020 and every Proud Board thereafter. We will formally recognize students for frequent acts that exemplify these character traits and habits of mind using *Hearts* for K&C and *Sharks* for G&P. These will be displayed on the outer edge of the Proud Board.

We hope that you will join us in encouraging these habits at home and out of school because we don’t want them to only to be emphasized and practiced during the weekday hours. We also look forward to hearing anecdotes from you about our students grittily facing nonpreferred and unwelcomed challenges and persevering until successful, as well as independently acting with kindness and compassion towards others.

School behavioral expectations

We encourage you to discuss these expectations with your child(ren) at home. I frequently remind our staff that it is never the expectations themselves that change children’s behavior, but rather the consistent adherence to them and the immediate action taken by the adults when an infraction is committed that helps make them work.

Be Strong, Be Nice, Be Smart.

Lunch-room expectations	Recess expectations	Bathroom expectations	Hallway expectations
1. Stay in seat 2. Eat 3. Talk quietly 4. Eat, and be silent and look at the adult when they are talking to you.	1. Be safe 2. Be nice 3. Be silent and look at the adult when they are talking to you.	1. Be quick (get there, go to the bathroom, wash hands, get back straight away) 2. Be clean (make sure everything goes into its appropriate place) 3. Be safe (behave responsibly) 4. Be nice (behave respectfully towards all others)	1. Walk 2. Talk quietly 3. Close lockers quietly and correctly

Reminders

Stop-Kiss-n-Go, early and late arrivals

Please see **Appendix A** for a review of SKG expectations as well as reminders for students arriving early and late.

School Safety

Per section 11-7.1.2.1 of the CT Fire Safety Code, we are required to conduct a fire or emergency drill each month. On the weeks specified below, which may be subject to change, we will conduct either a fire or lockdown drill. During these exercises, students will practice responding to such events under trained faculty direction and in a calm and orderly manner.

These drills are also an excellent opportunity for the staff to further review and refine our procedures. Additionally, the goal of these drills/exercises is to enable everyone to know what to do in the event that an emergency situation does occur and to be able to act with speed and efficiency.

Month	Week of	Safety Drill
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September	30 9-13	Fire drill Lockdown drill 1
October	14-18	Fire drill
November	4-8	Fire drill
December	9-13	Lockdown drill 2
January	6-10	Fire drill
February	17-21	Lockdown drill 3
March	2-6	Fire drill
April	20-24	Fire drill
May	25-29	Lockdown drill 4
June	1-5	Fire drill

Important Events and Dates

School Store 1	Wednesday, December 4
Movie Night	Friday, December 6 (6:30pm in APR)
Lockdown drill	December 9-13. Sometime during the week
PJ Day fundraiser	Friday, December 13
School Store 2 (Holiday Edition)	Wednesday, December 18
Last day before holiday-break (full day)	Friday, December 20

Note. Please *SharkBytes* for additional PTA information and events.

A Few FYIs

Reflections

The PTA is already advertising for participants in this year's Reflections Arts Program (see *SharkBytes*, [12/6/19](#)). This is a wonderful opportunity to support your child in developing other and often less emphasized forms of expression and creativity. Given my youngest son's penchant for expressive movement, I have recently enrolled him in dance and acting classes, which is serving as a valuable opportunity to develop his whole being, and I encourage you to consider the same for your children through *Reflections*.

Recycling and Environmental Conscientiousness

We continue to emphasize with our staff, especially during lunch, the need to have and remind our students to employ environmentally friendly practices that include placing their plastic and metal recyclables on the metal cart in the cafeteria instead of throwing them in the garbage bins.

We also continue to emphasize the *sharing table* in an effort to reduce waste where students can place unwanted and unopened food items (only those purchased from school) so that other students can take them free of charge.

Please encourage your child to support these efforts in school and to recognize opportunities out of school to support environmentally conscious practices. Also, consider having them join the Earth Rangers club. For more information, contact: Alexis Donovan or AC Cochran at RSSGreenTeam@gmail.com. important and essential element of doing that effectively is having an open and on-going dialogue with you.

Reminders

We encourage you to remain or become familiar with our school's website (<https://sherm.fairfieldschools.org>), from which you can also access our PTA information, and the district website (<https://www.fairfieldschools.org>). A great deal of pertinent information can be found at these online locations.

Your Feedback

Let me know what questions you have on these and any other topics, as well as how we're doing. While the staff and I are very busy in the educating of our youngsters (your children), an important and essential element of doing that effectively is having an open and on-going dialogue with you.

Yours truly,

Dr. Ian M. Banner

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Follow us on Twitter: @rogershermanllc

SKG Expectations



- Orange lines are for buses only. Cars are not permitted to enter onto the school site during drop-off. The same also applies for pick-up. However, if spaces are available at pick up, cars will be permitted to park on campus (only in designated spaces) and only for the adult you pick up a child at the classroom door (for grades K-4 only and for students housed only in the main building). All annex students who do not take a bus (i.e. a walker or for SKG) should leave through the Fern Street entrance *only*. No student should be picked up on campus by car. The SKG line is the only permitted place for this.
- Yellow lines are for SKG cars only. Drop-off and pick-up (students allowed to exit and enter the car) is on the solid line only.

Directions for SKG

1. SKG or drop-off and pick-up will *only* be on Fern Street and *only* on the school-side of the road. The **yellow** arrow on the picture (above) depicts the length of the permitted drop-off and pick-up line, which will be between the telephone pole after the campus driveway and the red cone or farthest-placed staff member by the playground.
2. Vehicles dropping off and picking up will be required to move all the way up and stop as far up Fern Street (at the cone or where directed by a staff member) to allow as many passengers as possible to access the SKG line, simultaneously. All drivers are asked to refrain from stopping in the middle of the SKG designated area to drop off or pick up as this greatly slows down and undermines the efficiency and courtesy of the SKG line.
3. Parents, family members or family support members (i.e. those dropping off/picking up as part of SKG or picking up directly from a classroom) will not be permitted to park on Fern Street during SKG periods. We kindly ask that parents inform and/or remind family or support members of this.
4. Sherman staff are positioned on the side of the street marked on the map with a yellow arrow only to assist with drop-off and pick-up.
5. For SKG vehicles that arrive early, drivers are expected to turn off their car to avoid idling.
6. All drivers will be expected to remain in their vehicle at SKG drop-off and pick-up. We kindly ask that drivers plan accordingly to avoid any need to exit the vehicle because this undermines SKG efficiency.
7. Immediately after dropping off and/or picking up, each car can carefully move forward and out of the line with a wealth of caution to avoid issues with other cars moving forward and/or exiting the line.
8. The drop-off/pick-up line will be continuously moving to ensure efficiency and expeditiousness.
9. Each family's continued cooperation and compliance with this process is greatly appreciated.

Expectations for students arriving early

- The school building opens for students at 8:45 am. Staff members are *not* contractually available to supervise children before 8:45, which is the reason that students are not permitted to enter the building before then. Therefore, please do not drop children off and leave them unsupervised before 8:45 am.
- This is also the case on 2-hour delayed openings; students may enter the building at 10:45 am.
- While this is important throughout the entire school year, it is particularly imperative with the dangerously low temperatures we experience during the colder months.

Expectations for students arriving late

- As a reminder, please remember that students are considered late and are marked in IC as such when they arrive in the building after 8:55 AM. This is the case regardless of whether or not a staff member is at the Fern Street door.
- We also close the doors on Fern Street at 8:55 AM—the time of the last morning bell.
- Please do not drop off your child in the morning when no staff member is present at the Fern Street door to allow your child to enter the building.
- Please also be reminded that the expectation for late arrivals is for you to take your child to the main office in order for him or her to enter the building and acquire his or her late pass.

We greatly appreciate your cooperation in adhering to these expectations as they provide a demonstration of courtesy and teamwork for our students and they help to ensure all of our students remain safe.