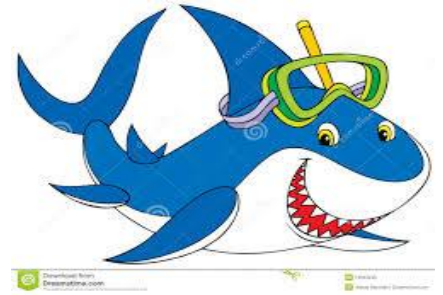


Roger Sherman Elementary School

250 Fern Street
Fairfield, CT 06824
Phone (203) 255-8330



Source: Worldartsme.com

Dr. Ian M. Banner, Principal

Cherish your human connections: Your relationships with friends and family.

– Joseph Brodsky (American Poet)

For: October 2019

Dear Parents and Families:

It was so great to see many of you at last Friday's walk-a-Thon, and thank you so much for joining us and supporting this wonderful school and community. Wouldn't it be nice to have a community walk-around-the-block every Friday? Especially if the weather was the same as it was last week.

A great deal of diligence has been dedicated to beginning the school year, and the teaching staff has just completed many of the in-class subject assessments that are required in the initial weeks of school. These assessments provide a wealth of information regarding what students can currently do (achievement) and how they are doing it (performance), and the teachers will certainly share much of this information with you when you meet with them during conferences.

Surprisingly, it already seems like we're deep into the school year, and we continue to remind ourselves that as of today, we're only 24 days in. Nonetheless, we are thoroughly enjoying the students and can't wait to see you all this week and next at our parent-teacher conferences. See below for specific details on that.

This month, I have included information regarding some of the work we are embarking on with regards to the physical building, so please be sure to read below.

I would like to express my gratitude to a number of individuals who are supporting our building beautification efforts. Thank you to Laury Katz for beautifying the planters outside of our Fern Street entrance, as well as AC Cochran, her husband, Brett, Melissa DiNardo, Katie Lang, Jamie Marzano, and Alexis Donovan all of whom helped clean up our courtyard, which looks fabulous and is now able to be used for staff and students to enjoy year round.

Thank you also to Jenny McCollum and Stephanie Goldberg (our Library Media Specialist) for their joint work on the recent and very timely Digital Families event. It was an excellent opportunity to practice the overall presentation and to celebrate areas that really were excellent as well as consider areas for refinement in future events. My overall feeling was that it was well executed and provided a great platform on which to build to support developing our own and our children's digital citizenship and ways to foster their appropriate use of technology in the information age.

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 |
|-----------|------------|--------------------------------|
| 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 |

Tools for Schools

A school monitors its indoor air quality and areas in need of attention/repair using a program developed by the EPA called *Tools for Schools*. A school-based team meets monthly to walk the building and observe existing or potential issues, as well as discuss reports staff members may bring from direct experience in their rooms or the building at large. Next steps for address are then discussed, which can lead to close monitoring or seeking immediate building maintenance attention from our operations staff at Central Office. For your viewing pleasure, I have included two links, below, on Tools for Schools.

Link (<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Environmental-Health/Environmental-Health-Section/Healthy-Environments-in-Connecticut-Schools#basics>) and (<https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools>)

Our *Tools for Schools* committee was very active last year, and it currently consists of three continuing parent volunteers and eight staff members—one of whom is our nurse and another who is our head custodian. I want to thank the committee members already for their time and energy in advance of the year really starting and for helping to seek areas of question and address.

Building-Level Updates

I met with our Director of Operations recently regarding some items for address and consideration, which include upgrading the basketball pole, hoop and net towards the rear of the blacktop area. As I understand it, this will be addressed very soon. Additional items include fixing the broken "mushroom" stools on the playscape and adding some mats over the plastic floor barriers to prevent slipping. I also discussed adding or updating items on the playground, which will be very costly, but nonetheless, we will look into what might be added and how much that will incur, as well as how that might be accomplished.

The blacktop, as we know, has many cracks and so we will be waiting to see if a new process that our operations department has trialed on another school's blacktop holds up during the winter. If it does, I have asked that we be placed atop the list for a similar upgrade at the end of this school year or during the summer. We would then be able to repaint many areas for games on the blacktop.

The PTA and I have recently begun discussing the possibility of having positive slogans and messages in our bathrooms that affirm the kind of thinking we want students to embrace. This may also lead to such messages being placed in other areas around the school that highlight positivity and kindness.

Additionally, we have continued our conversation with Chief Lyddy regarding the acquisition of a continuous marked crosswalk and adding a crossing guard at the corner of Birch and Fern, especially since our SKG now forces traffic in this direction. Chief Lyddy will be adding this request into his budget this year and hopefully next year we might have these requests acquired.

Lastly, we will be acquiring a hydration station that permits water bottles to be filled. We will likely have one in the main building and another in the annex, and so we're thrilled to be getting this we hope soon.

Important Events and Dates

| | |
|--|---|
| Walk-a-thon | Friday, October 4 at 9:00am |
| Fire drill | October 14-18. Sometime during the week |
| NO SCHOOL (Yom Kippur) | Wednesday, October 9 |
| Parent-Teacher Conferences – October 10, 15, 16 Early Dismissal (at 1:40) | See below for specific details |
| Early Dismissal (at 1:40) | Tuesday, October 23 |
| Halloween Dance | Friday, October 25: 7:00-9:00pm in APR |
| Picture retakes | Tuesday, October 29 |
| Halloween Parade | Thursday, October 31: 2:30pm on black top |

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

Parent-Teacher Conferences

This is always an exciting opportunity for you and your child(ren)'s teacher(s) to spend a little time discussing your child(ren)'s progress to date. Please remember that each conference is 15 minutes. Please ensure that you and the teacher(s) work together to adhere to this timeframe to avoid impinging on the classroom's conference schedule, which could impact the proceeding parents' conference times for their other children.

Schedules and details for our fall and spring conferences are listed here.

Fall Conferences

| | |
|---|---|
| Thursday, October 10, 2019 (Afternoon) | Times for these conferences will be between 1:45pm and 3:40pm |
| Tuesday, October 15, 2019 (Evening) | Times for these conferences will be between 5:00pm and 6:55pm |
| Wednesday, October 16, 2019 (Afternoon) | Times for these conferences will be between 1:45pm and 3:40pm |

Note. Please remember that you can dedicate a book during conference times.

Spring Conferences

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Wednesday, March 18, 2020 (Afternoon) | Times for these conferences will be between 1:45pm and 3:40pm |
| Thursday, March 19, 2020 (Afternoon) | Times for these conferences will be between 1:45pm and 3:40pm |
| Thursday, March 26, 2020 (Evening) | Times for these conferences will be between 5:00pm and 6:55pm |

A Few FYIs

From the Health Office

I am looking forward to another healthy year at Sherman School. However, if and when your child is home ill, please call the attendance line and indicate what the illness is (i.e. strep throat, bronchitis, GI virus, croup, pneumonia, etc.). Early action can help limit the spread of illness. Also, please call my office if your child has head lice.

Additionally, if your child is ill, has had surgery, or has an injury requiring a cast or splint, a note from your health care provider *is* required to excuse your child from P.E.

Also, please remember that all medications administered at school, including over-the-counter medication such as Tylenol or Advil require a doctor's order and should be brought to the school nurse *by an adult*.

If you have any questions regarding your child's health or need to update us on changes in your child's medical status, please contact me at the school's nursing office.

Regards,

Nancy Prusak RN
203-255-8331

Recycling and Environmental Conscientiousness

We will again remind our students this year 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 will also be emphasizing 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.

Stop-Kiss-n-Go

Towards the end of last year, I had a discussion with the police regarding the safety of students and parents cycling to school coming from the Birch-heading-into-Fern part of the neighborhood, and we both felt it imperative that cyclists do not cycle on Fern Street, especially against the flow of SKG traffic as it will likely occupy both sides of the road. We also felt that it would cause much less interruption to the flow of SKG traffic.

We therefore kindly ask that all cyclists exercise the maximum safety by walking their bike on the sidewalk down Fern Street to the school, including cyclists coming to the school from Beach Road. Our number one concern is and always will be safety, and we also want to maintain the safe and courteous flow of cars in the SKG line. Please help us with this.

Additionally, please remember that...

1. The Stop, Kiss and Go (SKG) line is *only* on the school-side of the street. No drop-off or pick-up is permitted on the other side of the street (the houses side of the road).
2. There is NO parking permitted on Fern Street during SKG arrival and dismissal. Please inform other friends or family of this who may be less familiar with the SKG process and/or have not directly received my emails.

3. Drivers should remain in their cars during SKG (drop-off and pick-up) times to maintain the flow of traffic.
4. Please refrain from walking or cycling on the SKG side of the road to avoid interrupting the flow of SKG (drop-off/pick-up) traffic.

This will be especially important and helpful as we head into the cooler seasons that often bring an increase in drop-off and pick-up traffic.

Roger Sherman Building Committee (RSBC)

As an update, we are still awaiting specific information as to when our lockers will be equipped with their sloped tops and the fills fitted, but the lockers are still fully functional and continue to look great.

Reminders

We encourage you to remain or become familiar with our school's website (<http://fairfieldschools.org/schools/sherm/>), from which you can also access our PTA information, and the district website (<http://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

lbanner@fairfieldschools.org

Follow us on Twitter: @rogershermanllc