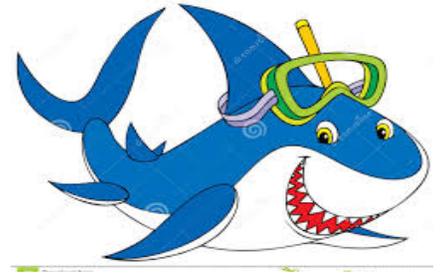


Roger Sherman Elementary School

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, 2018

Dear Parents and Families:

We have enjoyed 15 wonderful days in school thus far, and things are moving along nicely. I have been pleased with how everyone—students and staff—managed the heat at the very onset of the year and remained calm and focused on establishing familiarity with new routines and each other. It goes without saying that this provided us an added challenge to the start of the year, but I am an advocate of facing and directly addressing adversity.

Developing children’s capacity to effectively deal with challenging, stressful and anxiety producing situations is as important as developing their capacities for critical, creative and collaborative thinking, and so staff members and I are already planning with a view to integrating social and emotional learning into and alongside our academic curricular obligations. This is because we feel that humans, in general, fail to perform well and maximize their potential when they feel overly stressed, emotionally vulnerable and unsafe. This issue is intensified when children possess an undeveloped capacity to recognize that they are dis-regulated, and have not acquired the specific strategies they can employ to counter their anxiety and emotional imbalance.

As such, our planning will be considering previously used proactive approaches, such as CARES and Mind-Up, but we will be very mindful not to launch into doing something just to say we’re doing it. I don’t want this work to be just another curriculum or program to work through, but rather, for us to address social-emotional issues as a daily and contextual means for developing students’ capacity to more clearly know themselves—how they learn and react to stress—and more effectively understand others. I envision our work in this realm including frequent and deliberately-planned opportunities for breathing and mindfulness techniques, as well as teaching strategies for calming and regulating our emotions, and seeing challenge as welcome opportunity for developing emotional strength, balance and resilience.

With equal emphasis, we will be addressing this critical topic as part of a cohesive and consistent approach to maximizing attentive and mindful behavior in conjunction with developing a clear and transparent process for addressing behavior that doesn’t support respectful interactions with others, nor efficient and effective thinking.

I will provide continued update on how we will be directly and systematically addressing social-emotional learning as well as emphasizing and requiring appropriate behavior to support high performance and achievement in future emails and writings. And I will include strategies for which you can also use at home to reinforce and foster continued growth in these areas.

School Safety

You may have wondered what the large concrete boxes are that sit affront the main entrance. These are large planters that are in the midst of being beautified with aesthetic plantings, and also serve as barriers that prevent direct vehicle access to the front doors from E. Paulding.

Next week, I will be forwarding an overview of the safety drills for each month and provide you with a general sense of when we will conduct them. I will tell you (and the staff) the week that we will conduct the drill, but not the specific date. It is important that we have staff and students able to effectively and efficiently react in a drill situation in the same way they would if it was a real emergency. Please feel free to ask your child how she/he has been instructed to behave in such events, as this will provide you with a view to what your children are being told to do and how they are being required to do it.

While I hope that an actual event of this nature is never forced upon us, I do want everyone in the building to be able to act quickly as trained, and with poise and mindfulness to maximize everyone’s safety and security, which is the true essence of our drills. It is also worth reiterating here that our close relationship with the Fairfield Police Department and their expert guidance is and remains invaluable, and it helps everyone to act as I have outlined above. Their continued presence and support also serves as an indicator to our children that they are community members specialized in protecting and accentuating a climate of respect and courtesy by following rules that serve to keep us safe and able to work together.

It is my hope that you have also noticed an increased staff presence at morning drop-off and the end-of-day pick-up. This is to first provide an increased connection with the community by staff being more visibly present, and secondly, to emphasize a greater sense of security and support for safety.

Tech Insight

From Mrs. Goldberg:

I will be introducing the new typing program to students in the coming weeks, and below is the sequence for K-5. Please encourage typing practice at home. Please also see Appendix A (at the end of this document) for additional details.

Sequence

Typing Agent Scope and Sequence					
	K	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th -12 th
Pre-Keyboarding					
Mouse work (Lesson 0: K2 Mountain)	✓	✓	✓		
Posture (Lesson 1: Key Skills)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Keyboarding					
Home row keys (Unit 1)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Top row keys (Unit 2)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bottom row keys (Unit 3)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sentences and punctuation (Unit 4)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Numbers and symbols (Unit 5)				✓	✓
Practice to build speed (Unit 6-8)				✓	✓
Numeric keypad				✓	✓

Tools for Schools

Schools monitor 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 lead to close monitoring or seeking immediate building maintenance attention. 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>)

Each *Tools for Schools* committee is required to have parent representation. If you would like to join the committee, please send me an email indicating your interest. As I mentioned above, it does require a monthly commitment to meeting, which likely will be immediately following the school day, although time and specific dates for meetings are yet to be determined. If I receive overwhelming responses, I will likely select on a first-come, first-serve basis, and may select two parent representatives.

Important Events and Dates

Walk-a-thon	Friday, October 5 at 9:00am
Fire drill	October 15-19. Sometime during the week
Parent-Teacher Conferences – October 10, 11, 18 Early Dismissal (at 1:40)	See below for specific details
Early Dismissal (at 1:40)	Tuesday, October 23
Halloween Dance	Friday, October 26: 7:00-9:00pm in APR
Halloween Parade	Wednesday, October 31: 2:30pm on black top

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Fall Conferences

Wednesday, October 10, 2018 (Afternoon)	Times for these will be between 2:00pm and 3:30pm
Thursday, October 11, 2018 (Evening)	Times for these conferences will be between 6:00pm and 8:00pm
Thursday, October 18, 2018 (Evening)	Times for these conferences will be between 6:00pm and 8:00pm

Spring Conferences

Wednesday, March 20, 2019 (Afternoon)	Times for these will be between 2:00pm and 3:30pm
Thursday, March 21, 2019 (Evening)	Times for these conferences will be between 6:00pm and 8:00pm
Thursday, March 28, 2019 (Afternoon)	Times for these will be between 2:00pm and 3:30pm

A Few FYIs

Recycling

An important aspect of being a conscious and responsible citizen is acting considerately towards others and our environment. Recycling is a practice that supports that. During lunch, we have students now place their plastic recyclables on the metal cart in the cafeteria and not throw them in any of the garbage bins. This prevents students from throwing regular trash in the recycling bins and recyclables in the regular trash bins. All staff members are aware of this and I have asked them to continually remind the children until it becomes standard practice. I invite you to join us in reminding them of this and to practice recycling outside of school hours.

Roger Sherman Building Committee (RSBC)

Please stay informed and up-to-date on the Roger Sherman Building Committee's work for our upcoming Phase III renovations. The link (<https://www.fairfieldct.org/rsbc>) will provide you updates and progress on the committee's agenda items and minutes for and of past meetings. I will be in close communication with the committee as the planning gets underway and will liaise between you and staff and the committee.

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.

We also encourage you, if you haven't already, to become a member of our PTA, and you will receive all of the relevant information required to do so, as well as upcoming events and meetings in upcoming communication.

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 the community.

Yours truly,

Dr. Ian M. Banner

ibanner@fairfieldschools.org

Follow us on Twitter: @rogershermanllc

See Appendix A, below

Typingagent |

TYPE • TECH • THRIVE

Introducing Typing Agent Instructions for Home & Parent Access

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In today's digital age, teaching students to touch type is imperative. As students become keyboard proficient, this invaluable skill will help them succeed in their school years and will be critical as they pursue further studies, training, or move directly into the work force.

With this in mind, we are excited to inform you that our school now has access to one of the most innovative typing tutors available – a new typing program— Typing Agent. It can be accessed on our school's virtual library or through the Website: fairfieldschool.typingagent.com. Typing Agent is a 100% web-based program that teaches these very important keyboarding skills. Typing Agent has hundreds of lessons, tests, and reinforces learning to type with fun and exciting games and quests for students to enjoy. Research shows that students learn more when they are engaged and having fun.

An important benefit of Typing Agent is that it helps prepare our students to meet nationally established “Common Core State Standards and take online assessments. CCSS's dictate that students must have ample opportunities to demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills specific to their grade level and take part in a variety of rich, structured technology activities as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner. Typing Agent gives us leading edge technology to help our school and your student meet these goals and succeed in this digital age.

Another exciting feature of Typing Agent is that your student can log on to the program from both school and home, this access allows your student to continue to practice keyboarding from home via an internet ready computer, iPad, or Android device. Additionally, you as the parent/guardian have a special Parent Access portal on the Typing Agent website, which allows you to see how your student is progressing in their keyboarding skills with the program.

Student Username: (sent home with each student by 9/21/2018, usually first initial last name, and sometimes includes a #) e.g. ebrown or mtorres2

Password: Qwerty

We hope you will encourage your child to use Typing Agent on a consistent basis in order to partner with us to achieve their highest level of proficiency.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Stephanie Goldberg, Sherman LMS

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TYPING AGENT:

Typing Agent is compatible with both Windows and Mac/Apple desktop computers. It is also iPad and Android compatible.

To access Typing Agent, you will need the following:

1. Access to the Internet.
2. An updated Internet browser such as Firefox, Google Chrome, Internet Explorer Ver. 9 or higher or Safari.