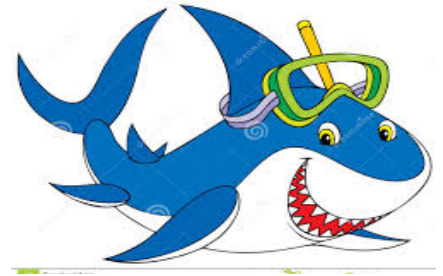


Roger Sherman Elementary School

250 Fern Street

Fairfield, CT 06824

Phone (203) 255-8330



Source: Worldartsme.com

Dr. Ian M. Banner, Principal

Around here, we don't look backwards for very long... We keep moving forward, opening up new doors and doing new things because we're curious...and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths – Walt Disney

July 23, 2018

Dear Parents and Families:

I hope that you are enjoying a wonderful summer and are finding the time to relax, enjoy family and fine friends, and experience the little things that often escape us during the school year. Personally, this summer has been a very busy work one thus far, which, I must admit, is the norm for me. Nonetheless, like my hope for you all, I'm working diligently to enjoy time with my wife—a third grade teacher in town—and my three boys, the youngest of which will be four in a week, the middle one who is five and heading into Kindergarten in September, and the oldest who is 11 and heading into middle school at the start of the school year.

I first want to thank you all for affording me such a wonderful welcome to the Sherman community, and let me say that I truly look forward to working with you and your children, and the wonderful staff at our school. Since my first day at Sherman on July 2, I have been quite busy reviewing schedules and procedures, reviewing the physical building layout, and talking with staff and parents who have availed themselves for a chat, and I welcome much more of such company throughout the summer. Thus, if you'd like to stop by and chat, please email me so we can set up a date and time that works for both of us. Just so you know: I will be on vacation this week—Monday, July 23 through Friday, July 27—and again Monday, August 6 through Friday August 10, and I will be attending various meetings in between and after the aforementioned weeks. Nonetheless, I'd love to chat with you and learn more about Sherman through your experiences.

With that being said, if you are unable to meet in person, don't despair. In an attempt to provide multiple options for you to offer your perspective and insight, I have created a very simple and short open-ended response questionnaire that you can access using the following Google Forms link: <https://goo.gl/forms/YJRzV4r06k5hE6Re2>

A Little Background

I am a firm believer of openness and transparency, and in that very spirit, I'd like to share just a little about my experiences that have informed my perspective on children, learning and leadership, such that I hope it provides a sense of the framework that often directs and influences my decision-making.

Aside from having earned five degrees, I have accrued 20 years of instructional and leadership experience working in Fairfield Public Schools as both a teacher at the elementary level (12 years), and as a building leader at the secondary level (8 years). I have also taught at the graduate level as an adjunct professor at Sacred Heart University, and I have worked with the State's teacher certification licensure program as a teacher-trainer/presenter and head scorer of the teacher portfolio for licensure. Prior to coming to the US, I played soccer with three professional clubs in England, coached professionally with the national governing body, and was head coach of a first division professional women's team while overseeing the youth program. I have also served in numerous roles in this

country, including Director of Coaching, as well as consulting to both youth and college programs, and have thus logged just as many years as experience in coaching as I have in education.

These experiences and my academic pursuits have lead me to view human learning as a meaning-making endeavor and not an exercise in simply acquiring facts and information. As Margaret Mead, a cultural anthropologist, once said: *Children must be taught to think, not what to think*. Even young children need to experience how facts and information inform ideas, thoughts and actions, and they must be provided opportunities use facts to explore and begin to understand how the world works, and how we, as people, work within it. I truly feel that there is no more joy than that derived from experiencing firsthand and supporting the journey of our youngest children towards developing into well-balanced and industrious individuals who are capable of greater levels of acceptance of and collaboration with all people, and to develop a comfort in considering alternative ways of understanding and operating in a diverse and dynamic ecosystem such as ours. And it is through this view, I feel, the purpose and value of education can be realized and understood.

The vision for my role of principal is not unlike any other leadership position in which I have served, which has been to place a premium on excellent instruction and planning rich learning experiences, and to establish a culture and climate of respect, courtesy, collaboration and investment that can be felt by all—children, staff and parents. I feel that little is accomplished unless the people with whom one serves and supports feel valued, involved, and emotionally and physically safe, and I also want them to be clear as to the goals we are aiming to meet, that the standards are high, and that to support such work, we must also enjoy what we do, laugh often, and bring joy to the time we spend together.

I truly look forward to working with and for you, and I am excited to learn from you and your experiences about Sherman elementary.

Reminders, Updates, Important Info

Please remember that the Sherman Reading Night is coming up on Tuesday, July 31 at the Fairfield Public Library starting at 7:00 PM. For those signed up for this, please don't forget to keep logging your hours, and help Fairfield Public Schools reach a town-wide goal of 1,000,000 minutes read this summer. I look forward to seeing you there!

I will provide you with school information and staffing updates for the 2018-2019 school year in an upcoming communication in August. In that sending, I will also inform you as to when student schedules will be available in Infinite Campus once a date/time frame for this is confirmed.

Yours truly,

Dr. Ian M. Banner

ibanner@fairfieldschools.org

Follow us on Twitter: @rogershermanllc