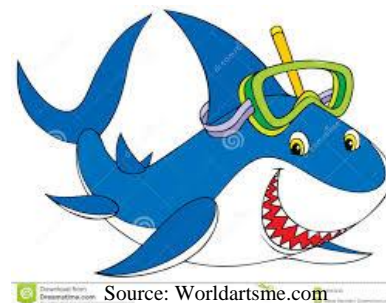


Roger Sherman Elementary School

250 Fern Street

Fairfield, CT 06824

Phone (203) 255-8330



CT School of Distinction (2019-2021)

#5 Ranked Elementary School in CT (US News & World Report, 2021)

Dr. Ian M. Banner, Principal

Trying to be the best is always a goal but working to constantly get better is far more important (Sinek)

August 16, 2022

Dear Parents and Families:

I am hoping that you have and are still enjoying a delightful summer. Personally, I was able to take some time from my office and the behind-the-scenes work that summer requires and enjoy it with my family, which included a little vacation time in Boston and Mystic. Needless to say, we thoroughly enjoyed it, and overall, we simply appreciated opportunities to embrace some low-key and much-needed family time together. I also made a commitment this summer to be sure that my time with family when taking vacation days were reserved only for that and not for addressing emails or work-related items. However, this remains an ongoing goal for me.

In turning my thoughts towards the start of the school year, it goes without saying the last few years have forced us all to face and confront the most unusual of circumstances, especially as it pertains to school. Unsuspectingly, last year made it very apparent to the school personnel that the distancing requirements and restrictions drained many of our resources and placed a heavy burden on our capacity to connect with each other in the ways we had enjoyed prior to the pandemic. At every turn, it seemed that we were required to rethink and revise even the most minor practices to ensure distancing amongst students and staff. However, at this time, we expect to return in two weeks to the way we operated school prior to Covid—without any of the mandated distancing restrictions, and we want to take full advantage of this in as many ways as we can throughout the school year while focusing on our core requirement of maximizing student learning.

As we embark on another year here at Sherman, I can say that I continue to be proud of how we (our students, staff and community) have embraced the challenges with which we have been presented, and I am most proud of the fact that we firmly adhered to all of the necessary requirements of practice and/or policy and yet remained committed to establishing and meeting challenging goals for student learning and development all while having provided an environment for all to feel safe, seen, heard, loved and valued. Thus, I am, as always, very excited to get this coming year underway.

Thank You

On behalf of the staff and the entire community, I'd like to thank our fabulous and supportive PTA for all their efforts and especially those this summer in renovating the Sherman staff lounge, which will be unveiled to staff at some point next week. I also want to thank our FPS operations department and Mr. Papageorge for his support of this work.

It goes without saying that another enormous thank you is extended to Mr. Ceste and Mr. Pena for their work this summer to prepare the building for the start of the school year all while working around two summer camps.

A Few Items of Note

Below are a few important items to note.

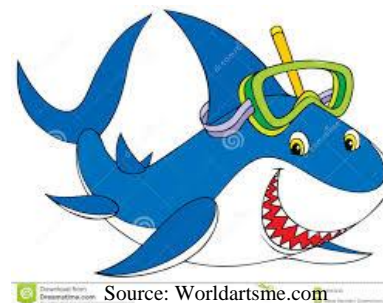
1. Orientation for all students (K-5) will be held on Friday, August 26.

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	Time	Overview
Kindergarten	8:30 – 9:30am	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Short presentation in APR (students and parents)2. K teachers take their students and parents to their classroom3. Bus ride starting at 9:00am4. Arrive back and dismissal at 9:30am
<i>New</i> students entering grade 1 – 5	10:00 – 10:25am	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Short presentation in APR (students and parents) and short building tour2. New students and families directed to their respective classroom to meet their teacher
Current Students entering grade 1-5	10:30 – 10:55am	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Current students and families go straight to their new classroom to meet their 22-23 teacher

3. I will provide you with school information and staffing updates for the 2022-2023 school year in an upcoming communication next week and after class placements have been released. Please note that we anticipate class placements being made available in Infinite Campus late afternoon on Monday (8/22). However, this is yet to be confirmed and once it is, I will pass along to you this information.
4. Because the number of classes required in some grade levels differ from last year, there have needed to be a few changes to teacher assignments, and again, this information will be forthcoming, and in my next sending, I will also include the new staff members joining the Sherman family.
5. Our fantastic secretaries report back to school this Wednesday, August 17, and our nurse reports back in the afternoon of Monday, August 22. All certified staff report back on Wednesday, August 24 and have three full days of scheduled work and meetings in preparation for the start of the school year on Monday, August 29.

As always, I truly look forward to working with and for you this coming year, and I am again excited to partner with you and the wonderful staff to support our Sherman elementary students and community. Let's go Sharks!

Important Links for this Year

The approved district **Student Calendar 2022-23** (updated and approved on 12/14/21):
<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1659638058/fairfieldschoolsorg/vq5nctu6pdasknfrwg1k/22-23FPSSStudentCalendar-BoEApproved12-14-21JuneteenthnoGradandnoPMconf.pdf>

The approved district **A-F Elementary Calendar 2022-2023** (updated and approved on 5/2/22):
<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1651509836/fairfieldschoolsorg/lumdecfcdoxlnqxisl/22-23FPSSStudentCalendarA-F.pdf>

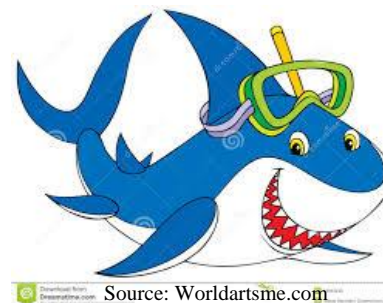
The **Open House – 2022:**

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Tuesday, September 13, 2022, from 6:00 – 8:00pm.

Sherman's Student Handbook:

The new revised handbook for 22-23 will be uploaded soon. The 21-22 link is here for now.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zJk_SA2dzLbP5jQ6PgFjwwlaRd-ioZ37/view

A Little Personal Background

Each year, I include a little overview of my personal life and experiences and perspective that have guided my current career path especially for our new families. I am a firm believer of openness and transparency, and in that very spirit, I'd like to share just a little about me 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.

I am a father of three wonderful boys, one of which will be entering his sophomore year, the middle one will be entering fourth grade and the youngest will be entering third grade. Two of them are avid and very competent athletes while the other is much more of a dancer and fashion designer. While they are wildly different in some ways, they are all caring and thoughtful individuals who derive their passion and inspiration from differing means. My wife is an elementary teacher in the Fairfield Public School system and will be entering into her second year as a first-grade teacher having previously taught 14 years in fourth and third grades, respectively. Need it be said that we are all contemplating the start of a new school year from similar angles.

I hold five degrees and I have accrued 20+ years of instructional and leadership experience 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) and at the elementary level (4 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 had many varied experiences one of which was playing soccer (football to me) with three professional clubs in England. Additionally, I 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 coaching 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 of experience in coaching as I have in education.

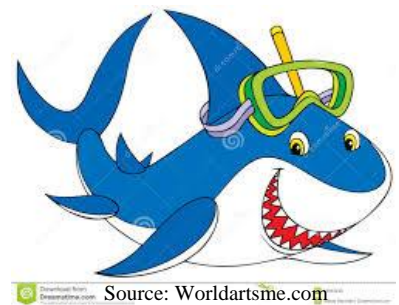
These experiences and my academic pursuits have led me to view human learning as a meaning-making endeavor and not an exercise in simply acquiring facts and information. As Margaret Mead, a cultural anthropologist, once said: *Children must be taught to think, not what to think*. Even young children need to experience how facts and information inform ideas, thoughts and actions, and they must be provided opportunities to 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. I also feel it is essential that children develop a comfort in considering numerous 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 best realized and understood.

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My role as principal is not unlike any other leadership position in which I have served, and this is to place a premium on critical elements of teaching, which include determining clear and ambitious goals for students' learning, planning meaningful learning experiences, employing effective instruction, and establishing a culture and climate of respect, courtesy by fostering close connections with others—children, staff and parents alike. Moreover, I feel that little is accomplished unless the people with whom one serves and supports feel valued, trusted, involved, and emotionally and physically safe.

As part of our on-going efforts at Sherman, we continue to foster greater clarity in explicating our learning outcomes for students and staff, increase our capacity to support everyone's emotional, psychological and physical health and wellbeing, as well as to extend our efforts to beautify our outside areas and to enhance our Sherman landscaping. As such, our intent is to provide an appearance that portrays simplicity and order—a Zen-like feel—that we believe contributes to the overall calm and purpose-driven mindset that we're aiming to establish in our school. As such, we want our physical structures to contribute to stimulating an energy that encourages poise, focus, ambition, kindness and empathy in everyone, and because we deem these elements to be the seat on which any and all achievement rests.

As always, please reach out with questions and provide feedback, and please use my primary email address below (not the Gmail account).

Be Strong, Be Smart, Be Kind. #Shermanstrong!

Yours truly,

Dr. Ian M. Banner

ibanner@fairfieldschools.org

Follow us on Twitter: @rogershermanllc