



# Roger Sherman Elementary

September 2009

## Principal's Corner

L. Moss

### Welcome Back to Roger Sherman School!

Every year it seems as if time off during the summer continues to fly by quickly and before you realize it we have to come together to find our classroom, get back to work, enroll in fall sports, and attend Open House. In the following paragraphs I plan to outline ways in which the home and school can work together to ensure overall academic success.

The best way to kick off the school year on a positive note is for students to come to school everyday on time and for the entire school day. Consistent attendance is critical to student achievement. If your child is not in school he/she can't learn. Also, there is research and evidence that regular attendance directly impacts significant test-score gains.

So remember:

- Make sure your child comes to school everyday.

- Don't schedule medical appointments during school hours.
- Don't take your child out of school for a family trip or activity.
- Don't allow your child to be tardy. Have your child get ready the night before so he can get to school on time.



A second way that you can help your child succeed at school is to support homework practices. The best way to do this is to designate a time and place for homework to be completed. The location and time to do homework should be consistent. Homework should not be completed in front of the TV, but in a quiet place with very little distraction. Homework should also be a priority as it is a way to improve achievement and develop valuable study

skills. Homework builds independent learning and responsibility. Homework is an opportunity for parents to see what is going on in school, so help can be given at home. Homework is also a way for students to recognize that learning can take place at home as well as school.

Another way to ensure student success at school is to encourage students to read everyday at home. Since students spend on average 15% of their waking time in school and the other 85% outside of school which means you have the most educational influence over your child. Not only encourage your child to read, get the whole family involved by reading aloud to each other. Be a reading role model by making sure your child sees you reading. Have lots of reading materials around such as: newspapers, magazines, books, or catalogues. Go to the library often. It is free and it has a better selection than any book store. Read in unusual places such as under a tree, on the floor, in the park, in a tent, upstairs, or downstairs. When it's fun

and interesting and everybody's doing it, parents can make reading exciting and important for children.

Finally, get involved in volunteer activities at your child's school. Join the **TPT** (Teachers and Parents Together) and attend family after school events. By becoming an active parent your child will see that you feel school is important. We have a great group of parents/officers who could really use your help. Some of the ways in which you can help are to translate fliers, or translate meetings, volunteer for specific events such as book fairs, the Snow Ball, and the end of the year picnic.

I hope to see many of you at school events this year. Have a good fall and let's work together as a team to see your child become the best student he/she can be. Best wishes for a successful school year.

### *Pre-K and Kindergarten*

**S. Conway, M. Rarey,  
K. Nitkowski, R. Natcher**

What a great year! It seems like some of the children are preschool naturals: following right along with the routine and getting into the swing of things. We are now having a full sized meeting time at the beginning of our day.

Each day it is someone's special day. That person gets to sit up front with Mrs. Rarey, hold the flag, help with the calendar and the weather chart, choose first at centers time, be the line leader, and be first in line for washing hands after our classroom elf "Preek" has checked on everyone's clean up job. We went to music and gym just like the big kids do.



Mohamed, Spencer B., Julianna C., Mariah, Sergio, Julianna T., and Raul making transportation cookies.

The children have been studying about transportation. We made our very own school buses this week with wheels that go around (just like in our favorite song – "The wheels on the bus go round and round"). It was a quick, simple project in order to determine their ability to cut, glue, write their name, and follow directions. Quite a few children are already writing their names or making letter-like shapes...a first step to writing! We also had large vehicles in the block corner, Row, Row,

Row Your Boat in the book corner on the tape player with the book, transportation cookie cutters in play dough, as well as making our wheel-painted award. Friday we drew our first pictures in our journals. We drew self-portraits. Our journals are for special pictures that then get dated and narrated if desired. We will work on them all year long.

Mrs. Conway's preschool class has been working hard learning the rules and routines of school. We are learning to use manners and treat our friends kindly. We go to music, media, and gym in nice, quiet, straight lines without any problems. We can sit at meeting times with our bodies still, our voices quiet, our ears listening, and our eyes watching.

We are proud to be in school! We have made some beautiful artwork. Come take a look at our smiley faced apples hanging on our bulletin board in the hallway.

Now that Autumn is here, we are looking forward to our field trip to Norton Brothers Farm for a hayride, apple picking, a special fall snack and a mini pumpkin.

Oh boy!



In Kindergarten we have been off to a busy start learning our first letters M, S, R, and T.

Students have completed their Phonemic Awareness Inventory.

All parents are invited to our Open House on Tuesday, October 6th from 5-6 p.m.

Hope to see everyone there!

## *First Grade*

**A. Weaver, W. McKay,  
B. St. John, K. Kalber**

Grade one students are well underway with their classroom routine. We have been predicting outcomes, reading stories, and sequencing events. In math, we have been reviewing numbers and sorting and classifying objects. Students have been discussing class rules that promote respect for themselves, others, and their school. They have spent time with their peers sharing what makes them unique and special. Grade one teachers are planning a field trip to the Meriden Public Library. Look for more information in the near future.

At home, please establish a homework routine and check your child's folder. Read with your child daily and review and sight words, letters, or

number skills your child's teacher may have sent home this month.



Elyssa and Derek are conducting a friendship interview in Mrs. Kalber's class.

## *Second Grade*

**K. Baransky, A. Jensen,  
J. Crouse, A. Sharnick**

**Welcome back to a wonderful year!**

The second grade has been very busy. We have been busy learning about our government.



We celebrated Constitution Day by holding our own Constitutional Convention.

We elected delegates and then voted on our own Bill of Rights. We walked together as a United Second Grade to our convention.



Delegates Olivia and Vanessa signing the Second Grade Bill of Rights.

In Language Arts, we have read two stories in our anthology: The Mixed-up Chameleon and Get up and Go. We have been working on sentence structure, and spelling as well as adding details to our writing. We have been learning about how we are all different. We are learning about what the main idea is.

In science, we have been learning about the life cycle of insects. Many classes are studying the life of mealworms as they change from a larva to a pupa to an adult insect.

In math, we have been reviewing our numbers and practicing our math facts.

Make sure you practice these at home!

We have our first field trip to the Durham Fair coming up soon! We can't wait to get our "passports" and learn around the fair.

## Third Grade

**B. Higley, A. Bryers,  
K. Wilson, B. Cabell**

On behalf of the third grade teachers, welcome to the 2009-2010 school year. This year promises to be one of growth and student achievement. As with every school year, there are some things that stay the same and some things that change. We welcome Mr. Cabell to the third grade. He previously taught on the first grade team. Mr. Cabell brings with him many resources on how to teach effectively, especially in writing workshop. This school year started as many others did, the students have been actively engaged in learning the routines of third grade. Before teachers begin teaching the curriculum, there is always time devoted to teachers modeling for students expected behaviors, how to transition through the school, and the standards of a third grade learner. It has been quite impressive to see the third grade students walking quietly through the halls and working cooperatively in the classrooms.



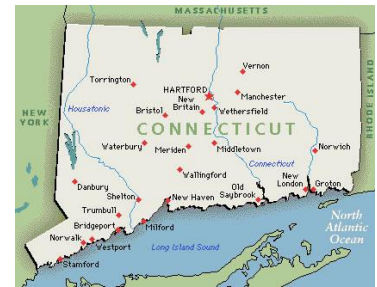
Some of the curriculum covered in September revolves around story elements and making predictions. The students are given time to read independently each day so they can develop into life long readers. In math, the students have engaged in a unit on graphing and data collection. The students have used on-line resources to create bar graphs and pictographs that are excellent visual representations. Also, third grade students are engaging in an "All about me" project as a part of the social studies curriculum. Have a great fall!

## Fourth Grade

**A. DiGennaro, K. Fedora, F. Wagner**

The pools are becoming cooler, the grills are being used less and less, the mornings are chilly, and days are growing shorter.....in other words... WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!!!! The new school year is full of promise, and Roger Sherman, which made safe harbor last year, is excited about the upcoming months of school. Fourth grade has hit the ground running and shows no sign of slowing down. The students, only in class for three weeks, have already accomplished a great deal. The fourth

grade has completed the first unit in math, place value to 10,000, and early indications are great growth from the pretest they took the first week of school. With elapsed time and fractions coming up later in the year this is a fantastic start. In reading, the students have begun their guided reading groups and are on their third story in the fourth grade anthology. The new fourth graders have also completed two or three writing prompts in the three week span.



Social Studies this year will focus around the State of Connecticut and different regions of the United States, and preparations for these lessons began last week with the teaching of basic map skills. The rest of the year will be full of hands on learning and forward thinking in all areas as the teachers, Mrs. Fedora; Ms. Wagner; Mr. DiGennaro, are energized and ready to help the students move forward in their education. So again, welcome back, and enjoy your school year.

## *Fifth Grade*

**S. Owen, A. Abbott, R. Tellez**

The fifth grade students in Ms. Abbott, Mrs. Owen, and Mrs. Tellez's classes are off to a great start this year. The fifth graders have been working hard on showing respect for self, others, and school. They are taking on the responsibility of being the role models for the younger students, and they are doing a wonderful job!

The students have jumped right into place value as our first unit in math. They are learning to identify numbers through the millions period and decimal numbers through the hundredths place value. They have learned to round numbers, compare numbers, and order numbers from least to greatest and greatest to least. They have also identified numbers on a number line. The classes have shown growth in these areas in just the first few weeks of school! We are constantly reminding the students to master their facts, which means they should be practicing nightly. We are looking for them to increase speed and accuracy in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

We are already 3 stories in to our Anthology book and the students have

experienced both realistic fiction and historical fiction. These are genres the students can relate to because the stories have been based on characters their age who deal with problems and situations that real people have. We have also begun learning about the 4 types of sentences and subjects of sentences in grammar. We have been writing expository essays on how we spent our summer vacations. The students are learning to plan their writing and organize their thoughts. We are using lots of descriptive details in our writing to explain our thinking.

The students in fifth grade have been working hard to start the year so successfully! We are looking forward to many exciting adventures in our classes!

*PBS*

**PBS Committee**



Welcome back! PBS is off to a great start this year! PBS stands for Positive Behavior Support. This is a school-wide discipline policy that focuses on rewarding positive behavior. PBS teaches

proactive strategies for teaching appropriate student behaviors in order to create a positive school environment. PBS is reinforced throughout the school in classrooms, as well as in non-classroom settings like the hallways and bathrooms.

Here at Roger Sherman School, positive behaviors are reinforced by yellow tickets. Your child will receive a yellow ticket when a teacher sees your child demonstrating a positive behavior. When an entire classroom is displaying a correct behavior, the entire class may be rewarded with a blue ticket. Students save these tickets for rewards. September's reward is extra recess and a popsicle outside for ten yellow tickets. Each month there is a new activity in which students can participate.

*MLI, Art, Music,*

*Media, PE*

**M. Muir, M. Ferazzi, B. Kaplan,  
B. Starrett, K. Davis, B. Poggio**



**September News from  
the Art Room**

Here we are again, in another new and exciting year. In art, we spend the

first couple of weeks reviewing – first the rules, and then the lines and shapes we will be using. Students might be coming home with papers that look like a lot of lines and that is exactly what it is! We review what we already know, but may have forgotten, and then add on to our lessons from there.

### **Star Artists**

Every week at the end of each class, I try to pick one student at a time that has been following the rules of respect. This student is rewarded with a certificate, and an art supply to take home. Their name is announced over the intercom and a star with their name on it is posted outside my doorway.

### **Volunteers Needed**

Anyone who is interested in volunteering for the art program, please contact me by phone, email or send in a note. Some responsibilities include copying, cutting, hanging student art work and helping create props for the music concerts.

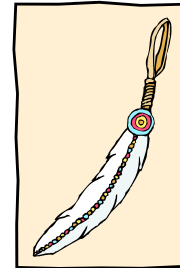


Early September is always a period of getting reacquainted with the school routines. In the computer lab, we initially focused on the routines while in the lab, and the PBS expectations that allow for optimum student learning.

Kindergarteners have been learning how to log onto the computer, and how to use a mouse and keypad. They have been enjoying some of the programs that reinforce some language arts skills. First graders have done a great job of logging on with their own user names and passwords. They are proud of their ability to create more involved documents. Second graders started the year by creating an acrostic poem with graphics depicting the letters of their names. They are now writing about the changes that come with Fall.

The upper grades have been exploring their Social Studies themes in MLT. Third grade is creating a web about themselves in Inspiration. Fourth grade is exploring their own state of Connecticut and turning it into a PowerPoint Presentation and Fifth grade is creating an Inspiration web about a

Native American tribe or nation of their choosing. We discussed the different cultures of different tribes, as well as the impact of the local environment on their lifestyles.



With most projects for grades 1 - 5, there is a rubric which shows the goals of the project, and the success of the student in meeting those goals. The rubric is graded and stapled to each completed project. It is an easy way for students and their parents to view the individual student's achievement on each project.



Students are working on learning songs and various dances.



We are working on increasing student stamina and agility through organized games.



Your children have started to check out books from the school library. Your child will be able to bring this book home and will have the opportunity to check out another book upon returning the book to the school library.

### *Volunteer Information*

**B. Higley, B. Poggio,  
N. Murray, A. Edson**

Any questions about the Volunteer Program can be directed to Mrs. Edson at (203) 238 - 1286.



*TPT*

**Executive Board**

Sign up to be a member of the TPT. It is only \$3.00 per family. You can send in a note to your child's teacher to receive another form for membership.

**Welcome back everyone!**

**The first meeting  
will be on  
October 13,  
2009 at 6:30.**

### *Reading Department*

**J. Flood, M. Larsen, A. Luz,  
S. Oneto, L. Torres**



To start the school year, we thought we'd discuss ways to make reading fun. Here are some ways to inspire a love of reading at home:

- Regularly visit the public library.
- Set aside 20 minutes each day for reading.
- Find a quiet space – turn off video games, TV's, computers, and music.
- Make it enjoyable by finding a cozy place to cuddle – make a fort, read outside on a blanket, bring your favorite things with you (teddy bear, hat, etc.) – you're limited only to your own imagination!

- Introduce the title, look at the pictures, discuss the topic, and ask your child what the book may be about. If your child is unsure of the topic, you can provide information.

- If your child is not yet reading, read to your child. Change your voice for different characters. Use interesting expression.

- If your child is beginning to read, take turns reading with him.

- For children who are fluent readers, consider having them read aloud to you.

- No matter which level your child is at, make sure he is thinking about the story. Pause to ask questions. Ask your child what he is noticing or wondering. Talk about what you've noticed or wondered. Does this story remind you of anything?

Just remember to keep it positive to encourage your child's love of reading!

### *From the Nurse's Office*

Please feel free to call the nurse's office with any questions or concerns at 639 – 5533.



This newsletter brought to you by the Public Relations Committee of Roger Sherman School.