



FREEMAN FOCUS

SPRING | SUMMER 2026

A Special Thank You...

Thank you to our students, staff, parents, and the entire Freeman community for the opportunity to serve over the past fifteen years as the Freeman Superintendent. It has truly been an honor to be part of a school district and community that values relationships, supports one another through challenges, and continually puts students at the center of every decision. The connections built here, the lessons learned, and the shared experiences will always stay with me!

Freeman is a special place because of its people. I have been continually inspired by the dedication of our staff, the resilience and character of our students, the partnership of our families, and the unwavering support of this community. Together, you have created a culture that not only strives for excellence, but also leads with care, respect, and a genuine commitment to doing what is right for our kids.

As we move toward the end of this school year, I am confident in our collective ability to finish strong. This is a time to continue lifting each other up, celebrating milestones both big and small, and staying focused on providing meaningful opportunities for every student.

Serving this community has been the greatest privilege of my professional life. Thank you for your trust, your support, and the opportunity to be part of something so special.

Pride - Commitment - Caring
WE are Freeman

Sincerely,
Randy L. Russell, Ph.D.
Superintendent



2026 STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S AWARD FOR
EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE for **ACHIEVEMENT**



Awarded by State Superintendent Chris Reykdal

Freeman School District was recently named one of just 25 districts statewide to receive the Washington State Superintendent's Award for Educational Excellence in Student Achievement, recognizing top performance in academic outcomes and student growth. This inaugural award highlights the district's strong results across key areas such as attendance, early learning readiness, advanced coursework participation, reading and math achievement, and graduation rates.

"This recognition is a direct reflection of the dedication, talent, and commitment of our students, staff, families, and community. Every day, our educators work tirelessly to support, challenge, and inspire students to reach their full potential, and this award affirms the collective effort it takes to build a culture of learning and continuous improvement."

- Randy L. Russell, Ph.D., Superintendent



PACE Character Traits

July - **GENEROSITY**

August - **GRATITUDE**

SOLAR PROJECT UPDATE



- We are near completion of the Freeman School District Solar Project
- This includes a 100 kW ground-mounted solar system
- It is funded by a grant through the WSU Energy Program, at **no cost** to the district or taxpayers
- It is made possible through partnerships with Partners for Rural Washington and Zero Emissions Northwest
- The project will reduce energy costs and allow savings to be reinvested in student programs



YOUR SAFETY, SECURITY & TECH LEVY DOLLARS AT WORK

While we recently learned that our district will no longer qualify for Local Effort Assistance (LEA) funding in 2026 due to an increase in our community's total assessed property value, this change reflects the strength and growth of our local community. Although this shift will impact our budget for the 2026–2027 school year, it also highlights the important role our community plays in supporting our schools. Local levy funding remains essential in ensuring we can continue to provide high-quality educational opportunities for our students, and we are incredibly grateful for the ongoing support of our community in helping us meet the needs of every learner. We'll continue to update you on the district projects funded by your levy support.

- Critical Incident Campus Mapping - COMPLETE
- Crosswalk Sign - installation coming soon
- K-8 MPR Lighting Replacement - summer 2026
- Playground Safety/Maintenance - summer 2026
- Parking Lot Repairs - summer 2026

Six-Time State Champs

The Freeman HS Trap team ended another incredible season by defending their State Championship for the **6th season in a row**, and taking home 11 trophies overall! Congrats to Coach Greg Vail and these amazing students!



Bi-County Honor Band & Choir



Twenty-one Freeman Middle and High School students auditioned and were selected to represent Freeman at the Northeast-B Music Educator's Association Honor Band and Choir Concerts, held March 13 at the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center at Gonzaga University. Congratulations to band and choir director James Jydstrup and our talented Freeman musicians on this outstanding achievement!





FREEMAN'S NEXT ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

Freeman School District is pleased to announce Michael Allen as the new Freeman Elementary Principal. With 18 years in the district, he brings strong experience in instructional leadership, student-centered learning, and building an inclusive school culture. Currently serving as our K-8 Principal Assistant and Middle School Athletic Director, Mr. Allen is known for his collaborative approach, high expectations, and commitment to continuous improvement.

"Mr. Allen has dedicated himself to serving our district in so many capacities, which has well-prepared him for FES Principal! He knows our district, cares about our staff, and is committed to continuing our tradition of excellence. I have always found him to be a thoughtful listener and willing to try new ideas. Congratulations, Mr. Allen!"

- Barb Gady, 1st Grade Teacher

"I have had the opportunity to work closely with Mike and have seen firsthand his commitment to our students, his work ethic, and his ability to build strong relationships. I am truly excited to see the positive impact Mike will have as our next elementary principal. - Lisa Phelan, FES Principal and Incoming Superintendent



Our students recently took center stage in two outstanding musical performances! The Middle School production of *High School Musical Jr.* featured 28 talented students from grades 5-7, who wowed audiences with their energy, teamwork, and stage presence. Meanwhile, our Elementary students shined in *Giants in the Sky*, with an impressive 70 participants from grades 3-5. We are incredibly proud of all the students for their hard work, courage, and creativity—these productions were a true celebration of the arts in our schools! Thank you to Mrs. Thompson, Ms. Nelson and Mrs. Beazer for their volunteer support.



2026 PACE STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

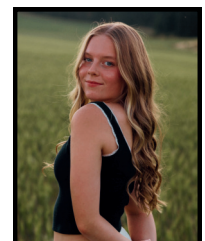
Partners Advancing Character Education (PACE) began in 2009 in Spokane Valley to promote the importance of good character through partnerships with schools. Every spring Freeman is honored to select a PACE Student of the Year for each of our three schools. These students were recognized and celebrated at the 2026 PACE Awards ceremony on Wednesday, April 29th for consistently demonstrating exceptional character, and for bringing character to light for themselves, their classmates, their schools and community.



Audrina Kazmi
5th Grade



Hallie Tenner
8th Grade



Mae Cashmere
12th Grade

Congratulations Audrina, Hallie and Mae!
Thank you for making Freeman proud!



Freeman School District #358
 15001 S Jackson Road
 Rockford, WA 99030

Freeman School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employee has been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Civil Rights, Title IX, and Section 504 Compliance Coordinator: Randy Russell, russell@freemansd.org, 509-291-3695, 15001 S Jackson Rd. Rockford, WA 99030

**FBLA
 STATE**



Twenty-five Freeman students attended the State FBLA Competition in downtown Spokane, April 22-24, showcasing their skills and professionalism. Nine students placed in the top 10 of their respective events, and sophomore Emma Dreyer qualified for nationals in Intro to Public Speaking. Congrats to advisor Kyle Monasmith and all of our outstanding FBLA participants!!!



COMING UP AT FREEMAN

- 5/9 FHS FFA Plant Sale - starting at 9am (while supplies last)
- 5/11 Spring Concert (grades 3-5) - 6pm - HS Blue Gym
- 5/22 Snow Make-Up Day - NO SCHOOL
- 5/25 Memorial Day - NO SCHOOL
- 5/26 Spring Concert (grades 6-12) - 7pm - HS Blue Gym
- 5/27 School Board Meeting - 6:00pm - PRTC Building
- 6/6 High School Graduation - 1:00pm - HS Main Gym
- 6/9 School Board Meeting - 3:00pm - PRTC Building
- 6/9 8th Grade Promotion - 6:00pm - HS Blue Gym
- 6/10 Last Day of School - early release at 12:30pm

Check out Freeman's website at www.freemansd.org for information regarding additional activity dates/times.

Hagan Grant Recipients

Freeman School District is excited to share that four grant applications were fully funded by the Hagan Foundation, totaling \$14,985 in support of innovative programs that benefit our students and staff. Guided by its mission to maximize impact and expand educational opportunities for youth, the Hagan Opportunities Grants awarded funding to a variety of projects at Freeman, including a Student-Led Yearbook Program, Scottie Bots, Shoebox Tasks to Support Special Needs, and School Communication and Inclusion Boards. We are incredibly grateful for this generous support, which helps enhance learning experiences and promote inclusion across our schools.

Check out our amazing teachers and administrators below who recently attended the Hagan Opportunities Reception and spoke about the impact of these projects. From left to right: Joanna Yearta, Jim Straw, Stacey Rawson, Lisa Phelan, Amanda Kazmi, Barb Gady, Hannah Warr, Kelly Neely, Board Chair Annie Keebler and Randy Russell.



FREEMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT
 PRIDE | COMMITMENT | CARING