



The Bagpiper

June 10, 2026

Reporting Freeman's news since 2009

Volume 12, Issue 3

State cuts TK funding, leaving thousands without early education access

By Paige Fricke
Staff writer

Washington State legislators cut Transitional Kindergarten (TK) funding by 25% for the 2026-2027 school year. How will this affect Washington families?

Student achievement scores in math and literacy are constantly declining throughout the globe, not only in Washington.

"TK has definitely made a positive impact on our students, especially as they get ready for kindergarten," Superintendent Randy Russell said.

Studies show that former TK students consistently outperform other peers that did not attend a TK program.

"We've had such a benefit from having Transitional Kindergarten as a school," TK

teacher Amanda Kazmi said. "Our kids are so prepared to go into Kindergarten that teachers are reporting they're ready to dive into more advanced skills."

Educators all around the state are understandably frustrated. No single student deserves to be denied access to early learning opportunities, especially kids that need the extra help.

Russell and incoming Superintendent Lisa Phelan went to advocate for TK-12 funding to the Washington State legislature in February, meeting with individual legislators and testifying in front of education committees.

"Nobody wanted to listen to anything about funding education for TK-12," Russell said.

This budget cut is harmful, not only to the early childhood learners, but to the

community and parents.

Removing slots for the next school year prevents families from giving their children early schooling. Parents work and stay-at-home parents are a lot less common due to inflation and the cost of living. With that, parents need a place for their kids to go to during the workday.

Leaving children without early education can lead to developmental problems in the future.

Freeman had TK funding cut like most districts across the state.

"Freeman has 20 slots for the 26-27 school year," Russell said. "That's approximately half the slots we've been able to offer for the last three years. We won't be able to fill one of our three teaching positions and we will have to adjust the rest of the TK staff."

Art show celebrates student creations



Brooke Forkner's art students celebrated a year of creating at the annual art show on May 26. Parents, students and staff enjoyed a glimpse of the variety of projects from the year.

All photos Brooke Forkner

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Band and Choir concert a hit

The band and choir classes gave a final concert performance on May 26. Each group played a selection of pieces they've worked on this past year. James Jydstrup (staff) also gave out awards earned by various band and choir members. The night finished up with the band being awarded the Above and Beyond award by Dr. Randy Russell for the countless hours they put in supporting their fellow students throughout the school year.



Photo Lane Matthews

James Jydstrup (staff) directs the middle school and high school choirs in a combined song.



Photo Lane Matthews

Senior Ava Aylward



Photo Lane Matthews

The high school choir performs.



Photo Lane Matthews

Seniors Josiah Kann and Josiah Bessire



Photo Lane Matthews

Junior Evan Smith



Photo Lane Matthews

Senior Avery Boswell



Photo Lane Matthews

Knowledge Bowl league champs, 9th in state

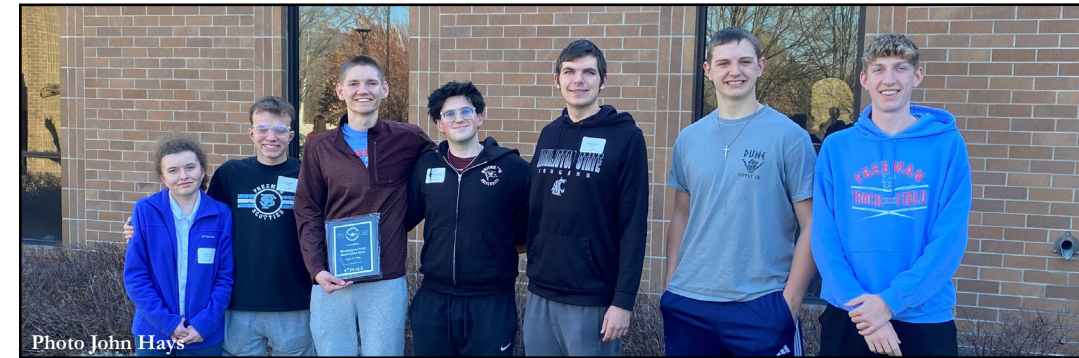


Photo John Hays

The Knowledge Bowl team placed 9th at state.

By Audrey Santman
Staff writer

Knowledge Bowl is an academic competition where students answer questions in a variety of topics, including math, science, and history.

The varsity team was seniors Josiah Kann (captain), Eli Cotton, Matthew Wigen and Colton Wolfnberger, junior Cooper Florence, and sophomore Hailee Cotton.

The JV team consisted of seniors Mae Cashmere, Jared Dryden and Jackson Smith and Rylan Talley, and juniors Micah Bessire and Max Kemble.

A competition is similar

to game shows like *Jeopardy*. A question is read by the speaker, and the team has to work together to answer the question. When the team thinks they have the correct answer, they press the buzzer to give their answer.

"With a correct answer, your team gets one point out of 50 questions," Bessire said.

There are multiple sections of this, with many different types of questions, some that you can blurt out and others that need to be answered with pencil and paper.

"After all four sections, the points from each round and correct answer are tallied for a total score out of 200," Bessire

said.

Coach John Hays decided to continue coaching Knowledge Bowl after retiring from teaching science at the high school.

"1 point is awarded for each correct answer, and there is no penalty for wrong answers," Hays said of the scoring.

Hays was proud of the team's performance this year.

"The Knowledge Bowl team finished first in the 2B Bi-county league this year," Hays said. "They made it to the state semi-finals, finishing in 9th overall. The team has had a great season this year and has done very well."



Photo John Hays

The Knowledge Bowl team wins the district championship.

New classes coming for 2026-27

By Chloe Kostal
Staff writer

Counselor Kaela Holm is working on adding some new classes for next year.

"We are scheduled to be adding AP Statistics, AP Psychology, and then we are also adding a Storytelling in Books and Media class that is a sister course to Introduction to Film that Mr. Thompson teaches," Holm said.

To add new elective courses, they first have to make sure the teacher is certified to teach the course. Then they see if they can fit it into the teachers schedule.

"So teachers have to be certified in a subject area in order to teach it," Holm explained. "Then, they fill out a Google form and let us know what the course could look like.

Then Principal Smith and I go over it. Smith takes a look at it to make sure that it aligns with what they're able to teach."

One of the classes they have tried to add that didn't make it onto the schedule for next year is AP Human Geography.

"We attempted to fill an AP Human Geography course," Holm said. "It had a lot of great interest. Unfortunately, it just didn't fit."

Trap takes state for the 6th time

By Chloe Kostal
Staff writer

This year's trap team has won their 5th consecutive state title.

Coach Greg Vail started the season with some goals for the team.

"My personal goals for the team are simple," Vail said. "I want to ensure that we continue to represent the same values that have defined this program over the past 14 years. I want the team to keep growing and to remain a place where students can have fun, stay safe, and build lasting friendships."

Junior Maddy Johnson is a 3-year member of the team. She has a pre-shot routine to help her shoot her best.

Johnson preps "with my squad, watching birds standing behind the houses, and being quiet for the last round and having my gun ready."

Johnson shot on team 2 at state.

Vail likes to set goals and motivate his shooters by having every student set three goals: a team goal, a personal trapshoot-



Photo Greg Vail
Team one brought home the state championship. Chase Jacot (9), Tucker Hawk (12), Drew Greger (12), Rex McGowan (11) and Austin Guinn (12).

ing goal, and a personal life goal.

"I work with them to break those larger goals into smaller, more realistic short-term goals that will help them progress steadily toward their end of year goal," Vail said.

Senior Austin Guinn finished his final season by winning state with his teammates on Team 1.

"I wanted to shoot 100," Guinn said of his personal goal. "I have never shot 100."

Vail encourages students to consider trying Trap in the future.

"Trapshooting is unique in that it is truly a lifelong sport,"



Photo Greg Vail
The senior members of the Trap team.

Vail said. "It is not uncommon to see individuals ranging from 60 to 90 years old still actively competing. As long as someone can safely handle a firearm, they can continue to participate, regardless of physical limitations. Over the past 14 years, our program has also helped provide opportunities beyond high school for students. Many of our students have gone on to earn scholarships to compete at the collegiate level, and some have even advanced to junior Olympic opportunities."



Photo Greg Vail
The trap team shows off their hardware won at state.

The best space movie this spring, *Project Hail Mary*

By Audrey Santman
Staff writer

Project Hail Mary came out on Mar 20, 2026. The movie has an incredible rating of 94% on Rotten Tomatoes and has many good reviews.

This movie started with a \$200 million budget, which is a lot for a space movie. In the first week, the movie grossed \$141 million, almost making profit in the first weekend. So far, the movie has made over \$600 million worldwide, making the movie a big success.

Ryland Grace (Ryan Gosling) is a middle school teacher who wakes up from a coma and finds himself on a spaceship with no memory of how he got there. He is on a mission to save Earth from a parasite called "astrophage," which is killing off the sun. He finds himself traveling to Tau Ceti, the only star that is not yet affected by astrophage. On his journey, he finds an alien whom he names Rocky (James Ortiz). He and Rocky work together to try to save their homes from astrophage.

The lead directors were Phil Lord and Christopher Miller, who are responsible for many other hit movies, including *21 Jump Street*, *The Lego Movie*, and *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*. The movie was filmed in the United Kingdom, specifically Shepperton Studios in Surrey.

The work done for the character Rocky was very good. Ortiz did a great job as the

voice of Rocky, as well as being Rocky's puppeteer and helping to design Rocky. Ortiz won an Obie Award for puppet design in *The Woodsmen*.

Rocky's appearance in the film is a spider-like alien who has five limbs and has a hard, rock-like body.

The inspiration for the film was Andy Weir's 2021 novel, *Project Hail Mary*.

Weir had another successful film adaptation of his book, *The Martian*, which scored 91% on Rotten Tomatoes and grossed over \$630 million.

The filming of space scenes was aided by NASA. Real astronauts and experts helped develop extremely realistic space scenes. Many scenes in the movie are also similar to *2001: A Space Odyssey*. They both have some very crazy, chaotic space scenes.

Overall, I really enjoyed this film. It was very interesting and had a great plot. The scenes that showed space were extremely realistic, and they show just how much time spent and commitment they put into it.

My favorite part was when Ryland meets Rocky for the first time. This film really focused on friendship and determina-



Photo IMDB.com
Ryland Grace sits with Rocky

tion, and that is what made it so special.

The only thing I would change is have more variety in scenes, because the majority of the scenes were onboard the ship.

The movie's rating is PG-13 due to intense peril, and some scenes that have suggestive references and some blood.

I rate this movie 4 stars. Everything about it was very well thought out. This is a good movie for a family movie night, and it is generally appropriate for all ages. I really recommend watching this movie in theaters. It is out in the theaters now and is set to be streaming in a couple months.

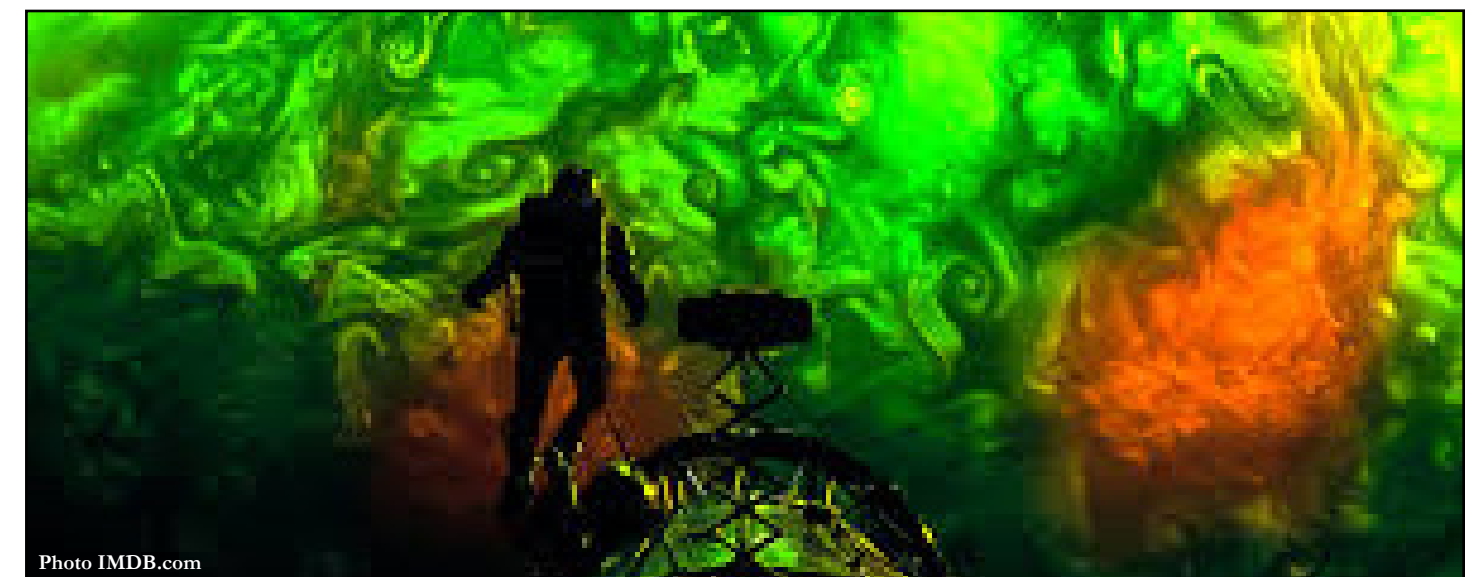


Photo IMDB.com
Ryland Grace looks at planet Adrian during a space walk.

Digital music apps: are they ruining the listening experience?

By Paige Fricke
Staff Writer

Music has come a long way, and everyone likes different types and genres of music. But how do people listen to it? Is the technology of streaming apps taking away from the potential listening experience?

Music is and has been a huge part of our lives for a very long time. Everyone experiences it differently, and everyone has their own "taste" in music. If

you like Pop, Rock, Country, Jazz, or a little bit of everything, you probably like and listen to some type of music.

But how do people listen to music? If it were the 80's right now, you would probably see most people listening through radios, record players, cassette players, or maybe even CD players. But now, the rise of technology has pushed away physical media in trade for digital apps like Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora, or Amazon

Music.

Physical media is great. It's fun to collect things like CDs and vinyl records. But also, listening apps like Spotify are convenient and (sometimes) cheaper. For example, one album on vinyl could run anywhere from \$20 to over \$250, while most streaming apps are free with the option to subscribe

If you're a fan of physical media, CDs would be your best bet. You can buy a bunch of blank CDs for around \$20,

and instead of only having one album (like on a record), you can burn any songs you want on a single CD. However, burning CDs requires effort, time, and patience. Yes, you can buy single albums or mixes on CD from stores, but burning them yourself allows freedom for multiple artists and your own little twist on it.

Fall an intense thriller from start to finish

By Piper Ramsey
Staff Writer

Fall is an entertaining movie, bringing action and thrill to the screen. It was recently added to Netflix in February. The directors are Scott Mann and Johnathan Frank.

Fall focuses on two best friends, Becky Connor (Grace Caroline Currey) and Shiloh Hunter (Virginia Gardner) who become stranded at the top of a 2,000 foot tall derelict television tower in the desert. They are very risky people. They do dangerous things like climbing tall towers or rock climbing.

After climbing the tower for a vlog, the ladder collapses forcing them to survive using limited resources.

The actors did an amazing job portraying their characters and making the story feel realistic. Currey and Gardner were intense and had fighting scenes high above ground. The fear, stress and friendship between them which made the movie more fun to watch.

"It's a good movie to watch when you're bored," freshman Chloe Kostal said.

Her favorite part of the movie was

"when they're trying to fly the drone."

Kostal rated this movie a 4 out of 5 stars because "it was kinda chessey."

I give it a 4.5 out of 5 stars. It would be a good movie to watch with your friends. However, it probably isn't a good movie to watch with kids under 13 due to the content. *Fall* is rated PG-13 because there were some graphic and bloody injuries, and bad words in this movie that aren't appropriate for little kids. But I do think this is a good movie to watch with friends or even family.



Photo IMDB.com



Photo IMDB.com

Knight leads golf team to back-to-back championship

By Piper Ramsey
Staff Writer

Senior Lily Knight finished third place at state, while the Scotties defended their team state championship. Knight also had the lowest round of the tournament, shooting a 69 on day 2.



Photo Pia Longinotti

"The season has been going pretty well," Knight said, "We've been having a lot of fun while trying to consistently improve."

Knight is the top golfer on the team.

"I'm working on

staying aggressive and hunting pins," Knight said.

"I think the overall goal is to win and to enjoy the process of becoming better."

Knight truly enjoys golf. To become a good golfer, you must have strong fundamentals like having the right grip, stance, and posture to create a good swing. Golf requires patience, staying calm under pressure and to



Photo John Bruno

keep going even after a mistake.

Knight shows great skill, focus and confidence every time she steps onto the course. Golf is a sport that requires patience, practice, and strong technique, and Knight has all these qualities.

"I'm hoping that the best round is yet to come!"

Knight will be competing on the golf team at Whitworth University next year.

Lochmiller overcomes injury on the diamond

By Piper Ramsey
Staff Writer

Senior Paige Lochmiller has a lot to celebrate this season as the team won league, districts and the state championship. She had a bigger battle personally as she was coming off a knee injury this year.

While her knee didn't keep her off the field, she had to play a different position taking on the challenge of first base.



Photo Pia Longinotti

"It kind of depends on the day," Lochmiller said. "It's definitely difficult to fully recover while still playing. But, it's also been good motivation, and it serves as my reason for the season."

A goal that Lochmiller wanted to complete this season was "to be consistent, help get my team back to state and get to truly know my teammates on a personal level."

Not only did they get back to state, but they brought home a 12-11 victory over 3-time defending state champions Adna.

"The season has been pretty successful despite how many girls we lost last year," Lochmiller said. "The team dy-

amic has stayed really strong"

Lochmiller still has a positive attitude everyday for practice or games.

Before game days there are always different ways people prepare for the big day. Some people relax by listening to music or talking to their parents for a pep talk. Lochmiller prepares for game day by "listening to some Fleetwood Mac. I don't put too much pressure on specific games, and talk with my parents. Then I do my stretches and go about our warm ups and mostly just try to relax."

The team has appreciated having support at home games this season.



Photo Pia Longinotti

"Our first home game - looking out and seeing so many people show up to support us - families, friends and other Freeman sports teams truly showed up," Lochmiller said.

Whenever there are lots of people at the games it means a lot to the softball team that there are people that want to support them and cheer them on.

Boswell takes 2nd in districts, 4th in state

By Audrey Santman
Staff writer

Senior Avery Boswell is a great tennis player. Over the last two years, she has a record of 33-3.

One of the highlights of Boswell's tennis career is when she won the 2B doubles state tournament last year. She and her doubles partner, Emma Hollen (class of '25), beat Manson's team 6-2, 6-1. They finished the season undefeated and helped Freeman finish third overall at state.

This year, Boswell has been playing singles since Hollen graduated.

"It's been exciting to see Avery take on a new challenge and transitioning to singles," coach Pia Longinotti said. "She has chosen the harder route this season. Avery is fun to watch on the singles court. She brings the mental toughness and stamina from playing volleyball, and she has a great all-around game from playing doubles. She has a great chance of medaling at state in

May."

Boswell is facing new challenges, but also enjoying playing singles.

"I love how this sport is entirely on one person, when playing singles," Boswell said. "It's been a fun challenge to turn that aspect of the game into an advantage for me!"

Boswell has only lost four matches this season, three of which are to Simi Sahota of Chewelah, who is favored to win state this year.

"My goal for this year is to win state again," Boswell said.

Boswell's inspiration and reason for joining tennis is her older sister, Ashley, who played in high school as well.

"I got into tennis freshman year, and I've loved the sport ever since," Boswell said.

Boswell has multiple ways to prepare for a match, especially an important one.

"I usually prepare for a match by listening to music beforehand and making sure I have a good mindset going into the match," she said.

Boswell really enjoys tennis and encourages others to join the team. Although she enjoys tennis, she thinks the team is very special too.

"My favorite part of tennis is the people involved," Boswell said. "It's a fun environment with a great coach and team!"

Avery had a great finish of fourth at state. She fought hard against her competitors but fell short in the final round. Next year, Boswell plans to go to Whitworth and play volleyball.



Photo Pia Longinotti

Boswell runs down a dropshot in her state victory over Sarah Zoretic (Pateros)

Sandborn continues to shine in track and field

By Paige Fricke
Staff writer

Senior Trenton Sandborn has made a big name for himself in track and field. His efforts have helped him achieve impressive results in both the high jump and the

hurdles.

Sandborn started competing in track in 8th grade. His 9th grade record for high jump was 6'0. Now, his senior year, his PR is 7'0. With that record, he is #1 in the state for high school high jump.

"My goal for this season is to win state

as a team and break all the state records," Sandborn said.

Sandborn was the state champion this year in both the high jump (6' 10") and the 110 Hurdles (14.06). He took second in the 300 hurdles (39.49) behind teammate Tyce Gilbert.

His performance helped his team take home the State Championship trophy.

At districts, Sandborn set his high jump PR at 7'0. He is ranked #15 nationally.

After helping lead his team to multiple state championships and earning national recognition, Sandborn leaves behind a legacy of excellence and determination.

As he heads to the University of Montana, he hopes to continue building on a high school career that has already made school history. As he prepares to join the University of Montana's track and field program, Sandborn hopes to continue improving and compete at the insane level against some of the nation's top athletes.



Photo Austyn Myers

Trenton Sandborn goes over his final hurdle as he wins the 110 medal at state.