

Freeman Middle Scoop 8-14-26

FMS Office Hours are 7:45 am to 3:45 pm. Doors are open to students at 8 am.

Email: FMSoffice@freemansd.org

*** Office phone (509)291-7301**

***Attendance line (509)291-7425**

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year!

First day of school – August 19th

Dear Freeman Middle School Families,

Welcome back! We hope you had an amazing summer and are as excited as we are to kick off a great school year together. There are a busy few weeks ahead, starting with our Open House and Ice Cream Social this Monday, Aug. 17th (new student tours at 4:00 PM, Open House at 4:30 PM, and parent meeting at 5:30 PM in the Gym), followed by the First Day of School on Wednesday, Aug. 19th. Football gear checkout takes place after school on Thursday, Aug. 20th under coach supervision until the activity bus, and fall sports practices for cross country, football, and softball officially launch on Monday, Aug. 24th (ending at 5:15 PM with the activity bus at 5:25 PM; parent meeting Tuesday, Aug. 25th at 5:15 PM in the TK-8 MPR). Note that 6th, 7th, and 8th graders can participate in all sports except football due to state rules. If your child is interested, register through FinalForms using the information included in this flyer.

Students will check out Chromebooks on Aug. 24th. Please remember families are responsible for device care and know that our internet filtering remains active at home. We'll wrap up the month with Picture Day Thursday morning, Aug. 27th, and look for Skyward Family Access to open on Friday, Aug. 28th at 4:00 PM.

As we begin this new year, we want to extend our thanks to two hall-of-fame educators who retired last year—6th-grade teacher Linda Mega and Secretary Joanne Moyer—for their incredible years of service to our school. We will miss you both! At the same time, we are thrilled to welcome Jim Rae back as a 6th-grade teacher after three fantastic years in the FHS shop department, as well as Katelyn Bedolla, who is stepping into her new role as FMS Secretary!

Be sure to keep an eye out for the *FMS Middle Scoop* on Fridays at 4:00 PM for ongoing updates, event details, and student celebrations. We are looking forward to a wonderful year of partnership, achievement, and growth with all of you!

Jim Straw, Principal

OPEN HOUSE:

- **August 17th – 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm**
- Ice Cream Social
- Students will be able to put their school supplies in their lockers
- There will be boxes available in the commons for tissues/wipes/zip lock bags
- **FMS Parent Meeting at 5:30 pm – 5:50 pm in the FMS Gym** (no schedules or classrooms will be available at this time as all FMS staff will be at the Parent Meeting.)
 - **SCHEDULES & LOCKERS:**
 - Student schedules will be handed out at the open house
 - Locker & combo will be on student's schedule

RETURNING STUDENTS:

- Every year we must have all back-to-school forms completed for every student.
- Contact the FMS office at FMSoffice@freemansd.org if you need help logging into your Family Access Account.
- Please log in to Family Access and complete form sets for each student.
 - You can find this on the left side of your home page on the Skyward Family Access screen titled
 - “FMS Registration for All Returning Students”. Included in the form is our Chromebook Assurance Plan Opt-In/Opt-Out Form. For you to opt-in for this "insurance", you will need to select opt-in AND pay your \$20 premium no later than September 15th, 2026

BUS INFO:

- **Afternoon Bus Zone Student Release**
 - Please plan transportation changes in advance by sending a written note with your student at the beginning of the school day or contacting the school office as early as possible. A student's verbal message is not sufficient for authorization for a transportation change.
 - Once a student has boarded the bus, parents, guardians, siblings, and staff members may not approach the driver to request the student's release. All requests must go through the supervisor on duty in the bus zone or the school office. The student will remain on the bus unless the driver receives authorization over the radio.

- This procedure helps staff review custody restrictions and other release instructions before a student is released. Thank you for helping us protect our students.

FREEMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT 2026 - 2027

IMPORTANT DATES



Monday, August 17, 2026
Open House / Orientation / Ice Cream Social
4:30 pm—6:00 pm

Wednesday, August 19, 2026
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL — Grades 1—12

Monday, August 24, 2026—FIRST DAY OF KINDERGARTEN

Monday, August 31, 2026—FIRST DAY OF TK



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DATES FOR 2026 - 2027 SCHOOL YEAR

High Quality Professional Development = Improved Student Achievement

2 Hour Late Start (10:15 am) Wednesdays for Professional Development

September 23	December 2	March 17
November 4	February 3	May 5

No School Days for Professional Development

January 4	March 8	May 5
-----------	---------	-------

CHECK THE DISTRICT WEBSITE FOR OUR 2026 - 2027 DISTRICT CALENDAR

www.freemansd.org

PRIDE, COMMITMENT, CARING

Dear Families,

We know technology plays a growing role in students' lives — whether it's A.I., texting, gaming, or simply hearing about social media and devices from friends or siblings. That's why we take a thoughtful, age-appropriate approach to helping students build healthy, high-character habits they can carry into any situation, both online and offline.

Our community at Freeman Middle School is excited to continue our ongoing partnership with [The Social Institute](http://TheSocialInstitute.com) (TSI), a leader in empowering students, families, and educators to navigate their technology – including A.I., social media, and devices – in healthy ways.

No matter your child's current tech use — whether they use devices and apps regularly or are just beginning to ask questions — the resources offered through this partnership are designed to be flexible and family-friendly.

As your child's school, we're honored to be your partner on this journey. We understand that each household has its own values and approach to technology — and we fully respect that. This program is not about prescribing rules or parenting strategies. It's about offering ideas and tools that you can use in whatever way that fits your family best.

How Your Family Can Participate This School Year:

1. **Register your free account for The Toolkit, if you have not yet done so.** Many families refer to this as the CliffsNotes of social media and technology! Go to <https://thesocialinstitute.com/family-toolkit/>, click *Activate Account*, and enter our school code: 3e33C147103C25
2. **Continue the conversation at home:** Each month, Family Huddle questions may be emailed to you as a follow-up to student lessons. These short, optional prompts can spark meaningful conversations and reinforce your family's values.

We're excited to continue offering this timely education to our school community. If you have any questions or thoughts, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,
Jim Straw

EVERY DAY COUNTS!

A Family-Friendly Guide to School Attendance | TK-12th Grade

In the Freeman School District: We know that regular attendance helps students stay connected, keep learning, and feel successful at school.

NEW DISTRICT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Families have 10 days from the date of their child's absence to excuse the absence. Please contact the school as soon as possible rather than waiting until the 10-day deadline.

WHY ATTENDANCE MATTERS

10%	About 10 days matters. Missing around 10% of school days in a typical 180-day year is considered chronic absence and is associated with academic risk.
TK-12	Every grade matters. Attendance patterns begin early, and higher absence in middle and high school is associated with lower academic outcomes.
ALL	Learning is connected. When students miss school, they can miss instruction, relationships, routines, and opportunities to participate.

HOW TO REPORT OR EXCUSE AN ABSENCE

CALL	Elementary: 509-291-7425 Middle School: 509-291-7425 High School: 509-291-3721
EMAIL	Freeman Elementary School: FESoffice@freemansd.org Freeman Middle School: FMSoffice@freemansd.org Freeman High School: FHSoffice@freemansd.org
NOTE	Send a note with your child to school. You can easily excuse an absence using any of these methods. Remember: you have 10 days from the date of the absence to excuse it.

HOW FAMILIES CAN HELP

- **Build routines.** Consistent bedtimes, morning routines, and preparing the night before can make school mornings easier.
- **Communicate early.** Let the school know when your child will be absent.
- **Check attendance.** Watch for patterns before a few absences become a larger concern.
- **Ask for help.** If transportation, health, anxiety, family circumstances, or another barrier makes attendance difficult, contact the school—we want to partner with you.
- **Reconnect after an absence.** Help your child return to routines and learning.

OUR GOAL IS NOT PERFECTION—IT IS CONNECTION.

Children will sometimes need to be absent. Illness, appointments, family emergencies, and other circumstances happen. Our goal is to help students attend as regularly as possible and make sure families have the support they need.

A QUICK ATTENDANCE CHECK

Is my child attending regularly?	Notice patterns
Are absences becoming more frequent?	Reach out early
Is there a barrier we can solve together?	Partner with school

Research basis: Attendance Works; UChicago Consortium/Attendance Works research on chronic absence and student outcomes. Research consistently identifies regular attendance as an important opportunity for learning, relationships, and school connection.

SCOTTIE DASH:

Each year we organize an annual fundraising event called "Scottie Dash." This event is not only a fun-filled day for our school community, but also the primary source of financial support for the ASB (Associated Student Body) and PTSG (Parent, Teacher, Student Group). The funds raised through the Scottie Dash, sale of ASB cards and donations directly contribute to the success of various TK- 8 student activities and programs: Assemblies, Craft Fairs, Dances, Math is Cool, Class Retreats, Robotics and Sports- equipment, officials and uniforms.

By sponsoring our event, you will not only be investing in the development of our students but will also demonstrate a commitment to supporting the growth and well-being of the local community.

- Enjoy promotional opportunities through event materials, banners, and social media shoutouts.
- Event t-shirt w/ business sponsors logo for Corporate, Platinum, and Gold Sponsors
- Gain visibility among the Freeman community.

We offer three levels of sponsorship to accommodate a range of contributions:

- Corporate Sponsor: \$2500
- Platinum Sponsor: \$1000
- Gold Sponsor: \$500
- Silver Sponsor \$250
- Custom Sponsorship: We welcome contributions of any size and will gladly recognize your support.

To confirm your sponsorship commitment or to discuss any further details, please feel free to contact me, Jim Straw, directly at jstraw@freemansd.org or Mike Allen at mallen@freemansd.org.

- You can go to our Scottie Dash website <https://wa-freeman-lite.intouchrecepting.com/ScottieDash> - This link is available to send to friends and family so they can donate directly. 
 - Please make sure to add your students' names when you make a donation.

SPORTS:

FINAL FORMS ATHLETE REGISTRATION: <https://freeman-wa.finalforms.com/>

- If you have not yet created an account for yourself and your student in Final Forms, please do so ASAP and select which sports they plan to participate in for the 2026-2027 school year. Parents must create a parent account and then an individual account for each student. There are forms for both parents and students to complete each year.
- **Sports physicals are required to participate in practice on the first day.** They are valid for two years from the date of completion. (If you have a new physical, please bring it to the office and we will get it uploaded into Final Forms, or you may scan it and upload it yourself. If you manually upload yours, we must go in and approve each one individually and will be working on that ASAP. If you have any questions regarding Final Forms or physicals, please reach out to FMS@freemansd.org

SPORTS FEES/ASB CARDS:

- We ask that student-athletes pay for their ASB card and extracurricular participation fees before the first athletic competition.
- **Middle School Sport Participation Fees** - ASB Card (once annually) - \$30. Transportation Fee (once annually) -\$10 Yearly Total- \$40
- **DRAFT SPORTS SCHEDULE** Review 26-27 SY DRAFT sports schedules.

[Make a Payment](#) – click to pay fines/fees and lunch balances

[Student/Parent Handbook](#)

[FMS Office Reminders](#)

[FMS 26-27 Bell Schedules](#)

[SMS Text Opt-in for FMS Communications](#)

[Qustodio App](#) - [Monitor your Students Chromebook](#) by using this free app, you will be able to Manage your student's screen time; Supervise your student's online activity; Access expert advice vis FSD Online Safety Hub

[26-27 FSD School Calendar](#)

[All Freeman SD Fliers](#)

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, rrussell@freemansd.org, 509-291-3695, 15001 S Jackson Rd. Rockford, WA 99030