DRAFT

Freeman School District

Minutes

FREEMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Date and Time
Monday March 23, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location
PRTC - 14815 S Jackson Rd, Rockford, WA 99030

Vision Statement
Continuing Our Tradition of Excellence in Education

Mission Statement
The Freeman School District is the center of a unique, rural community. With pride, commitment and caring, we provide a safe environment for all students to experience meaningful, rigorous learning opportunities that allow them to dream and develop into capable, confident and ethical members of the 21st Century.

Directors Present
A. Keebler, B. Morphy, D. Santman, N. Talbott

Directors Absent
D. Teague

Guests Present
A. Steinolfson, Amanda Kazmi, Chad Ripke, J. De Peralta, Jeff Smith, Jim Straw, Kent Bevers, Kirk Lally, L. Phelan, Mike Allen, R. Russell, RaeAnne Clark (remote), Ryan Larkin, Stacey Rawson, T. Reed

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Keebler called a meeting of the board of directors of Freeman School District to order on Monday Mar 23, 2026 at 6:00 PM.
Dave Teague was excused from the meeting.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Todd Reed led us in the flag salute.

D. Establish Quorum

There is a quorum present.

II. Consent Agenda

A. February 2026 Consent Agenda Items

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve the February 2026 consent agenda, as presented. Nate Talbott seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B. March 2026 Consent Agenda Items

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve the March 2026 consent agenda, as presented. Danielle Santman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

III. Board Recognition

A. Above and Beyond Award

Annie Keebler, current FSD Board Chairperson, has served the Freeman SD for 15 years as a school board member, including 3 separate times as the board chair. Her tireless dedication to our students, staff, and community, along with her unwavering support of public education, is amazing. We are so fortunate to have such a Servant Leader in our community. Annie is a very deserving recipient of the Above and Beyond Award.

IV. Pace Character Trait

A. DILIGENCE

Persistence, dedication and hard work.

V. Correspondence

A.

Brenda's Helping Hand Donations

In our latest Freeman Focus newsletter, we highlighted Brenda's Helping Hand which is a benevolent fund within Freeman School District Nutrition Services that helps ensure students have access to school meals during times of family hardship. Created in memory of a beloved staff member, the fund reflects our community's care of one another. We announced in the newsletter our current debt amount of $11,436.95. It is with incredible gratitude we acknowledge three generous donations that have come in totaling $6,000. We are grateful to these donors who are making a significant difference for our students. This is a little over half of what we need to cover our current debt.

B. Education Support Professionals Week

During the week of March 9-13, 2026, we were able to honor all of our classified staff at FSD. This included Bus Drivers, Paraeducators, Nutrition Services staff, Secretaries, Custodians, Maintenance/Grounds staff and Technology. We are grateful for the important work they do making sure our school district runs smoothly. Annie Keebler read the Governor's Proclamation.

VI. Building Reports

A. Lisa Phelan, Elementary School Principal-Assistant Superintendent

Overview

For the 2025-26 school year, Freeman Elementary School will continue to strengthen our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) across academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains. Our focus will be on refining practices within all three tiers to ensure that each student receives the support they need to thrive. Equally important, we are committed to fostering a strong sense of belonging for all students, staff, and community members.

Areas of Focus

- We are still in a waiting game for decisions regarding TTK funding for the 2026-2027 school year. We know there will at least be a 33% cut. We are considered a desert school, but the definition of that in the state mapping of school districts is unclear. More to come as work through planning options to take care of our Freeman families as best we can.
- Professional Learning PD- Equitable Access for all students/Universal Accommodations- The full day professional development was led by teachers, and administrators. The feedback from the staff was positive.
- Profile Meetings wrapped up the week of March16th- March 20th. The exciting outcome from the data shared and reviewed at profile meetings is the success of the math switch system that is in place for grades 3rd – 5th.

- TTK/K round-up is scheduled for April 23rd. We currently have 22 students signed up for round up.

Enrollment

TK = 40 and P3 = 5 K = 65 1st = 49 2nd = 63
3rd = 57 4th = 73 5th = 57= **409**

B. Jim Straw, Middle School Principal

Overview

For the 2025-26 school year, Freeman Middle School will continue to strengthen our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) across academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains. Our focus will be on refining practices within all three tiers to ensure that each student receives the support they need to thrive. Equally important, we are committed to fostering a strong sense of belonging for all students, staff, and community members.

Areas of Focus

>Professional Development Day- Monday, March 9th - we had some incredible staff step up to help train their peers; some topics included using AI for diverse learners, autism basics, active practice within the classroom, foundational literacy, and more.
>TK-8 Learning Walks w/ Liberty
>WSU Partnership

8th Grade Mentorship Program finished on Friday, March 13th

7th Grade WSU Riverpointe Campus Visit- Wednesday, March 25th - the kids will have a very unique and amazing experience to go into the cadaver lab, pharmaceutical lab and sleep lab, as well as attend a session regarding the nursing profession - we are grateful for this partnership!

>Preparing for Student Led Conferences on April 2nd & 3rd.

Friday, February 27th- Introduction
Friday, March 13th & 20th - Work Days
Friday, March 27th- Practice
Students will also work on specific slides during class.

>Northeast B Honor Band & Choir - the MS had over 10 students who auditioned for this and were selected to represent Freeman; they made us proud not only with their performance, but with their behavior as very respectful and polite students - it's a treat to be back in this group as the NEA didn't have a program like this.

Enrollment

6th- 57 7th- 73 8th- 64 Total- 194

C. Jeff Smith, High School Principal

Overview

For the 2025-26 school year, Freeman High School will continue to strengthen our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) across academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains. Our focus will be on refining practices within all three tiers to ensure that each student receives the support they need to thrive. Equally important, we are committed to fostering a strong sense of belonging for all students, staff, and community members.

Areas of Focus

- ASB elections are scheduled for April 30
- Honor Band and Choir recipients - two band members, two choir members, as well as a choir ensemble - kudos to Mr. Jydstrup for his help in organizing the event with the hosts
- March 9 PD was great
- 25-26 Master Schedule is in process: new math course - AP Statistics, and also looking to add AP Psychology
- Applying for 1 new CTE course: Advanced Business & Marketing
- Conferences are getting scheduled and we are communicating with parents
- End of Year planning is underway - Graduation: June 6, 1 pm FHS Gym

Enrollment

9th = 67, 10th = 55, 11th = 73, 12th = 78 Total: 273

D. Chad Ripke, High School Assistant Principal-Athletic Director

Overview

Winter Sports

- Girls Basketball – Girls got knocked out of the district tournament. Garret Sawyer was named NE2B South Coach of the Year.
- Boys Basketball – Boys placed 4th at the district tournament, advanced to play in the arena. Won on Wednesday vs Napavine to advance to the double elimination portion of the bracket. Boys fought hard, ended up 1-2 in the arena.
- Wrestling – Wrestling team won the state qualifying tournament here at Freeman. 10 boys and 1 girl advanced to the state tournament. 6 boys, Grayson Bake 4th, Quienton Malone 4th, Bearret Murphey 4th, Quincy Paxton 5th, Kope Pedersen 8th, and Noah Baker 8th. Elle Krug placed 6th and became Freeman's first girl wrestler to place at the state tournament.

Spring Sports – One softball game so far. A number of other games have been cancelled because of weather/field conditions. Hopefully we will get some games in soon and some better weather.

Areas of Focus

- Dinner/Auction was held on March 14 at the CDA Casino, almost $62,000 raised before we pay all the bills. Ballpark around $51,000 net profit. Top three things

the auction pays for are officials fees, uniform costs, and post-season travel. 'Needs' are the priority, and hope to invest in some of the 'wants' with support of the Boosters and ASB.
- Our intent was to hire a golf overflow coach, but internal candidates fell through, so we'll likely stay with what we have and make it work. Will also be hiring a C team Volleyball coach.
- Fall schedules are almost all complete, working on winter schedules currently.

Enrollment

- Baseball – 24, which included four 8th graders to help salvage a JV team.
- Boys Golf – 21/Girls Golf 17
- Boys Tennis – 4/Girls Tennis 10
- Softball – 14
- Boys Track – 32/Girls Track 23

E. Mike Allen, K-8 Principal Assistant-Athletic Director

Overview

Work to improve programs and support our student athletes.
Participate in partnership with the Greater Spokane County League (GSCL).

Areas of Focus

- Girls Basketball: Red (8th/7th)Varsity and Blue (7th/6th) Varsity are on a roll in the middle of their season.
- Finalizing Spring Sports Staffs and looking towards next fall.
- Really trying to maintain coaching staff that are in district as they have eyes on the kids outside of the sport, and have consistency and relationships with kids.
- Spokane County Sports League Meeting March 26th: Mead, Lakeside, Deer Park, Riverside, Central Valley, West Valley, East Valley, Freeman, Cheney, Newport, Spokane Public, Medical Lake expected to be in attendance. Discuss the potential of new leagues - Jim Straw and Mike Allen will attend.

Enrollment

- FMS Girls Basketball - 28
- Baseball - potential of 57, although it's early
- Track - potential of 54, although it's early

VII. Department Reports

A. Kent Bevers, Nutrition Services Director

Overview

Freeman SD Nutrition Services supports the philosophy of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and will provide wholesome and nutritious meals for our students.

Areas of Focus

1. **New Dietary Guidelines (https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/dga-realfood)**
    1. USDA Policy Memo on new dietary guidelines (Eat Real Food): The guidance *does not* create new requirements for national school lunch and breakfast programs.
    2. USDA is actively developing a proposed rule to update Child Nutrition Program standards.
    3. No changes at this point and time to the current meal pattern standards for breakfast or lunch.
2. **Final rule on added sugars and sodium weekly limits (not part of the new dietary guidelines)**
    1. Take effect 2027-28 SY.
    2. Training Workshop in Mead on April 29 – I will be attending.
3. **State Breakfast Assistance Rate change: dropping from $0.30 to $0.20 (dropping by $0.10) in March.**
    1. February @ $0.30 = $69.
    2. Calculating the same numbers for February at the new rate ($0.20), the $69.00 drops to $34.50
    3. It's not a lot, but as we all know, any reduction in funds is a hit on the budget.

B. Everett Combs, Transportation Director

Overview

- "The students of Freeman are the heart of our community and the reason we serve. The Freeman School District Transportation Department is dedicated to providing safe, reliable, and respectful transportation for all TK–12 students. We are committed to connecting home, school, and community, ensuring every student arrives ready to learn and thrive."

Areas of Focus

- Very proud of the drivers in every aspect but especially being able to go from 2 hour late start to No School to Yes we are going to school if you can come in and drive last minute on the day when we lost power from the wind.
- On March 6th we conducted a school bus safety competition (Roadeo) with the drivers that had to make up a day because of the day we lost in December because of the wind storm. I had 4 buses with three drivers in each bus competing

on the course. It was very close to the course I set up for you at the beginning of the year board/leadership inservice. It was a fun day of learning and competition.
- To/From Mileage: 14,922 miles
- Extra-Curricular: 2,315 miles
- We are currently at:

11 Regular Ed Routes
1 SPED Route
1T/K /SPED Route
1 McKinney-Vento Routes

C. Kirk Lally, Maintenance-Grounds Director

Areas of Focus:

1. Working with Randy and Alan on summer projects.
2. FES MPR lighting replacement to LED. All in is about $24,000. Jesse is looking into grants for the school district to offset the cost.

Safety:

1. Working with Dan Corder and Jason McPherson to present at the March 24th table top exercise at the PRTC from 9am to 11am. Go over Freeman's new emergency response manuals.

D. Stacey Rawson, Interim Director of Student Services

Overview
For the 2025-26 school year, Freeman Student Services Department will strengthen our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) across academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains. Our focus will be on refining practices within all three tiers to ensure that each student receives the support they need to thrive. Equally important, we are committed to fostering a strong sense of belonging for all students, staff, and community members.

Areas of Focus and Enrollment
Special Education

- Heading into a busy season for our team! Many special education re-evaluations and initial evaluations happen in the spring.
- Enrollment is up- 2 new transfer-in students within our boundaries with existing IEPs.
- IEP Online- Special Education software- is getting updates this spring (moving from version 2.0 to 3.0-complete overhaul). Shayla is working hard to learn the new system updates and prepare to launch the new software in August. Special Ed team will be trained in May/June and August for next year.

- 120 Students

Multilingual Learners (MLL)

- No updates
- 3 students

McKinney Vento/ Foster Youth

- New transportation route for foster student- was able to combine with a McKinney Vento route for time/ cost savings.
- 19 students/ 1 student

Title 1/ Learning Assistance Program (LAP)

- Intervention groups are going well! New rounds of groups just started based on our winter AIMSweb data. Paras are all trained in many evidence-based reading and math curricula including UFLI, Heggarty, Connecting Math Concepts, and Delta Math RTI. Very positive math improvement results and kudos to the staff for looking at the data and diving deep to make some very positive changes that are showing proven results.
- Dyslexia Screening: OSPI requires annual dyslexia screening for K-2 students. This is now completed and will be entered in Skyward for reporting by the end of the month. 28 students screened as “at-risk”
- 72 students (K-8)

Highly Capable

- All newly identified 2/3rd graders are entered in Skyward per OSPI requirements
- 5th graders will be screened in May during advanced math placement testing
- 17 students (2-3rd grade)

Math is Cool - 4th Grade trip will be part of the approval process later in the meeting.

E. Todd Reed, Technology Director

Overview

Provide the highest quality technology-based services, in the most cost-effective manner, to help facilitate the FSD mission.

Areas of Focus

- We collaborated with the production team for the elementary musical to integrate and test purchased microphones funded by PTSG. We ensured proper wiring and functionality to enhance audio quality and support a seamless performance experience.

- Finished our 2026 E-Rate Filing, 60% discount, on eligible services such as our internet and category2 funding to replace district network switches.
- All District backup generators passed their biannual maintenance and inspections. Each generator is exercising and running as designed.'
- Today we ordered new district servers, 4 crosswalk flashers, CRG mapping and network switches.

F. Alan Steinolfson, Finance Director

- Capital Projects Cash Flow - we recently paid for turface, made a 50% down payment on our parking lot maintenance, purchased a new generator battery as the previous one went out during the last power outage (working to refurbish the old one to have as a backup), approved the K-8MPR lighting project as well as some floor repairs in that area, and paid for the CRG mapping; this summer we'll pay for the second half of parking lot repair/maintenance, as well as potential work on the fields; we got a little over $10K that came in during the month of February from levy payments, but the larger payment will come in April.
- General Fund Cash Flow - we are currently at a 2.6% fund balance, which is normal this time of year to be low; we are budgeting to end about 5% in the general fund at the end of fiscal.
- Enrollment graphs were shown and in February each year is when actual apportionment is released based on actual enrollment. Have 15 over budget is extremely helpful and resulted in approximately $100,000 in additional revenue.
- Recovery and Carryover were discussed - as of now, each program has carryover, but Transportation is looking at $200,000 in recovery if the money isn't spent. New gating systems, as well as fuel purchases, will be coming.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

A. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Freeman School District receives state award for educational excellence!

- Freeman was selected as one of 25 top-performing school districts in the state of Washington for educational achievement. Measurements included regular attendance, kindergarten readiness, highly capable program participation, high school level math in 8th grade, CTE programs and 4-year graduation rate, to name a few.

B. School Safety, Culture and Environment

- Emergency Procedures Update - Dr. Russell presented the board with a document outlining the details of our updates regarding the school district's emergency

procedures manual/Standard Response Protocol (SRP). We have a table top exercise tomorrow, 3/24 to walk through it all with local response agencies.
- Dr. Russell reviewed our latest Freeman Focus Newsletter highlights, including our Spokane Scholars, how levy dollars are being put to work, the announcement regarding our next Superintendent, Lisa Phelan, as well as student updates regarding activities and classroom work.

C. Partnering with Parents and School/Community

D. Fiscal & Legal Accountability

- WA State Legislative Update - Dr. Russell expressed his disappointment regarding the state legislative session regarding school district support. We are preparing for a 15-20% insurance increase again, but no additional monies from the state to support the hit to our budget. We will be looking at staff attrition (not replacing positions that naturally are vacated due to retirement, resignation, etc.), and going into a hiring freeze until we see how TTK and legislative finances wrap up. We have a staffing discussion this Wednesday, but teaching positions from here on out will be in a hold status as we are not getting help from the state.
- Bill Morphy reiterated his frustration with the state's lack of support for education.
- Our Capital Levy has been our saving grace, and we need to continue to tell our community about how important their support is.

IX. Board Comments

A. Musical Production

Annie Keebler wanted to express her gratitude to the staff who have put so much time and energy into the FES and FMS musical productions. The elementary performance was incredible and we are looking forward to seeing the middle school production in April.

X. Unfinished Business

A. Approval of Board Policy No. 3425 - 2nd Reading

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 3425 - 2nd Reading - Accommodating Students With Adrenal Insufficiency, as presented. Nate Talbott seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Board Policy 1821 - 2nd Reading

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 1821 - 2nd Reading - Standards For Individual School Directors, as presented. Danielle Santman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Board Policy No. 2170 - 2nd Reading

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 2170 - 2nd Reading - Careers and Technical Education, as presented. Nate Talbott seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

D. Approval of Board Policy No. 5000 - 2nd Reading

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 5000 - 2nd Reading - Recruitment, Selection, and Evaluation of Staff, as presented. Danielle Santman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

XI. New Business

A. Approval of Building Condition Assessment Report

This is a WA state required report regarding our assets and what we are doing to preserve such assets.

Danielle Santman moved the Board approve the Building Condition Assessment Report, as presented. Nate Talbott seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Trip Request - Math is Cool 4th Grade Competition

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve the Trip Request - Math is Cool 4th Grade Competition, as presented. Danielle Santman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Board Policy No. 2108 - 1st Reading

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 2108 - 1st Reading - Learning Assistance Program, as presented. Nate Talbott seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

D. Approval of Board Policy No. 2106 - 1st Reading

Danielle Santman moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 2106 - 1st Reading - Program Compliance, as presented. Nate Talbott seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

E. Approval of Board Policy No. 2140 - 1st Reading

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 2140 - 1st Reading - Comprehensive School Counseling Program, as presented. Danielle Santman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

F. Approval of Board Policy No. 5011 - 1st Reading

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 5011 - 1st Reading - Sexual Harassment of District Staff Prohibited, as presented. Nate Talbott seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

G. Approval of Board Policy No. 6220 - 1st Reading

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 6220 - 1st Reading - Bid or Request for Proposal Requirements, as presented. Danielle Santman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

H. Approval of Board Policy No. 1111 - 1st Reading

Danielle Santman moved the Board approve Board Policy No. 1111 - 1st Reading - Oath of Office, as presented. Bill Morphy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

We need to review the first paragraph to correct the misspelling of "must" and make sure it reads correctly. Edits will be made for the 2nd reading in April.

I. Approval of Form A No. 1111 - 1st Reading

Danielle Santman moved the Board approve Form A No. 1111 - 1st Reading - Oath of Office, as presented. Bill Morphy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

XII. Other Information

A. Future Board Meetings

Future Board Meetings

- The next board meeting will be on Monday, April 27, 2026 at 6:00 PM. We will likely need to add an executive session for the April meeting.
- The following meetings will be on Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at 6:00 PM, and Tuesday, June 9, 2026 at 3:00 PM.
- Please check calendars for July 20th to see if that's going to work in schedules for the budget hearing. There was a suggestion to not do it 9am, but continue with the evening meeting to avoid work schedules and allow for more of the community to attend if they wish. The board is also looking to move it earlier in July if possible.

XIII. Personnel

A. Personnel Action

Addendum presented...

Administration: **Lisa Phelan** – Superintendent
Mike Allen – Elementary School Principal TK-5

Certified: **Denise Briggs** – resignation - Middle School ELA Teacher – 1.0 FTE Continuing (effective 8/31/26)
Teagan Mahre - Middle School ELA Teacher – 1.0 FTE Continuing (starting the 2026-2027 school year)
Josie Marro – resignation – High School ELA/CTE Teacher – 1.0 FTE Continuing (effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year)
Lee Phelps – Substitute Teacher
Emma Frey – resignation – Early Childhood Teacher (TTK) – 1.0 FTE Non-Continuing (effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year)

Classified: **Kristie Parham** – Substitute Bus Driver – pending completion of bus driver training/certifications
Dawn Piazzi - Substitute Paraeducator
Suzanne McNally – resignation – Bus Assistant (effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year)

Extracurricular: **Emily Nelson** – resignation – MS Assistant Track Coach
Nate Dahlin – resignation – MS Head 7th Baseball Coach
Leah Heideman - MS Head Track Coach
Kaylynn Mendenhall - MS Assistant Track Coach
Teagan Mahre - MS Head 7th Baseball Coach
Nate Dahlin - MS Overflow Baseball Coach (anticipated)

Bill Morphy moved the Board approve the Personnel Action - addendum, as presented. Danielle Santman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

XIV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. De Peralta
Recording Secretary _____

Board Secretary _____

Board Chair _____

Freeman School District 15001 South Jackson Road Rockford, WA 99030 Pride | Commitment | Caring