

Walk For Freedom

*Freedom Elementary School
Freedom, Wisconsin*

The physical education teacher at Freedom Elementary School engaged students, staff, and parents in a “Walk for Freedom.” Students set out to walk or run the 8,137 mile trek that would lead them from Freedom, Wisconsin through 10 other cities in the United States also named Freedom and then back to Wisconsin.

Walk for Freedom was a voluntary activity. Over 350 students in first grade through fifth grade and many of their parents participated in the program. Every day during recess, students accumulated miles by walking or running around the track on the playground. For every completed mile, students got their mileage cards punched by the noon supervisor. For every 10 miles students received a plastic foot charm to wear on a chain. Other prizes were awarded for 40, 70, 100, 150, and 200 miles. The top 25 students with the most mileage participated in the Freedom Christmas Parade. Teachers encouraged parents to walk or run with their children any day, however Fridays were the official Parent Day.

This practice has helped the school achieve many of its goals. Teachers used Walk for Freedom to tie into lessons about freedom in the United States. Discussions about the benefits of exercise, including freedom from health problems, were frequent among the Freedom school community. The practice also fostered town pride in Freedom, WI.

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