

New Fremont Middle School opens on schedule

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FREMONT -- For Anthony Walker, Thursday came and went smoothly.

Walker, principal at Fremont Middle School, spent the end of his first day in and around the new North Street school building as he pointed students to their buses and later motioned parents through the main entry pickup area, while he and other FMS administrators braved the blowing snow and chilly temperatures to direct traffic.

As he routed students past the cafetorium and to their designated bus areas, Walker said the operations in the new school went as planned.

"I think it's been wonderful. It seems like we thought of everything and the problems we did have, we corrected right away," Walker said, minutes before donning his coat and standing in front of the building.

The 126,000-square-foot building is spread over 12.5 acres, with students in grades eight, seven and six occupying their own floors for core classroom instruction.

It includes a new gymnasium that seats 650, a central media center equipped with iPads and an adjacent multimedia production lab, and a student activities center with classrooms and practice space for performing and visual arts students.

Thursday was a first for teachers, too.

Mindy Miller and Kristin Osborne said they could sense the excitement among their students in the new surroundings.

Osborne, a sixth-grade language arts teacher, said her students were a little nervous coming to a new building, but handled the changes.

She and Miller said the procedures put in place by school and district administrators made the transition easier.

"All the planning up to this point was worth it," Osborne said, as she and Miller stood at the base of the first floor stairwell.

Miller teaches seventh-grade science, and she said the building was less spread out than the old FMS facility on Croghan Avenue.

"I think it's a little better," Miller said.

The teachers added that they appreciated a lot of the building's features, from the natural lighting and temperature controls to the microphones in classrooms.



Fremont Middle School students Felix Montaluo, Charlie Fuegmann, Maria Mata and Mary Ann Brunner work on an eighth-grade math assignment Thursday during the first day of class in the new building. / Jonathon Bird/News-Messenger