



Ahead of new season, our picks for the area's top high school football players
>> Sports, 9A

Vol. 122, No. 21 || DentonRC.com || Denton, Texas

DENTON ISD

‘When the kids show up, we feed them’

As number of hungry students grows and SNAP cuts loom, DISD says all will be fed

By **Lucinda Breeding-Gonzales**
Staff Writer

For Chris Bomberger and Liz Rafferty, who lead Denton ISD's child nutrition program, hunger has been a persistent challenge, and now a worsening one.

Denton ISD has seen growth in the number of students who qualify for free and reduced-cost lunches. And Congress passed an omnibus spending package over the summer that will cut 20% of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP, through 2034.

The cuts will total about \$186 billion, and will be felt in public schools. Schools aren't funded directly by SNAP, but when households lose their eligibility for SNAP

food benefits, they also lose their automatic eligibility for the free and reduced-cost lunch program. The bill also cut funding to local farms, many of which have been able to supply public schools in their communities with fresh, whole foods thanks to federal funds.

"We're about 48-49% free and reduced in the district," said Bomberger, the district's executive director of risk management and child nutrition. "We've had, over the past seven or eight years, a trend that it's increased as our population continues to grow. As our population continues to grow, we expect this population to grow with it. That's how the trend usually goes."

Putting food on the school breakfast and lunch table is a formidable part of the district's budget. For the 2025-26 budget, child nutrition is projected to cost



Chris Bomberger

See DENTON ISD on 7A



Courtesy photo/Denton ISD

A Denton High School student grabs a hot meal in the cafeteria on the first day of the school year.

Put a hat on it



A participant in the junior heifer competition places his hat on his heifer during opening weekend of the North Texas Fair & Rodeo. The fair continues through Sunday with live music, rodeo events, Mutton Bustin', thrill rides, live-stock shows and festival food favorites. Uncle Kracker and the Bull Blowout are on Saturday evening; Los Pescadores del Rio Conchos and the Ultimate Bullfighters' Celebración del Toro close out the fair season on Sunday.

Matt Iaia/
For the DRC



How students can get mental health support

An estimated 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. lives with mental illness. UNT and TWU students have access to a range of services. **>> Local, 2A**



Exploring the heart of Peanuts' new musical

After 35 years, Charlie Brown returns to song in *Snoopy Presents: A Summer Musical*, a heartfelt Apple TV+ special. **>> Entertainment, 8A**



ONE STOP. FULL COMFORT.
BCI: ALL YOU NEED, JUST A CLICK AWAY.
(WITH ONLINE CONVENIENCE AND LOCAL SERVICE)

BCI
PLUMBING • HEATING • AIR
940.565.1010
LIC #TACLA 005013C M23894

