

Board Recognition

September 22, 2026

Ryan High School Student's Artwork Selected for Display in the U.S. Capitol

Shae Crawford, a student at Ryan High School, has been named the First Place winner of the 2026 Congressional Art Competition for Texas' 13th Congressional District, represented by U.S. Congressman Ronny Jackson. Her winning piece, an oil pastel of an American flag titled "Still Waving," now hangs in the United States Capitol, where it will remain on display for one year.

The Congressional Art Competition is an annual nationwide competition sponsored by the U.S. House of Representatives that has recognized the artistic talent of high school students since 1982. Students in grades 9–12 submit original work through the congressional office representing their district, where entries are reviewed and a First Place winner is selected. Each district's winning artwork is displayed for a full year in the Capitol exhibit hallway traveled daily by members of Congress, their staffs, and thousands of visitors, with every piece labeled with the congressional district, the title of the artwork, and the name of the student artist. The theme for the 2026 competition was "Celebrating 250 Years of America."

Shae's selection places her work among that of student artists from congressional districts across the country and reflects both her own talent and the strength of the fine arts instruction that supported her.

- Shae Crawford – *Student Artist, Ryan High School*
- Aimee Foutch – *Art Teacher, Ryan High School*

This honor reflects Denton ISD's commitment to fostering excellence in the arts and to creating opportunities for students to share their voices with audiences well beyond the classroom.

Denton ISD Earns 24th Consecutive "A" Rating in the State's Financial Accountability System

The Texas Education Agency has again assigned Denton ISD an "A," Superior Achievement rating under the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (School FIRST), the state's annual review of how responsibly public school districts manage the dollars entrusted to them. The result extends the district's record to 24 consecutive years at the state's highest financial accountability mark, a distinction reserved for districts that can document disciplined, transparent stewardship of public funds year after year, without exception.

Reaching that mark is a demanding process. A district's rating is drawn from its audited annual financial report and scored against 21 separate indicators that examine the accuracy and timeliness of the data submitted to the state, administrative cost ratios, debt management, the strength of the fund balance, and whether an external auditor identified any material weakness in internal controls. Several of those measures are designated critical indicators, meaning a failure in any one of them results in an automatic F, or Substandard Achievement, regardless of how strongly a district performs on every other measure. This year's rating reflects the district's audited financial results for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2025.

The rating follows the Board of Trustees' June adoption of a balanced General Fund budget for 2026–27, built on \$380.3 million in projected revenue and \$380.0 million in expenditures for a projected surplus of \$325,542 — a roughly \$19.9 million improvement over the prior year's adopted budget. That plan devotes nearly 59 percent of General Fund spending to instruction and funds a 4 percent compensation increase for teachers along with a 2 percent increase for all other employees.

A rating like this is earned in daily decisions long before it is ever announced. The district recognizes the Financial Services team whose long-range planning, internal controls, and day-to-day diligence made this achievement possible:

- Jennifer Stewart – *Chief Financial Officer*
- Vicki Garcia – *Executive Director of Financial Operations*
- Misty Ward – *Director of Budget and Bonds*
- Julie Simpson – *Director of Finance*
- Sandi Evans Guin – *Assistant Director of Finance*
- Yalonda Weaver – *Director of Grants and Special Revenue*
- Cindy Willis – *Director of Purchasing*
- Ebony Haggerty – *Payroll Manager*

This recognition underscores Denton ISD's commitment to responsible fiscal stewardship — one of the compass points guiding the district's work on behalf of students, staff, and taxpayers — and to ensuring that every dollar entrusted to the district reaches the classroom.

Communities In Schools of North Texas Site Coordinators

Denton ISD recognizes the Communities In Schools of North Texas (CISNT) site coordinators who serve students across the district. Communities In Schools places trained coordinators directly on campuses, where they become part of the school community and work alongside teachers, counselors, and administrators to surround students with a community of support that empowers them to stay in school and achieve in life.

Site coordinators identify students facing barriers to learning — attendance, academic struggles, behavior concerns, or unmet basic needs — and build individualized support plans for them. Their daily work includes one-on-one and small-group support, mentoring, academic assistance, college and career readiness guidance, and family engagement. They also connect students and families to essential resources such as food, clothing, school supplies, hygiene items, health and mental health services, and community referrals, while tracking each student's progress throughout the year. Because coordinators are on campus every day, they are often the first to notice when a student needs help and the first to respond.

Several campuses are also served by ACE and afterschool site coordinators, who extend learning beyond the school day through academic support, tutoring, enrichment activities, and family programming that keep students engaged and connected during out-of-school hours.

Denton ISD is grateful for this partnership and for the leadership guiding it:

- Tasha Moore – *Chief Executive Officer, Communities In Schools of North Texas*
- Dr. Linsey Schafer – *Chief Academic Officer, Communities In Schools of North Texas*

The 2026–2027 Denton ISD site coordinators are:

- Makayla (Mak) Fox – *Alice Moore Alexander Elementary*
- Devin Le – *Alice Moore Alexander Elementary*
- McKenzie Brown – *Anita Reeves Elementary*
- Evelyn Alderete – *Borman Elementary*
- Fabiola Marrero Lebron – *Catherine Bell Elementary*
- Courtney Garcia – *Cross Oaks Elementary*
- Ariel Fitzpatrick – *Evers Park Elementary*
- Marla Suarez – *Evers Park Elementary*
- Cameron Alaniz – *Hodge Elementary*
- Genevieve Martinez – *Hodge Elementary*
- Jennifer Cardwell – *McNair Elementary*
- Nancy Moreno – *Newton Rayzor Elementary*
- Dayna Richardson – *Providence Elementary*
- Jacob Silva – *Rivera Elementary*
- Jaliyah Johnson – *Bettye Myers Middle School*
- Nadia Samudio – *Calhoun Middle School*
- Joel Vasquez – *Calhoun Middle School*
- Daisy Gonzalez – *McMath Middle School*
- Rebekah Irick – *Rodriguez Middle School*
- Blessing Mutiti – *Rodriguez Middle School*
- Vanessa Carrillo – *Strickland Middle School*
- Osvaldo Guajardo Trevino – *Strickland Middle School*
- Timarie Cammon – *Denton High School*
- Olumide Aje – *Ryan High School*