

First day in new dining hall

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Hello to sesame chicken, Malano sandwich.

Lunch time on Monday found Amanda Barkmeier feeling like a new kid.

“You have to find your way around,” the Gothenburg High School junior said.

With the completion of an expanded dining hall, that included renovation of 12,000-square feet of cafeteria, kitchen and concession area, students were greeted by three different serving lines—with seven choices of entrees—plus a salad/sandwich bar.

On Monday’s menu was a Swede special of sesame chicken, grilled chicken or a hamburger, chicken enchilada or burrito, pizza or a new Malano sandwich.

Senior Kerry McPheeters liked the new sandwich served on toasted ciabatta bread with salami, provolone, sweet onions, tomato and lettuce.

Jon Rehmert, a junior, wanted to try the sesame chicken and egg rolls but the entree was gone by the time he got to the window.

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Because of first-day confusion, junior Kyle Maline said it took longer than usual for students to get their food.



Junior Brittyn Munster said she liked the variety of food in the new surroundings while classmate Shay Wear was impressed with “all of the space.”

Danielle Shriver, a junior, said she didn’t like sharing tables with elementary students.

At the end of school last year, elementary students ate in the cafeteria before high schoolers.

Jacob Williams, a junior, said he thought the food was better than last year.

“The pizza was good,” said freshman Kyann LeViner. “I think it tastes better than last year.”

Food service director Joni Jacobsen described Monday as a typical first day.

“It was hard for them to figure out what line for what food,” Jacobsen said. “Tomorrow will be better.”

All students received a free brunch in the dining hall Monday morning to kick off completion of the renovation.

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Because the project wasn't finished when school started on Aug. 18, classes were dismissed at noon the first two days and students ate in the south gymnasium last week. They used disposable dinnerware.

Food service staff served out of the weight room, across the hall, and carted dishes to the family and consumer sciences room where they had access to water and sinks.

Last week, they moved into the kitchen where they prepared food and washed dishes.

In addition to the cafeteria and kitchen, a weight room was expanded 500 feet.

Superintendent Mike Teahon said a final inspection with Paulsen Inc. of Cozad, and architects, is scheduled Wednesday (today).

Teahon said the installation of communication equipment in the dining hall, which is a separate contract, has not yet been completed.

Paulsen began work on the \$1.1 million project in mid-May, shortly before school dismissed for the summer.

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