

THE CENTER

Central Kitchen,
Instructional Farm,
and Education Center

SITE SELECTION



THE CENTER: THE CHALLENGE — AND OPPORTUNITY

Today in Oakland, one in four children does not have access to affordable, healthy food. Within the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), this issue is even more urgent, with 73 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. By creating The Center, a Central Kitchen, Instructional Farm, and Education Center, OUSD has the opportunity to dramatically improve the meals we serve in our schools. Through The Center, we aim to boost student achievement and support mental, emotional, and physical health, all of which are closely tied to healthy eating. Beyond promoting healthy eating, The Center will offer real-world learning opportunities through its Instructional Farm and Education Center, and add a new branch to West Oakland's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Corridor.

HOW DID OUSD SELECT THIS PARTICULAR SITE FOR THE CENTER?

During the 2010-2011 school year, Steve Marshall, (the president of an award winning food services consulting and design firm in Oakland) assessed what the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) would need to do to implement Rethinking School Lunch Oakland. Mr. Marshall examined 50+ District-owned properties to determine which facilities could host kitchens. Finding a District-owned site that could host the Central Kitchen, Instructional Farm, and Education Center--the hub of Rethinking School Lunch Oakland--proved challenging because this required finding:

- a District-owned property that did not house a school;
- a property that provided enough acreage to accommodate a 43,000+ square foot building and a large Instructional Farm;
- a property adjacent to streets wide enough to accommodate a delivery truck, and close to transportation routes for distribution of ingredients to satellite kitchens district-wide.

Only the Marcus Foster campus at 2850 West Street met all of these technical requirements for the Center. For more information about this process, please see OUSD's Rethinking School Lunch Feasibility Study at www.ousd.org/thecenter.

IS THIS PROJECT DISPLACING A SCHOOL?

No. The State Administrator closed the Marcus Foster School in June 2004 and the site has not operated as a school since then. After the State Administrator closed the school, OUSD's Programs for Exceptional Children (PEC) occupied limited space at this site, which it used primarily for its administrative offices. PEC also hosted its Young Adults Program (offering classes to 18-22 year olds) and the Temporary Alternative Placement program. PEC relocated to Cole Elementary in June 2015.



IS IT POSSIBLE FOR OUSD TO RELOCATE THIS PROJECT TO ANOTHER SITE?

No. OUSD does not have another District-owned property with the acreage needed to accommodate The Center, which is critical to Rethinking School Lunch Oakland.

IF OUSD DID NOT DEVELOP THIS PROJECT AT 2850 WEST STREET, WHAT ALTERNATIVE USES WOULD BE POSSIBLE AT THIS SITE?

Because this site is the only District-owned property that can accommodate the Center, and OUSD has selected it for that purpose, OUSD has not considered alternative uses for this site and no charter has requested the Marcus Foster School campus for use as a charter school. Alternative uses for this site would generally be limited to OUSD facility needs or a charter school.

WHERE IS THE SITE SELECTION OF THIS PROJECT IN THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PROCESS?

To comply with CEQA, OUSD prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project because there is no evidence that this project or any of its aspects will have a significant adverse impact on the environment. A Mitigated Negative Declaration does not require analysis of alternative sites considered.

In the case of the Center, OUSD did in fact consider other sites as described above. The Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Initial Study for this project are available on the project website: www.ousdthecenter.org

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT?

To learn more about The Center, visit www.ousdthecenter.org. You can also call 510-761-8360 or email thecenter@ousd.org to get in touch and join our mailing list.

¿Quieres esta información en español? Si es así, por favor llame al 510-761-8360 y deje su mensaje y número de teléfono.