Digital Photo and Story of
Central Kitchen
Site Visit, October 12-15, 2015

A team of district administrators, staff, and community partner visited the food service programs of several districts between October 12-15, 2015. The purpose of these site visits was to learn from districts with model food service programs. We focused our visits on districts that were serving more whole-food based meals and had or were considering a central kitchen design. For the purposes of the Food Service Advisory Committee, this summary will focus on aspects that reflect the food service program vision in these districts. The processes, structures (kitchens, equipment), and potential changes will flow from the vision that we design.

The following document describes the team on the site visits, some of the questions, the main themes that percolated to the top, and some lessons learned or key questions. The focus, for the purposes of this report, is the program vision. The document includes photos so that the reader can see what the team saw. This visit was made possible by a grant from the Whatcom Community Foundation.

The Team

Team member	Sites Visited
Greg Baker, Superintendent of Schools	Oakland, CA; Berkeley, CA
Mauri Ingram, President and CEO, Whatcom Community Foundation	Oakland, CA; Berkeley, CA; Boulder, CO
Steve Clarke, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning	Oakland, CA
Ron Cowan, Executive Director, Capital Projects and School Facilities	Oakland, CA; Berkeley, CA
Nora Klewiada, Executive Director, Human Resources	Boulder, CO
Simone Sangster, Assistant Superintendent Finance and Operations	Oakland, CA; Berkeley, CA; Boulder, CO
Mark Dalton, Director Food Services	Oakland, CA; Berkeley, CA; Boulder, CO; Greeley, CO
Heidi Rodriguez, Assistant Director Food Services	Oakland, CA; Berkeley, CA; Boulder, CO; Greeley, CO

The Sites

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM COMPARISONS					
	Bellingham SD	**Oakland Unified SD**	**Berkeley Unified SD**	**Boulder Valley SD**	**Greeley SD**
# of Schools	22 *(14 ES, 4 MS, 3 HS + 1 Alt HS)*	102 (118 including charter schools)	16 *(11 ES, 3 MS, 1 HS + 1 Alt HS)*	56 *(35 ES, 12 MS, 9 HS)*	25 *(14 ES, 3 K-8, 4 MS, 5 HS)6 charter + 3 vended charters*
Total	11,000; 38%	37,000 (48,000	10,000; 38%	30,000	21,000; 68%

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CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM COMPARISONS					
	Bellingham SD	**Oakland Unified SD**	**Berkeley Unified SD**	**Boulder Valley SD**	**Greeley SD**
Enrollment	F&R	including charter schools); 71% F&R	F&R		F&R
Production Scale	Lower Scale- 6,000 (4200 L, 1,800 B) meals per day prepared at 4 cooking kitchens.	Large Scale- 30,000 meals per day prepared at 2 central kitchens.	Lower Scale- 4,000 lunches per day prepared at 1 central kitchen.	Large Scale production- 12,000 meals per day prepared at 3 cooking kitchens.	Large Scale production- 19,000 (10,000 L, 9,000 B) meals per day prepared at 1 central kitchen.
Progress towards Central Kitchen	Approaching design process.	Design process has been finished.	Central kitchen built many years ago.	Beginning thought processes around design.	Central kitchen retrofitted in 2009-10
Current Food Service Model	Heat & Serve (mostly processed foods, cooked and sent out to schools for same-day service)	Cook-Chill, next-day service model; almost all food is pre-packaged and sent off-site for service.	Cook-Chill, next day service, sent out cold and finished cooking at serving site, scratch-cooked meals	Cook-Chill, next day service, sent out cold and finished cooking at serving site, scratch- cooked meals	Cook-Chill, next day service, sent out cold and finished cooking at serving site, scratch-cooked meals
Goal Food Service Model	Cook-chill, scratch cooking, bulk serve, next day meal service.	Broader scale, cook-chill, next day meal service, limited packaging.	Achieved.	1 centralized cooking kitchen, broader scale, scratch-based.	Achieved.
# of Food Service Staff	69	300	65	200	100+
Community Partners	Whatcom Community Foundation	Center for Ecoliteracy	Edible Schoolyard	Whole Foods	Farm to School Chefs Move to Schools

Questions

A sample of questions that we considered during our visit:

- How are school gardens being incorporated?
- What's being/been done to "prime the pump"/ get kids ready for new model?
- How are they preparing/training/developing staff

- How do they deal with different needs at different grade levels?
- Are there savings to be found in the new model?
- Ask detailed questions about equipment- what do you really use?
- If you could do it again, what would you do differently? Equipment, work flow (design)
- Observe kids, talk with kids and staff, look in garbage cans (how enthusiastic are they really?)
- How do you bridge school nutrition/ lessons with home?
- Really look, listen, feel, notice

Main Themes

The key question underlying all programs we visited was:

What do we want our kids eating?

- Food – bulk, pre-cut for service
- Food Sources
- Food Preparation
- Food – as seen by students
- Participation – type of program, which meals
- Eating experience
- Menu
- Culture
- Engagement with community
- Food chain education

Lessons Learned

- Fresh, healthy, nutritious food can be prepared from raw ingredients, be prepared at scale, and be part of a school lunch program at multiple school locations.
- All programs visited participated in the national school lunch program. Universal breakfast was supported in all low-income schools.
- The food service program should build through the school district – it is important to capture the youngest students as they are more likely to stay with the program.
- Food experience and education contribute to the success of the program.
- With education and introduction of whole food early in students' lives participation in school food programs can be increased.
- Connections with and communication between schools and parents, and the district and community are important (e.g. about the program, farmers' market, catering, food truck).
- Students and staff in the food service program benefit from seeing each other.

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What do we want our kids eating?

Food – bulk, pre-cut



Salad Bar, Berkeley



Milk Dispenser and Glasses versus Pint Cartons, Boulder

Food Sources (fresh, frozen) versus prepared

Different vendor sourcing



Fresh, Raw Ingredients, Berkeley



Raw Frozen Chicken tenders, Boulder

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Food Preparation



Cooking soup stock from scratch, Berkeley



Smoothies, Boulder



Making Museli from scratch, Boulder



Potatoes being prepared, Greeley

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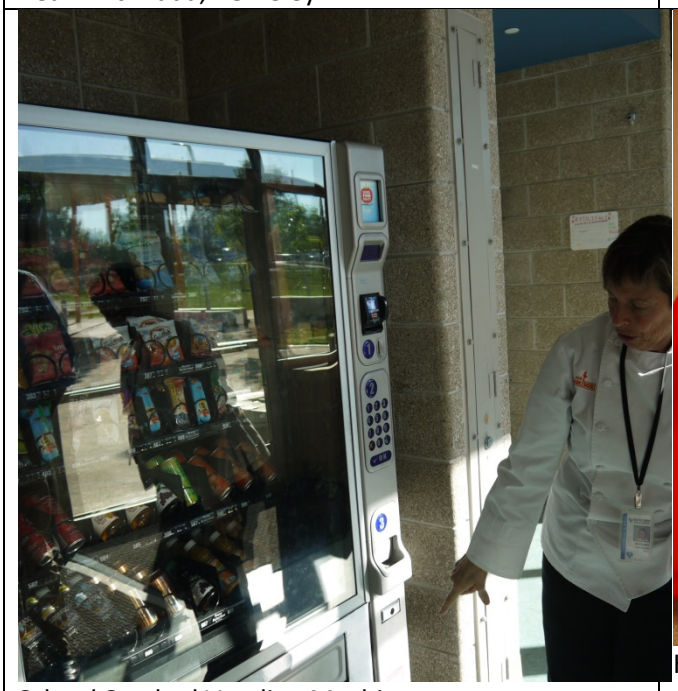
Food – as seen by students



Bean Enchilada, Berkeley



Muesli for Breakfast, Boulder



School Stocked Vending Machines



Hot Dog and Beans, Boulder

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Participation and Experience

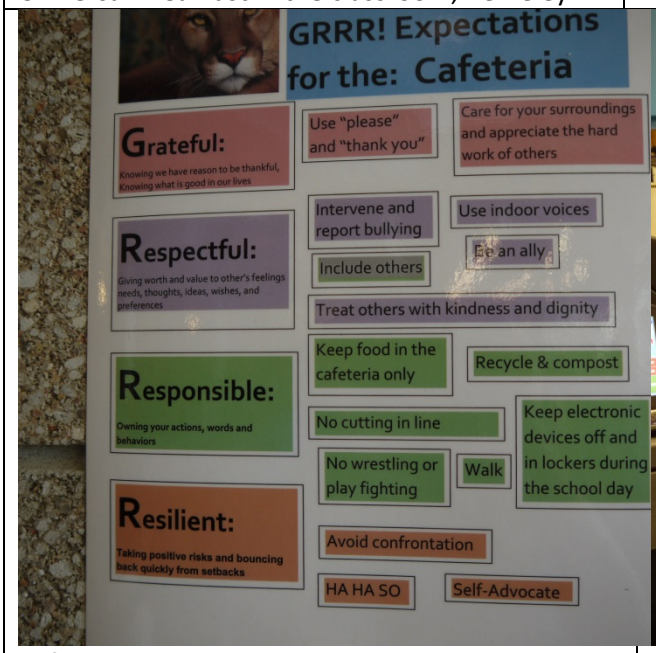
Environment and eating with others



Universal Breakfast in the classroom, Berkeley



Dining environment, Boulder



Cafeteria Culture, Boulder



Service Lines, Boulder (we do not have a release for images of these students)

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Culture

"Only the best for our kids"

Length of lunch period is important, but varies across schools and districts.

Menu

Number of options, Menu Rotation

	Berkeley	Boulder	Greeley
ES number of options	1	1	2
MS number of options	2	2	4
HS number of options	3	2	4

The menu rotation and number of different dishes offered also varied across districts, although we do not have specific counts on this.

Engagement with community

- Being a good neighbor
- Farmers markets at the school or kitchen site
- Education kitchen spaces for school and community use
- School food service food truck

Education / wellness



Food signage in the cafeteria, Berkeley
Cafeteria was collocated with central kitchen



School gardens integrated into the curriculum, Berkeley