



Best Practices and Resources for Values-Based Procurement in Schools

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA OVERVIEW

PARTICIPANTS:	TOTAL ANNUAL SPEND:
Berkeley Unified School District, Oakland Unified School District, San Francisco Unified School District, West Contra Costa Unified School District	\$25 million
KEY VENDORS:	MEALS SERVED PER YEAR:
Crystal Creamery, Daylight Foods, Goldstar Foods, Revolution Foods, Sysco	19.4 million

Values-Based Procurement: Over the past several decades, school food operators have led the charge in values-based procurement, developing robust local purchasing and food and nutrition education opportunities for children across the country. And yet limited budgets, staffing shortages, and the ongoing complexity of federal, state, and local nutrition policies limit an individual district’s capacity to implement values-based procurement, improve it, or both. However, the funding picture is changing. Since 2021, the State of California has directed a portion of its budget surplus to offer post-pandemic California districts unprecedented support for food service operations, including the expansion of values-based procurement.

Food Service Operations: Bay Area schools participating in the Good Food Purchasing Program offer a multitude of food programming, which can include breakfast and lunch through the National School Lunch Program as well as snacks, summer meals, and dinner through the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Three of the four participating school districts run full scratch operations (meal preparation with fresh ingredients to avoid the use of additives and preservatives). These operations are supported by central kitchens and on-site finishing kitchens. One district offers a small scratch-cooking program that includes a heat-and-serve prepared-food vendor.

Best Practices

- Work with district administration, parent-teacher, and community-based organizations to share values-based procurement goals with a broad audience of stakeholders.
- Build partnerships with local growers and increase their values-aligned production practices with funding from the [CA Farm to School Incubator Grant Program](#).
- Apply for special funding opportunities, including the [California School Food Best Practices Fund](#), [Kitchen Infrastructure and Training Funds](#), [Local Food for Schools](#), and [California Department of Education Finance and Grants](#). Some of these funds may not be recurring, so using them and capturing the impacts through a Good Food Purchasing assessment or other evaluation framework can help make the case for future funding.
- Advocate for additional and continued state-level funding for improving school food procurement and infrastructure.



Resources



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

[California Farm to School Program](#)

[CDFA Farm to School Network \(newsletter signup\)](#)

[Farm to Fork Publications](#)

BID GENERATOR

[Simplify School Food Procurement \(generate values-aligned RFPs\)](#)

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Farm to School \(best practices\)](#)

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE WITH FAMILY FARMERS

[Farm to Cafeteria](#)

[The California Farm Directory](#)

CENTER FOR ECOLITERACY

[Teaching and Modeling Food Systems Change in Schools](#)

CHEF ANN FOUNDATION

[Tools and Resources \(signup\)](#)

[Healthy School Food Pathway \(professional development\)](#)

JUST BIPOC SOURCING

[Connected Markets: Just BIPOC Sourcing](#)

[Bringing Diversity to Your Plate: Create Your Own Pilot](#)

[Good Eats Company: Case Study](#)

NATIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL NETWORK

[Resources \(database\)](#)

FOODCORPS

[FoodCorps in Your Community](#)

[Resources](#)

URBAN SCHOOL FOOD ALLIANCE

[Resource Center](#)

Supportive Consultants

[Kitchen Sync Strategies \(supplier/supply chain focus\)](#)

[Kitchen Table Advisors \(supplier/supply chain\)](#)

[Shared Plate Strategies \(bid preparation, coalition building, events\)](#)

[Shift Health Accelerator \(values-based, community-led initiatives\)](#)