

CENTER FOR ECOLITERACY

at the DAVID BROWER CENTER 2150 ALLSTON WAY, SUITE 270 BERKELEY, CA 94704-1377
TEL: (510) 845-4595 WEB: www.ecoliteracy.org

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CONTACT:

Lisa Bennett
Communications Director
Center for Ecoliteracy
510.845.4595 x108 / 415.439.3511
lisa@ecoliteracy.org

NEW COOKING STRATEGY FOR ALVORD UNIFIED SCHOOLS

BASED ON THE CENTER FOR ECOLITERACY'S "CALIFORNIA FOOD FOR CALIFORNIA KIDS™"

BERKELEY, May 29, 2013 — Two hundred food service staffers from Alvord Unified School District are participating in a new cooking school offered by the Center for Ecoliteracy, a nonprofit dedicated to education for sustainable living and a leader in school food reform.

The goal is to help the district make the transition to scratch cooking, with an emphasis on fresh, seasonal, and California-grown ingredients. The training is part of a new program of the Center for Ecoliteracy's Rethinking School Lunch initiative, [California Food for California Kids™](#).

The one-day cooking school will be held at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, June 4, 2013 at Hillcrest High School, 11800 Indiana Ave, Riverside, CA 92504

Nutrition services directors from Riverside and San Bernardino County schools, including Rodney Taylor of Riverside Unified School District, are also expected to attend.

Using hands-on, participatory cooking experiences, the event will be facilitated by the Center for Ecoliteracy's Creative Director Karen Brown and Rethinking School Lunch Program Manager Adam Kesselman. Teams will whip up delicious and diverse recipes from the Center's cookbook and professional development guide, *Cooking with California Food in K-12 Schools*. ([Download here.](#))

Co-written by award-winning cookbook authors Georgeanne Brennan and Ann Evans, *Cooking with California Food* introduces the 6-5-4 School Lunch Matrix — a new framework for menu planning based on six dishes students already know and love, five ethnic flavor profiles, and four seasons.

Pamela Lambert, director of Child Nutrition Services for Alvord Unified, currently oversees meals for 28,000 students at 31 sites. Lambert previously served as Director of Student Nutrition Services at Escondido Union High School, where she successfully transformed the meal program to sustainable scratch cooking, partnered with local organic farmers, and

increased participation by over 300%. She aims to make similar strides at Alvord Unified.

"We greatly value professional development as a means to improve nutrition and academic success," says Lambert. "We are excited to partner with the Center for Ecoliteracy to bring California Food for California Kids™ to its 200 staff members."

"Pamela is a dynamic innovator," says Center for Ecoliteracy cofounder and executive director Zenobia Barlow. "We are honored to assist her in launching a new approach to healthy food in Alvord schools. She is a valued leader in our California Food for California Kids™ efforts.

"California schools serve nearly one billion meals every year," Barlow adds. "Encouraging California food for California kids is a common sense approach: enhancing the health of schoolchildren, promoting lifelong healthy eating habits, supporting the local economy and environment, and celebrating our agricultural and cultural diversity."

The Center's engagement with the Alvord school district is made possible by funding from The California Endowment. This collaboration aims to promote the streamlined integration of fresh, seasonal, and locally sourced fruits and vegetables into school meals.

For more information about the Center for Ecoliteracy, visit www.ecoliteracy.org