



**Situation:** Upgrade of classroom furnishings at multiple middle and high schools in a large, geographically spread-out urban-suburban school district.

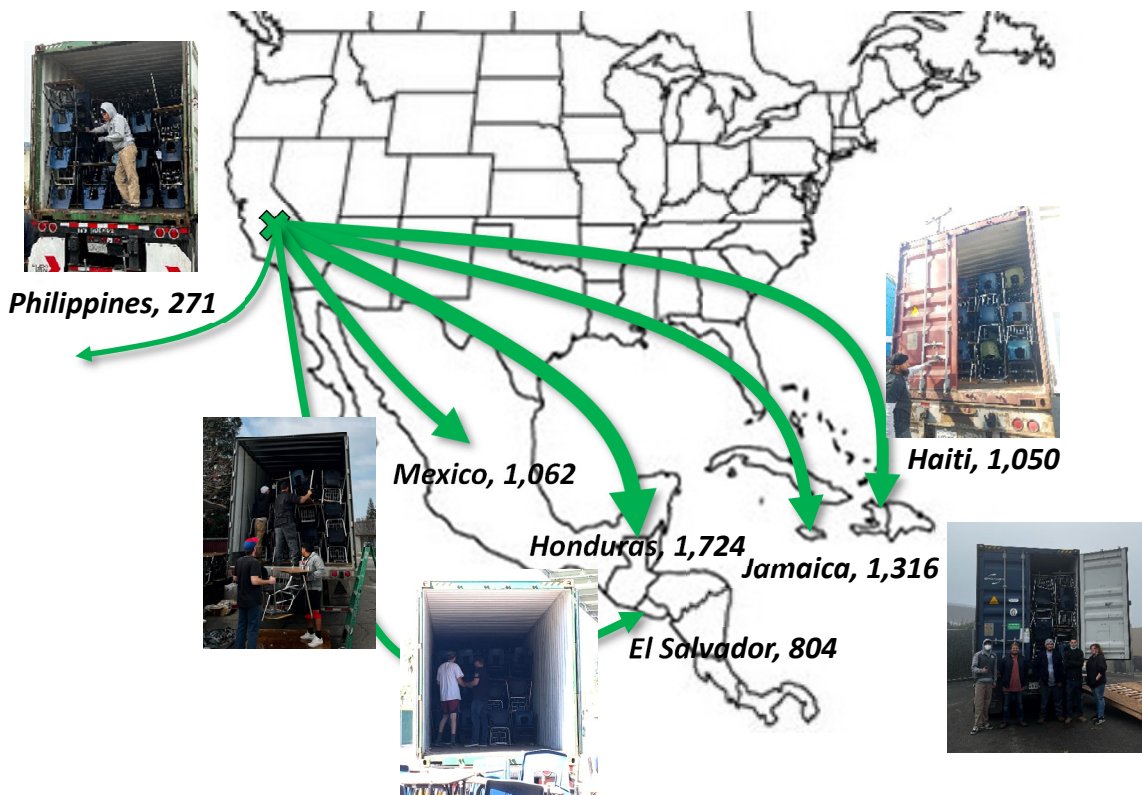
**Quantity and Composition:** Over 6,200 “combo” desks (seat and writing surface a single unit).

**Setting:** Urban and suburban streets.

**Overview**

The Fresno Unified School District undertook an upgrade of furnishings at its middle and high schools. A central element was the replacement of thousands of combination or “combo” desks – where the seat and writing surface are joined in a single unit.

The District asked furniture supplier MeTEOR and The Reuse Network to offer a better option than throwing the old desks away. The Reuse Network in turn reached out to their international network of nonprofit partners who outfit schools in impoverished communities around the world. In phases over eight months, The Reuse Network placed 6,227 combo desks, filling 22 tractor-trailers, with recipients in six countries.



**Implementation**

The outstanding features of this project were its scale and extended schedule, with desks being replaced in waves over a period of eight months. International shipping and supply-chain issues added further complications. On one side, inbound shipments of new desks were frequently delayed, forcing delays to the removal schedule. On the other, outbound shipping containers were problematical to secure and sometimes cancelled at the last minute, forcing more last minute schedule adjustments. These in turn affected the scheduling of moving crews and Reuse Network staff. For all involved, the project was like shooting arrows in the dark, wearing a blindfold.

In the end, through Fresno USD’s partnership with MeTEOR and The Reuse Network, tens of thousands of kids will reap the benefit of Fresno’s commitment to reuse. At the same time, the District has kept nearly 100 tons of what is definitely not “waste” out of the landfill. Those are the results that really count.



Fresno desks headed for schools in central Mexico. The desks have been re-packed onto open trailers to simplify inspection and clearance at Customs.



Some of more than 1,000 desks from Fresno that were distributed to schools in Haiti.