

Supervisor Nate Miley invited the kids to join him on stage in Ashland.

By Amy Sylvestri

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Dozens of Ashland families got together Monday afternoon to celebrate the placing of the last beam on the frame of what will be a new Ashland youth center.

Parents, teachers, children, and local politicians gathered to sign the last 30-foot beam that will

be a part of the \$23 million center's framework.

The two-story, 31,500-square-foot building is currently under construction at 16335 East 14th Street, near Edendale Middle School, and is expected to open its doors by the end of the year.

The building will house a recreation center, a cafe, a career center, and a youth health clinic. There are plans for the building to be called the REACH Youth Center, REACH being an acronym for Recreation, Education, Art, Careers, and Health.

Pedro Naranjo, the center's executive director said the center will be a blessing for a community that lacks positive activities for youth ages 11 to 24.

"We needed a place where we can honor our youth and honor their power," said Naranjo. "Today's event is a huge milestone, it honors the work of the past eight years that made this possible."

Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley spoke at the dedication and invited the children in the crowd to come up to the stage.

“This is a great day,” said Miley, “This is the culmination of a dream. It wasn’t my dream, it was their dream.”

Michael Rose, a 10-year-old who came to the ceremony with his mom, said that he can’t wait to hang out there.

“It seems like it will be pretty cool,” said Rose. “Plus, it’s right next to the park.”