

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FRED KOREMATSU DAY OF CIVIL LIBERTIES AND THE CONSTITUTION

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION No. 2454-2**

WHEREAS, January 30, 2025, is designated as Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution which recognizes the extraordinary civil rights activist and advocate; and

WHEREAS, Fred T. Korematsu was born in Oakland, California, on January 30, 1919, to Japanese immigrant parents. His refusal to enter Japanese internment camps during World War II, his subsequent arrest and conviction, and the issues raised by the United States Supreme Court Case, *Korematsu v. United States*, stand as civil rights advocacy landmarks; and

WHEREAS, Fred T. Korematsu remained a civil rights activist throughout his life, and in 1998 he was awarded the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Bill Clinton; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the State of California passed the Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution Bill marking the first time in the United States that a day was named after an Asian American of Japanese ancestry; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters (SCC ROV), in partnership with the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE), honors Mr. Korematsu's legacy through the promotion of civic engagement among youth with activities such as voter pre-registration, education campaigns, and school partnerships. As part of the Power of Democracy initiative, SCCOE provides educational resources and materials to local schools and hosts events like the Youth Civic Engagement Celebration, which honors youth contributions to community engagement. In the 2023-2024 school year, SCCOE and its partners, including the League of Women Voters and the Association of University Women, actively supported High School Voter Education Weeks by visiting schools to pre-register students; and

WHEREAS, programs such as the [State Seal of Civic Engagement](#) encourage meaningful participation in civic life, further strengthening youth involvement in democracy. Research continues to show that engaging students early on in civic education significantly increases the likelihood of their active participation in future elections; and

WHEREAS, emphasizing the importance of civic duty, numerous cities within Santa Clara County actively promote civic engagement, fostering civic learning and encouraging participation among youth. Cities such as San José, Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, and Santa Clara provide students with the opportunity to partake in the Youth and Teen Commissions, which are recognized as the official advisory group to the Mayor and City Council regarding the development of policies and recommendations affecting youth; and

WHEREAS, to amplify student voice, the Santa Clara County Board of Education includes a student board member from a SCCOE program, and on September 21, 2022, in alignment with a new state law, the board welcomed their first student board member; and

WHEREAS, the student board member may exercise preferential voting rights by stating their opinion and/or position on action items; and

WHEREAS, the SCCOE supports Asian American and Pacific Islander educators through programs such as the Asian American and Pacific Islander Educators Network (AAPIEN) and Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP), a national nonprofit organization that cultivates a pipeline of Asian American and Pacific Islander leaders. LEAP leaders and members of the AAPIEN participate in professional development, which is facilitated by SCCOE staff, where they are encouraged to seek out leadership roles and hone and strengthen leadership skills. Participation in these programs encourages educators from SCCOE and other educational institutions to share and celebrate their lived experiences; and

WHEREAS, social justice issues continue to be at the forefront of the country's consciousness and our local communities. The life of Fred T. Korematsu can be a valuable instructional tool when teaching our youth about civil rights, advocacy, equity and civic engagement; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Santa Clara County Board of Education and the Interim County Superintendent of Schools do hereby adopt this resolution to recognize January 30, 2025, as "Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution."

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the County Board of Education at a meeting held on December 18, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES: President Berta, Vice President Rocha, and Trustees Lari, Pacheco Jr., Speiser and Sreekrishnan

NOES: none

ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: Trustee Chon



Maimona Afzal Berta, President
Santa Clara County Board of Education



Charles Hinman, Ed.D.
Interim County Superintendent of Schools