

**From:** Leslie Boon

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 8:43 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>

**Cc:** [email redacted]

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Japanese American Heritage inclusion in ESMC curriculum!

Hello,

As an educator in the Fremont Union High School District, I just learned that Japanese Americans are not currently included in the ethnic studies education being developed at the state level?

This is shocking to me, as the history of California is rich with Japanese American history starting from the late 1800s and early 1900s, when my grandparents first arrived in the bay area. San Jose is my hometown, and our Japantown is rich with history and remains a thriving cultural center, as well as home to Norman Mineta, former SJ Mayor and US Dept of Transportation Secretary.

How can we exclude the traumatic events of the incarceration of Japanese and Japanese Americans during WWII, and the contributions of the highly decorated military unit, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team? Many of these heroes, such as Lawson Sakai, have passed away and can no longer share their experiences with high school students as he has several times at my high school. The JAs on the West Coast of the U.S. have fared especially poorly, and serve as a reminder that civil liberties have been and can again be denied to American citizens.

It is with great disappointment, anger, and frustration that we have to fight to bring the Japanese American experience back into the curriculum. We are partnering with various JA and AAPI community groups in advocating for the inclusion of the Japanese American experience - our contributions, struggles and loss of civil liberties. We plan to provide the curriculum developed by the Korematsu Institute as a model that can be used. As we advocate for Japanese American inclusion, we will also be advocating for the inclusion of our larger AAPI family.

If you have any questions about my message, feel free to reach out to me.

Leslie Ogawa-Boon

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3rd generation Japanese American in CA