

**From:** Robert Rusky

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 10:56 PM

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

**Cc:** [email redacted]

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Curriculum -- Inclusion of Japanese American Unit

Dear people,

I just learned that that Japanese American history is not to be included in the California's recommended Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. I find this decision to be highly disturbing and can't imagine what justification there could be for the decision.

Japanese American history is an important part of California history, West Coast history and even national history, starting with the initial efforts at establishing trade relationships and the waves of immigration in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, to San Francisco's school segregation law in the very early 20<sup>th</sup> Century that President Teddy Roosevelt had to help settle, to the Alien Land Laws, the World War II Internment, Redevelopment, Redress and the communities' responsive struggles to survive and define their own identity and destinies, and much more.

Personally, although I am not Japanese American, I was privileged to be part of all three coram nobis legal teams in the 1980s that successfully reopened the criminal convictions of Fred Korematsu, Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui for defying the wartime military orders directing the forced removal and incarceration of the West Coast Japanese American population. I was also co-lead counsel in the litigation that returned the historic Julia Morgan designed Japanese YWCA building to the San Francisco Japantown community, and I serve on the advisory board for the San Francisco Rosa Parks Elementary Program Japanese Bilingual Bicultural Program.

Through this involvement I have learned much about Japanese American history, the example it provides and lessons it holds about our state and our democracy, and I have also learned about the astonishing resilience and determination to survive the Japanese American communities have shown in the face of this historical adversity. Japanese American history is important for all Californians, and it should be part of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

Robert Rusky