



Davis Joint Unified School District
**KOREMATSU
 ELEMENTARY**
 3100 Loyola Drive
 530-757-5358

Korematsu Kids School Newsletter

January 30, 2011
 Commemorative Issue

Celebrating California's Designation of 'Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution'

From the Principal

We are proud and honored that the State of California proclaimed January 30 as the first annual Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution. Although our school has been recognizing Mr. Korematsu since the school opened, schools across town and the state will be joining us in remembering the contributions of Fred Korematsu and the importance of preserving our civil liberties.

Approved by the governor on September 23, 2010, Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution brings attention to the constitutional rights afforded to all Americans regardless of race and ancestry. In particular, the Fifth Amendment: "No person shall ... be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law"; and the Fourteenth Amendment: "...nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

Fred Korematsu's lifelong pursuit of justice on behalf of himself and others is symbolic of the founding ideals and traditions of our state and nation. He was a tireless advocate for American rights to liberty, due process and equality regardless of race, ethnicity, or national origin.

Fred Korematsu was arrested in 1942 and convicted for defying a military "exclusion order" at a time when persons of Japanese ancestry on the US west coast, including United States citizens, were ordered to live in concentration (internment) camps.



Fred Korematsu wears the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1998. "In the long history of our country's constant search for justice, some names of ordinary citizens stand for millions of souls," President Clinton said. "Plessy, Brown, Parks ... to that distinguished list, today we add the name of Fred Korematsu."

Photo by Shirley Nakao
 Courtesy Korematsu Institute

"As long as my record stands in federal court, any American citizen can be held in prison or concentration camps without trial or hearing. I would like to see the government admit they were wrong and do something about it, so this will never happen again to any American citizen of any race, creed, or color."

Fred Korematsu in 1983, on his decision to challenge his conviction 40 years later.



Forty years later, Fred Korematsu's wrongful conviction was overturned by Judge Marilyn Hall Patel of the U.S. District Court for Northern California. It was a pivotal moment in civil rights history.

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Parents, students and community, you are invited:

Fred T. Korematsu Social Justice Day

Celebrating California's designation of 'Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution'

Wednesday, February 2, 2011

6:00 — 8:00 pm, Multipurpose Room (MPR)

Guest Speakers — Student Poetry and Song — Children's Activities — Video Screening — Exhibits

www.korematsupto.org — korematsukids@korematsupto.org

Published and funded by the Korematsu Parent Teacher Organization (KPTO) in behalf of
 Fred T. Korematsu Elementary School at Mace Ranch—3100 Loyola Drive—Davis, CA 95618—530-757-5358

From the Principal

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In 1998, President Clinton awarded Fred Korematsu the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, Fred Korematsu continued to speak out, reminding the government to not treat Muslim Americans or people of Middle Eastern descent in the way people of Japanese descent were treated in World War II. He filed two legal briefs with the Supreme Court when some prisoners were detained for a lengthy period at Guantanamo Bay.

More than 60 years of activism ended when Fred Korematsu passed away at the age of 86 in 2005.

Fred Korematsu was an ordinary man who took an extraordinary stand against social injustice. There are many lessons our community can learn and embrace from this American civil rights hero.

As we celebrate Fred Korematsu Social Justice Day at our school on February 2nd, let's reflect on our social climate and think about the legacy we want to leave with our students when they leave Korematsu Elementary.

We opened with two grades in 2006 and became a full K-6 school in 2008. Embracing traits of Mr. Korematsu, what must we practice daily to ensure a socially-just school? How do we collaboratively foster and teach principals of equality and solidarity? How do we teach understanding, the importance of valuing human rights and the need to recognize the dignity of every person at our school? What programs and policies do we currently support that ensure equity and strive for the equality of opportunity for all of our students, in particular those that feel left out?

Lastly, how can each and every one of us be a "hero" to someone else in our daily interactions? You too can be an ordinary person who takes an extraordinary stand to right wrongs.

- Mary Ponce

Schedule for Fred T. Korematsu Social Justice Day

Morning assemblies for students, led by Student Council

- Screening video "Fred Korematsu: The Power of Protest."
- Third grade poem "Definition of a Genius."
- Presentation "Heroes for Social Justice."
- Korematsu choir singing "What can one little person do?"

Evening program and activities for families and the community

6:00 – 6:30 pm: Assembly in the MPR

- Opening remarks and guest speakers.
- Third grade poem "Definition of a Genius."
- Korematsu choir singing "What can one little person do?"

6:30 – 8:00 pm: Children's activities at stations around campus.

6:30 – 8:00 pm: Fred T. Korematsu exhibit in the library.

- Repeat screenings of video "Fred Korematsu: The Power of Protest"
- Exhibits about Fred T. Korematsu.

How our school was named for Fred Korematsu

In 2006, after years of effort, Mace Ranch neighborhood residents were ecstatic that their long-sought school would soon open. Nearly all thought the school would assume the placeholder name of Mace Ranch Elementary.

Several law professors from UC Davis, and members of the Japanese-American community suggested naming the school for Mr. Korematsu, who had died the previous year.

Then school board member (and current county supervisor) Jim Provenza formally proposed the name, adding the "... at Mace Ranch" to also recognize the neighborhood's long hard work in getting the school built and opened.

"Fred Korematsu: The Power of Protest"

During our social justice events on February 2, students and families will be able to view a six minute video from the Institute for Advancing Unity, "Fred Korematsu: The Power of Protest", designed for teachers throughout the state to educate K-12 students on civil rights and the activism of Fred Korematsu.

The video is included with lesson plans in free curriculum kits from the San Francisco-based Fred T. Korematsu Institute for Civil Rights and Education.

The Institute for Advancing Unity (formerly the Capital Unity Council) is an educational organization based in Sacramento dedicated to transforming human ignorance and prejudice into mutual understanding and respect. For more information, visit: www.championsofunity.org