

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Resolution No. 61-1617
Recognizing Fred Korematsu Day – January 30, 2017

WHEREAS, Mr. Korematsu was born on January 30, 1919, in Oakland, California, a child of Japanese immigrants; and

WHEREAS, In February 1942, shortly after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, authorizing the Secretary of War to exclude any or all residents from certain geographic areas and authorizing federal authorities to provide transportation, shelter and other accommodations for excluded or displaced residents; and

WHEREAS, With that authority, the U.S. Army issued orders excluding more than 100,000 people of Japanese descent, including many U.S. citizens, from areas on the West Coast and requiring them to report to internment camps; and

WHEREAS, Those orders included Exclusion Order 34, which as of May 1942 barred “all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and non-alien” from an area near San Francisco Bay and which required Japanese Americans to report to a Civilian Control Center from which they were sent to detention centers and internment camps; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Korematsu was arrested on May 30, 1942 in downtown San Leandro, CA and subsequently convicted in U. S. District Court for refusing to go to a Japanese American internment camp, but did not accept this injustice and instead fought it vigorously through all the means provided him under law; and

WHEREAS, The United States Supreme Court upheld Mr. Korematsu’s conviction, but after the 1983 findings of the Carter Special Commission that internment of Japanese Americans was based on “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership,” and the discovery of other documents in U. S. Government Archives that stated Japanese Americans posed no danger to the U.S., a U. S. District Court Judge, on November 10, 1983, overturned Mr. Korematsu’s conviction, of which the history of the events established Mr. Korematsu as a civil rights icon for a younger generation of Japanese Americans and Americans in general;

WHEREAS, President Bill Clinton awarded Mr. Korematsu the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor, in 1988; and

WHEREAS, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a bill in 2010 making January 30—Mr. Korematsu’s birthday— an annual day of recognition in California known as the Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution, the first time any state designated a day in honor of an Asian American; and

WHEREAS, The District has named one of its middle schools Fred T. Korematsu Middle School to salute his contributions to American society and humanity at large; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Korematsu is one of the great modern civil rights heroes and a notable defender of the Constitution, his people and the great American ideals to which we aspire but do not always attain.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board of Education salute the legacy of Fred Toyosaburo Korematsu and designate January 30, as Fred Korematsu Day.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this eighteenth day of January 2017 at a regular meeting of the Board of Education by the following vote:

AYE’s _____ NO’s _____ ABSENT _____ ABSTAIN _____

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution was duly and regularly introduced, passed, and adopted by the members of the Governing Board of the West Contra Costa Unified School District, at a public meeting of said Board held on January 18, 2017.

President of the Board of Education of the
West Contra Costa Unified School District

Clerk of the Board of Education of the
West Contra Costa Unified School District