



Building Japan-America Connections at the High School Level

Connecting Students. Celebrating Culture. Building Community.

The Japan America Society of Chicago is launching an exciting new initiative to bring together Japanese and Japanese American high school students throughout the Chicago area. Through social outings, educational seminars, and cultural workshops, this program aims to create a welcoming and supportive community where students can connect with peers who share their cultural heritage, exchange ideas and experiences, and develop a stronger sense of belonging.

Building a Strong Foundation

A dedicated committee of four Japanese mothers has been established to identify and engage students, foster meaningful connections, and build a supportive network rooted in shared cultural values.

To date, 30 students representing 11 public and private high schools in Chicago have been identified. As the initiative grows, the committee hopes to expand its reach to include Japanese and Japanese American high school students in the surrounding suburbs.

Beyond student programming, the initiative will provide opportunities for Japanese parents to connect, share experiences, exchange guidance, and build relationships. These connections may also create pathways to future mentorships, internships, and other opportunities that support students' personal and professional development.

Students will also be encouraged to engage with and contribute to the broader Japanese and Japanese American community through volunteer service, internships, and other community involvement.

Planned Activities

Throughout the year, students will have opportunities to participate in activities designed to encourage friendship, learning, cultural exploration, and community engagement, including:

- Social Gatherings: Bowling, pizza parties, and other outings that help students build friendships across schools.



- Sports and Recreation: Volleyball and soccer workshops that promote teamwork and connection.
- Educational Seminars: Programs that introduce students to new ideas, career pathways, and opportunities for personal growth.
- Cultural Workshops: Experiences that celebrate Japanese heritage and deepen students' understanding of their cultural identity.

For more information email kono@jaschicago.org.