

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMENT/RESPONSE FORM**

This comment and response form contains comments since April 11, 2018, State Board meeting when the List of Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absence from School, were considered at Discussion Level.

Topic: Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absence
From School

Meeting Date: June 6, 2018

Code Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3j

Level: Adoption

Division: Field Services

Completed by: County Office Administrative
Unit

Summary of Public Comments and Agency Responses:

The following are comments received from members of the public and the Department's response.

1. Nayan Jain
2. Shabbir Q. Shehabuddin

1. **COMMENT:** I am a follower of Jain Religion and see that you have marked some "Jain" holidays in your calendar (Like Mahavir Jayanti, Diwali) in your calendar. Jainism is one of the most ancient Indian religions. One of Jain's most important religious event is known as "Paryushana" which is celebrated for eight days in August/September. We Jains go to temple, do prayers, do fasting and many other practices during those eight days. This festival is not in your list currently and I am requesting you to please consider adding this Jain Festival in your list of approved religious festivals/holidays and permit students to take holidays. Paryushana 2018 will begin on Friday, September 7, 2018, and ends on Friday, September 14, 2018. (1)

RESPONSE: The Department agrees with the commenter and has made the appropriate changes to add the Jain holiday. Below is the addition to the "List of Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absences from School."

Paryushana (Jain)

September 7-14, 2018

2. **COMMENT:** I had an opportunity to review the proposed 2018-19 List of Holidays that is currently under review with the State Board. Yawm Aashura which is on Thursday, September 20, 2018, was not on the list. While technically part of Ashara Mubaraka, it is still the holiest day of the year for us, much like Yom Kippur and/or Easter. I think it should be listed separately on the List to signify its importance and for the recognition. It would be important for us to have it listed specifically, as opposed to just a part of Ashara Mubaraka. I noted that the year runs from July to June. If you look at the original list I provide, the three holidays that fall in the summertime are not on the list, namely: Yawm al-Arafa (August 20, 2018), Eid al-Adha (August 21, 2018), and Eid-e-Ghadeer (August 29, 2018). Could they be added to the list? Yawm al-Arafa is what is currently listed as Hajj Day, but we don't call it that. And Eid al-Adha is already on the list, only Islam Dawoodi Bohra needs to be added. (2)

RESPONSE: The Department agrees with the commenter and has made the appropriate changes to add the Islam Dawoodi Bohra. Below is the addition to the “List of Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absences from School.”

Yawm Aashura (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)	September 20, 2018
Yawn al-Arafa (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)	August 20, 2018
Eid al Adha (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)	August 21, 2018
Eid-e-Ghadeer (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)	August 29, 2018



**Adoption Resolution
June 6, 2018**

State of New Jersey
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RESOLUTION

The List of Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absence from School

WHEREAS, according to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16 and N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(j), regarding student absence from school because of religious holidays, the Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, is charged with the responsibility of prescribing such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the law; and

WHEREAS, the law provides that:

1. Any student absent from school because of a religious holiday may not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence;
2. Students who miss a test or examination because of absence on a religious holiday must be given the right to take an alternate test or examination;
3. To be entitled to the privileges set forth above, the student must present a written excuse signed by a parent or person standing in place of a parent;
4. Any absence because of a religious holiday must be recorded in the school register or in any group or class attendance record as an excused absence;
5. Such absence must not be recorded on any transcript or application or employment form or on any similar form; and
6. The Commissioner, with the approval of the State Board of Education, is required to:
 - (a) prescribe such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act; and
 - (b) prepare a list of religious holidays on which it shall be mandatory to excuse a student. The list, however, is to be a minimum list. Boards of education, at their discretion, may add other days to the list for the schools of their districts; and

WHEREAS, although the New Jersey Department of Education makes every attempt to ensure the accuracy of the dates using the lunar, Gregorian and Julian calendars; and

WHEREAS, dates within this resolution may not be fixed before the State Board adopts the annual calendar and may require additional revision; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the State Board of Education permits the Commissioner of Education, after annual adoption by the State Board of Education, to revise the dates provided in list of religious holidays.

WHEREAS, the district board of education has the right to add any bona fide religious holiday to the list for its own schools; now therefore be it,

RESOLVED that the State Board of Education adopts the following list of religious holidays for the 2018 - 2019 school year:

2018-19 School Year Observances

July 2018

Date	Observance
July 10	Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i)
July 22	Tish'a B'Av (Jewish)
July 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guru Purnima • Asalha Puja Day (Buddhist)

August 2018

Date	Observance
August 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast in Honor of the Holy Mother of Lord Jesus (Eastern Orthodox Christian) • Lammas (Christian and Wicca)
August 6	Transfiguration of the Lord (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
August 13-15	Obon (Buddhist)
August 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Catholic Christian) • Dormition of the Theotokos (Orthodox Christian) • Naga Panchami (Hindu)*¹
August 15-27	Onam (Hindu)*
August 19-24	Hajj Day (Islam)*
August 20	Yawm al-Arafa (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 20-21	Eid al-Adha (Islam)*
August 21	Eid al-Adha (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 25	Ulambana (Buddhist)
August 29	Raksha Bandhan (Hindu)* Eid-e-Ghadeer (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

September 2018

Date	Observance
September 1	Ecclesiastical Year begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 2	Krishna Janmashtami (Hindu)*
September 7	His Holiness Sakya Trizin's Birthday (Buddhist)
September 7-14	Paryushana (Jain)

¹ * Disclaimer: New Jersey Department of Education has made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of the dates. The information has been verified through the use of various sources and some dates may vary due to the lunar, Gregorian and Julian calendars.

Date	Observance
September 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nativity of Mary (Christian) Nativity of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 9-11	Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)
September 10	Feast of Trumpets (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
September 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Year – Hijra (Islam) 1st Muharram (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)
September 12	Muharram (Islamic New Year)
September 12-20	Ashara Mubarak (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
September 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yom Kippur (Jewish) Day of Atonement (Christian, Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
September 12-23	Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)*
September 20	Yawm Aashura (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
September 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mabon (Wicca/Pagan) Ostara (Wicca/Pagan)
September 23 - 30	Sukkot (Jewish)
September 24-30	Feast of Tabernacles (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
September 27	The Elevation of the Holy Cross (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 30- October 2	Sh'mini Atzeret (Jewish)

October 2018

Date	Observance
October 1	Last Great Day (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 2	Simchat Torah (Jewish)
October 9-17	Navaratri (Hindu)*
October 18	Dussehra (Hindu)*
October 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of the Scriptures as Guru Granth (Sikh) Birth of B'ab (Baha'i)
October 30	Chehlum Imam Husain (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

November 2018

Date	Observance
November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Saints' Day (Christian) Samhain-Beltane (Wicca)
November 2	All Souls' Day (Christian)
November 7	Diwali (Hindu, Jain and Sikh)*
November 8	Goverdhan Puja (Hindu)*

Date	Observance
November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Saints' Day (Christian) Samhain-Beltane (Wicca)
November 10	Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
November 15	Nativity Fast begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
November 20	Maulid al-Nabi (Islam and Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
November 21	The Presentation of the Theotokos to the Temple (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
November 23	Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Birthday (Sikh)
November 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom (Sikh) Urus-Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
November 26	Day of Covenant (Baha'i)
November 28	Ascension of 'Abdu'l Baha (Baha'i)

December 2018

Date	Observance
December 2	First Sunday of Advent (Christian)
December 2-10	Hanukkah (Jewish)
December 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bodhi Day (Buddhist) Immaculate Conception (Christian)
December 12	Milad Imam-uz-Zamaan (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
December 21	Yule (Wicca and Christian)
December 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas (Christian) The Nativity of Christ (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
December 26	Zarathosht Diso (Zoroastrian)
December 28	Milad Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

January 2019

Date	Observance
January 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gantan-sai (Shinto) Mary, Mother of God - Catholic Christian
January 3 through 10	Holy Convocation (Church of God and Saints of Christ)
January 5	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib (Sikh)
January 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feast of Epiphany (Christian) Feast of Theophany (Eastern Orthodox Christian) Nativity of Christ (Armenian Orthodox)
January 7	Feast of the Nativity (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

Date	Observance
January 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maghi (Sikh) Bodhi Day (Buddhist)
January 14	Makar Sankranti and Pongal (Hindu)*
January 20	World Religion Day (Baha'i)
January 21	Tu B'shvat (Jewish)
January 28	Chinese/Lunar New Year (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist)

February 2019

Date	Observance
February 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imbolic-Candlemas (Wicca and Christian); The Presentation of Our Lord to the Temple (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
February 8	Nirvana Day (Buddhist)
February 10	Vasant Panchami (Hindu)*
February 15	Nirvana Day (Jain)
February 21	Jonah's Passover (Eastern Orthodox Church)
February 26-March 1	Intercalary Days (Baha'i)

March 2019

Date	Observance
March 4	Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)*
March 5	Shrove Tuesday (Christian)
March 6	Ash Wednesday (Christian)
March 11	Clean Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
March 13	L. Ron Hubbard's Birthday (Church of Scientology)
March 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ostara (Wicca) Mabon (Wicca/Pagan Northern and Southern Hemispheres)
March 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purim (Jewish) Holi (Hindu)* Nowruz (Zoroastrian) Lord's Evening Meal (Christian, Jehovah's Witness) Ayyam al Beez (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
March 22-24	Hola Mohalla (Sikh)*
March 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annunciation of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian) The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (Christian) Urus – Syedna Taher Saifuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
March 28	Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian)

April 2019

Date	Observance
April 2	Yawm al-Mab'ath (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
April 3	Lailat al Miraj (Islam)*
April 5	Souramana Yugadi (Hindu)*
April 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God) • Chandramana Yugadi (Hindu)*
April 8	Buddha's Birthday/Buddha Day-Buddha Day*
April 13-20	<p>Memorial of the Feast of the Lord's Passover (Church of God and Saints of Christ)</p> <p>Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread (Church of God and Saints of Christ) March 31-April 6</p>
April 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palm Sunday • Ramnavami (Hindu)*
April 17	Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
April 18	Holy Thursday (Christian)
April 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passover (United Church of God) • Holy Friday (Christian) • Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)*
April 19-21	Theravadin New Year (Buddhist)
April 20-26	Days of Unleavened Bread (Philadelphia Church of God)
April 20-27	Passover (Jewish)
April 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God) • Lazarus Saturday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easter (Christian) • Palm Sunday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) • First Day of Ridvan (Baha'i) • Lailat al Bara'ah (Islam)*
April 22	Easter Monday (Christian)
April 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 11th Panchen Lama's Birthday (Buddhist) • Holy Thursday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Friday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) • The Last Friday of The Great Lent (Eastern Orthodox Church)
April 28	Easter (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ninth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i) • Bright Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

May 2019

Date	Observance
May 1	Beltane (Wicca)
May 2	Twelfth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)
May 6-June 4	Ramadan (Islam)
May 9	Yom Ha'Azmaut (Jewish)
May 18	Visakha Puja (Buddhist)
May 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lag B'Omer (Jewish)Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i)Shahada – Amirul Mumineen (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 26-27	Laylatul Qadr (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 27	Milad Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 29	Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
May 30	Ascension of Our Lord (Christian)
May 31	Aakhir Jumo'a (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

June 2019

Date	Observance
June 1	Laylat as-Qadr (Islam)*
June 4	Eid al Fitr (Islam and Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
June 9	Pentecost (Christian)
June 9-10	Shavuot (Jewish)
June 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib (Sikh)Pentecost (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
June 21	Litha (Wicca)
June 24	Fast of the Holy Apostles (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

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