

**State Board of Education
Comment/Response Form**

This comment and response form contains comments since March 4, 2020, State Board meeting when the List of Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absence From School was considered at Discussion Level.

Topic: Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absence From School

Meeting Date: May 6, 2020

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

Level: Adoption

Division: Field Services

Completed by: Field Services
Coordination

Summary of Public Comments and Agency Responses:

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

No comments were received.



**Adoption Resolution
May 6, 2020**

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

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, that 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; and be it further

Resolved, that the State Board of Education adopts the following list of religious holidays for the 2020 - 2021 school year:

2020-21 School Year Observances

July 2020

Date	Observance
July 4	Asalha Puja Day (Buddhist)
July 5	Guru Purnima
July 9	Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i)
July 25	Naga Panchami (Hindu)* ¹
July 28-August2	Hajj Day (Islam)*
July 29	Yawm al-Arafa (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
July 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tish'a B'Av (Jewish)Eid al-Adha (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
July 31	Eid al-Adha (Islam)*

August 2020

Date	Observance
August 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fast in Honor of the Holy Mother of Lord Jesus (Eastern Orthodox Christian)Lammass (Christian and Wicca)
August 3	Raksha Bandhan (Hindu)*
August 6	Transfiguration of the Lord (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
August 7	Eid-e-Ghadeer (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 11	Krishna Janmashtami (Hindu)*
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)
August 16-23	Paryushana (Jain)
August 19	1 st Muharram (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 19-28	Ashara Mubarak (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 20	1 ST Muharram (Islamic New Year)
August 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ulambana (Buddhist)

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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)*
August 22-September 2	Onam (Hindu)*
August 28	Yawm Aashura (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

September 2020

Date	Observance
September 1	Ecclesiastical Year begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 7	His Holiness Sakya Trizin's Birthday (Buddhist)
September 8	Nativity of Mary (Christian)
September 18-20	Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)
September 19	Feast of Trumpets (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
September 21	Nativity of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 21-29	Mabon (Wicca/Pagan)
September 27	The Elevation of the Holy Cross (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yom Kippur (Jewish) Day of Atonement (Christian, Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)

October 2020

Date	Observance
October 2-9	Sukkot (Jewish)
October 3-9	Feast of Tabernacles (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 7	Chehlum Imam Hussain (Ism Dawoodi Bohra)*
October 9-11	Sh'mini Atzeret (Jewish)
October 10	Last Great Day (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 11	Simchat Torah (Jewish)
October 17-26	Navaratri (Hindu)*
October 19	Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
October 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of the Scriptures as Guru Granth (Sikh) Birth of B'ab (Bah'i)
October 28	Milad an-Nabi (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
October 29	Maulid al-Nabi (Islam)*

November 2020

Date	Observance
November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All Saints' Day (Christian)Samhain-Beltane (Wicca)Urus-Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
November 2	All Souls' Day (Christian)
November 14	Diwali (Hindu, Jain, Puja, Deepavali and Sikh)*
November 15	Goverdhan Puja (Hindu)*
November 19	Milad Imam-uz-Zamaan (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
November 21	The Presentation of the Theotokos to the Temple (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
November 24	Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom (Sikh)
November 25	Day of Covenant (Baha'i)
November 27	Ascension of 'Abdul'l Baha (Baha'i)
November 28	Nativity Fast begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
November 29	First Sunday of Advent (Christian)
November 30	Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Birthday (Sikh)

December 2020

Date	Observance
December 5	Milad Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
December 8	Immaculate Conception (Christian)
December 11-18	Hanukkah (Jewish)
December 22	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)

January 2021

Date	Observance
January 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gantan-sai (Shinto)Mary, Mother of God - Catholic Christian
January 3-10	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)

Date	Observance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nativity of Christ (Armenian Orthodox)
January 7	Feast of the Nativity (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
January 13	Maghi (Sikh)
January 14	Makar Sankranti and Pongal (Hindu)*
January 17	World Religion Day (Baha'i)
January 20	Bodhi Day (Buddhist)
January 28	Tu B'shvat (Jewish)

February 2021

Date	Observance
February 1	Imbolic-Candlemas (Wicca and Christian)
February 2	The Presentation of Our Lord to the Temple (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
February 12	Chinese/Lunar New Year (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist)
February 14-23	Midwinter Ceremonies (Native American)
February 15	Nirvana Day (Buddhist, Jain)
February 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shrove Tuesday (Christian) Vasant Panchami (Hindu)*
February 17	Ash Wednesday (Christian)
February 25	Jonah's Passover (Eastern Orthodox Church)
February 25-28	Intercalary Days (Baha'i)
February 26	Ayyam al Beez (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
February 27	Purim (Jewish)

March 2021

Date	Observance
March 2	Urus – Syedna Taher Saifuddin
March 10	Yawm al-Mab'ath (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
March 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)* Lailat al Miraj (Islam)*
March 13	L. Ron Hubbard's Birthday (Church of Scientology)
March 15	Clean Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
March 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ostara (Wicca) Mabon (Wicca/Pagan Northern and Southern Hemispheres) Nowruz (Zoroastrian)

Date	Observance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Naw-Ryz (Baha'i)
March 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annunciation of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian) The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (Christian)
March 26	Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian)
March 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lord's Evening Meal (Christian, Jehovah's Witness) Passover (United Church of God)
March 27-April 4	Passover (Jewish)
March 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palm Sunday Lailat al Bara'ah (Islam)* First Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God)
March 28-April 3	Days of Unleavened Bread (Philadelphia Church of God)
March 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holi (Hindu)* Hola Mohalla (Sikh)*

April 2021

Date	Observance
April 1	Holy Thursday (Christian)
April 2	Holy Friday (Christian)
April 3	Last Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God)
April 4	Easter (Christian)
April 5	Easter Monday (Christian)
April 8-16	Passover (Jewish)
April 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holy Thursday (Christian) Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread (Church of God and Saints of Christ)
April 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Souramana Yugadi (Hindu)* Chandramana Yugadi(Hindu)*
April 13-20	Memorial of the Feast of the Lord's Passover (Church of God and Saints of Christ)
April 13-May 13	Ramadan (Islam)
April 16-17	Yom Ha'Azmaut (Jewish)
April 20	First Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)

Date	Observance
April 21	Ramnavami (Hindu)*
April 24	Lazarus Saturday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)* • The 11th Panchen Lama's Birthday (Buddhist) • Palm Sunday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 26	Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)*
April 27	Theravadin New Year (Buddhist)
April 28	Ninth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)
April 29	Holy Thursday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Friday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) • The Last Friday of the Great Lent (Eastern Orthodox Church) • Lag B'Omer (Jewish) • Shahadat – Amirul Mumineen (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

May 2021

Date	Observance
May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beltane (Wicca) • Twelfth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)
May 2	Easter (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
May 3	Bright Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
May 3-4	Laylatul Qadr (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 4	Milad Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 7	Aakhir Jumo'a (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 8	Laylatul Qadr (Islam)*
May 12	Eid al-Fitr (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascension of Our Lord (Christian) • Eid al Fitr (Islam)*
May 16-18	Shavuot (Jewish)
May 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i) • Pentecost (Christian)
May 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visakha Puja (Buddhist) • Buddha's Birthday/Buddha Day-Buddha Day*
May 29	Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)

June 2021

Date	Observance
June 16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib (Sikh)
June 21	Pentecost (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
June 24	Litha (Wicca)
June 28	Fast of the Holy Apostles (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

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