

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE
COMMENT/RESPONSE FORM

This comment and response form contains comments since March 6, 2019, 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: May 1, 2019

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. Jean Public,
Member of the Public
 - **Comment:** There should be no more religious holidays accepted for the school children of New Jersey. Far, far too many holidays are already allowed. It has become absolutely stupid to allow so many holidays. If you don't want to go to school, don't go but to have all those holidays makes it a laughing stock for everybody.
 - **Response:** The list of Religious Holidays is a resolution annually adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance with the State statute and regulation 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.



**Adoption Resolution
May 1, 2019**

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 2019 - 2020 school year:

2019-20 School Year Observances

July 2019

Date	Observance
July 9	Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i)
July 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Guru PurnimaAsalha Puja Day (Buddhist)

August 2019

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 5	Naga Panchami (Hindu)* ¹
August 6	Transfiguration of the Lord (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
August 9-14	Hajj Day (Islam)*
August 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tish'a B'Av (Jewish)Yawm al-Arafa (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 11	Eid al-Adha (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 12-15	Eid al-Adha (Islam)*
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)Ulambana (Buddhist)Raksha Bandhan (Hindu)*
August 19	Eid-e-Ghadeer (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 24	Krishna Janmashtami (Hindu)*
August 27-September 3	Paryushana (Jain)
August 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New Year – Hijra (Islam)1st Muharram (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)

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"> Muharram (Islamic New Year)

September 2019

Date	Observance
September 1-9	Ashara Mubaraka (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
September 1 – 15	Onam (Hindu)*
September 2	Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)*
September 7	His Holiness Sakya Trizin's Birthday (Buddhist)
September 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nativity of Mary (Christian) Nativity of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 10	Yawm Aashura (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
September 21-29	Mabon (Wicca/Pagan)
September 27	The Elevation of the Holy Cross (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 29-October 1	Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)
September 29 - October 8	Navaratri (Hindu)*
September 30	Feast of Trumpets (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)

October 2019

Date	Observance
October 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yom Kippur (Jewish) Day of Atonement (Christian, Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 13-20	Sukkot (Jewish)
October 14-20	Feast of Tabernacles (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 19	Chehlum Imam Hussain (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
October 20	Installation of the Scriptures as Guru Granth (Sikh)
October 20-22	Sh'mini Atzeret (Jewish)
October 21	Last Great Day (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 22	Simchat Torah (Jewish)
October 24-29	Diwali (Puja, Deepavali)*
October 27	Diwali (Hindu, Jain and Sikh)*
October 28	Goverdhan Puja (Hindu)*
October 29	Birth of B'ab (Baha'i)
October 30	Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)

November 2019

Date	Observance
November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All Saints' Day (Christian)Samhain-Beltane (Wicca)
November 2	All Souls' Day (Christian)
November 9	Maulid al-Nabi (Islam and Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
November 12	Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Birthday (Sikh)
November 13	Urus-Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
November 21	The Presentation of the Theotokos to the Temple (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
November 24	Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom (Sikh)
November 26	Day of Covenant (Baha'i)
November 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nativity Fast begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)Ascension of 'Abdu'l Baha (Baha'i)

December 2019

Date	Observance
December 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">First Sunday of Advent (Christian)Milad Imam-uz-Zamaan (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*Ecclesiastical Year begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
December 8	Immaculate Conception (Christian)
December 17	Milad Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
December 22	Yule (Wicca and Christian)
December 22-30	Hanukkah (Jewish)
December 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Christmas (Christian)The Nativity of Christ (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
December 26	Zarathosht Diso (Zoroastrian)

January 2020

Date	Observance
January 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gantan-sai (Shinto)

Date	Observance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary, Mother of God - Catholic Christian
January 1 -7	Holy Convocation (Church of God and Saints of Christ)
January 2	Bodhi Day (Buddhist)
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)
January 14	Maghi (Sikh)
January 15	Makar Sankranti and Pongal (Hindu)*
January 19	World Religion Day (Baha'i)
January 25	Chinese/Lunar New Year (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist)
January 29	Vasant Panchami (Hindu)*

February 2020

Date	Observance
February 1	Imbolic-Candlemas (Wicca and Christian)
February 2	The Presentation of Our Lord to the Temple (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
February 8	Nirvana Day (Buddhist)
February 10	Tu B'shvat (Jewish)
February 13	Jonah's Passover (Eastern Orthodox Church)
February 15	Nirvana Day (Jain)
February 21	Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)*
February 25	Shrove Tuesday (Christian)
February 26	Ash Wednesday (Christian)
February 26-March 1	Intercalary Days (Baha'i)

March 2020

Date	Observance
March 2	Clean Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
March 9	Ayyam al Beez (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
March 9-10	Holi (Hindu)*
March 10	Purim (Jewish)
March 10-12	Hola Mohalla (Sikh)*
March 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L. Ron Hubbard's Birthday (Church of Scientology)

Date	Observance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milad Imam-uz-Zamaan (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
March 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ostara (Wicca) Mabon (Wicca/Pagan Northern and Southern Hemispheres) Nowruz (Zoroastrian)
March 21	Yawm al-Mab'ath (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
March 22	Lailat al Miraj (Islam)*
March 24	Souramana Yugadi (Hindu)*
March 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annunciation of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian) The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (Christian) Chandramana Yugadi (Hindu)*
March 28	Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian)

April 2020

Date	Observance
April 2	Ramnavami (Hindu)*
April 5	Palm Sunday
April 6	Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
April 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lord's Evening Meal (Christian, Jehovah's Witness) Theravadin New Year (Buddhist) Memorial of the Feast of the Lord's Passover (Church of God and Saints of Christ)
April 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)* Passover (United Church of God) Buddha's Birthday/Buddha Day-Buddha Day*
April 8-16	Passover (Jewish)
April 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holy Thursday (Christian) Lailat al Bara'ah (Islam)* First Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God) Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread (Church of God and Saints of Christ)
April 9-15	Days of Unleavened Bread (Philadelphia Church of God)

Date	Observance
April 10	Holy Friday (Christian)
April 11	Lazarus Saturday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easter (Christian) Palm Sunday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 13	Easter Monday (Christian)
April 15	Last Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God)
April 16	Holy Thursday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 17	Holy Friday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 19	Easter (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Day of Ridvan (Baha'i) Bright Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 24 – May 23	Ramadan (Islam)
April 25	The 11 th Panchen Lama's Birthday (Buddhist)
April 26	The Last Friday of The Great Lent (Eastern Orthodox Church)
April 29	Yom Ha'Azmaut (Jewish)
April 28	Ninth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)

May 2020

Date	Observance
May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beltane (Wicca) Twelfth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)
May 7	Visakha Puja (Buddhist)
May 11	Shahadat – Amirul Mumineen (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 12	Lag B'Omer (Jewish)
May 14-15	Laylatul Qadr (Islam and Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 15	Milad Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laylatul Qadr (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)* Laylat as-Qadr (Islam)*
May 21	Ascension of Our Lord (Christian)
May 22	Aakhir Jumo'a (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i) Eid al-Fitr (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
May 24	Eid al Fitr (Islam)*
May 28	Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
May 29-30	Shavuot (Jewish)

Date	Observance
May 31	Pentecost (Christian)

June 2020

Date	Observance
June 7	Pentecost (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
June 15	Fast of the Holy Apostles (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
June 16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib (Sikh)
June 24	Litha (Wicca)

Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D., Commissioner
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