

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

This comment and response form contains comments received since the March 2, 2022, 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 4, 2022

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

Level: Adoption

Division: Field Support and Services

Completed by: Field Support and Services

Summary of Public Comments and Agency Responses:

The following are comments received from members of the public and the Department's response. Each commenter is identified at the end of the comment by a number that corresponds to the following list:

1. Baninder Mahabir
2. Narinderjit Kaur
3. Sumit Bangia

1. **Comment:** The commenters requested the Department add Vaisakhi, one of the most significant days of the year for Sikhs, to the list of excused holidays. The commenters indicated that the holiday had previously been on the List of Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absences From School but has been missing for a few years. **(1, 2, 3)**

Response: The Department agrees and will reinstate the holiday on the List of Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absences From School.

Vaisakhi (Sikh)

April 14, 2023



**Adoption Resolution
May 4, 2022**

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 2022-2023 school year:

2022-2023 School Year Observances

July 2022

Date	Observance
July 8	Yawm al-Arafa (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
July 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i) Eid al-Adha (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
July 7-12	Hajj Day (Islam)*
July 10	Eid al-Adha (Islam)*
July 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asalha Puja Day (Buddhist) Guru Purnima
July 17	Eid-e-Ghadeer (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
July 29	1 st Muharram (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
July 29 – August 7	Ashara Mubarak (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

August 2022

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 2	Naga Panchami (Hindu)* ¹
August 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tish'a B'Av (Jewish) Transfiguration of the Lord (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
August 7	Yawm Aashura (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
August 9	1 st Muharram (Islamic New Year)
August 11	Raksha Bandhan (Hindu)*
August 12	Ulambana (Buddhist)
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 19	Krishna Janmashtami (Hindu)*
August 23-24	Paryushana (Jain)*
August 30 – September 8	Onam (Hindu)*
August 31	Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)*

* 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.

September 2022

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 16	Chehlum Imam Hussain (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
September 21	Nativity of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 21-29	Mabon (Wicca/Pagan)
September 26-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rosh Hashanah (Jewish) Feast of Trumpets (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
September 26 – October 5	Navaratri (Hindu)*
September 27	The Elevation of the Holy Cross (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

October 2022

Date	Observance
October 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yom Kippur (Jewish) Day of Atonement (Christian, Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 7	Milad an-Nabi (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
October 8	Maulid al-Nabi (Islam)*
October 9-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sukkot (Jewish) Feast of Tabernacles (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 11	Urus-Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
October 17	Last Great Day (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 17-18	Sh'mini Atzeret (Jewish)
October 18	Simchat Torah (Jewish)
October 20	Installation of the Scriptures as Guru Granth (Sikh)
October 22-26	Diwali (Hindu, Jain, Puja, Deepavali and Sikh)*
October 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goverdhan Puja (Hindu)* Birth of B'ab (Bah'i)
October 27	Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
October 29	Milad Imam-uz-Zamaan (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

November 2022

Date	Observance
November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All Saints' Day (Christian)Samhain-Beltane (Wicca)
November 2	All Souls' Day (Christian)
November 8	Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Birthday (Sikh)
November 14	Milad 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 27	First Sunday of Advent (Christian)
November 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nativity Fast begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)Ascension of 'Abdul'l Baha (Baha'i)

December 2022

Date	Observance
December 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Immaculate Conception (Christian)Bodhi Day (Buddhist)
December 19-26	Hanukkah (Jewish)
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)

January 2023

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 Gobindh 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 13	Maghi (Sikh)
January 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makar Sankranti and Pongal (Hindu)* • World Religion Day (Baha'i)
January 22	Chinese/Lunar New Year (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist)
January 24 - February 2	Midwinter Ceremonies (Native American)
January 26	Vasant Panchami (Hindu)*

February 2023

Date	Observance
February 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Presentation of Our Lord to the Temple (Eastern Orthodox Christian) • Imbolic-Candlemas (Wicca and Christian)
February 5	Ayyam al Beez (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
February 6	Tu B'shvat (Jewish)
February 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urus – Syedna Taher Saifuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra) • Jonah's Passover (Eastern Orthodox Church)
February 15	Nirvana Day (Buddhist)
February 17	Yawm al-Mab'ath (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)
February 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)* • Lailat al Miraj (Islam)*
February 21	Shrove Tuesday (Christian)
February 22	Ash Wednesday (Christian)
February 26 – March 1	Intercalary Days (Baha'i)
February 27	Clean Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

March 2023

Date	Observance
March 3	Govinda Dwadashi (Hindu)*
March 6	Holika Dahan (Hindu)*
March 7	Purim (Jewish)
March 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lailat al Bara'ah (Islam)* • Holi (Hindu)*
March 8-10	Hola Mohalla (Sikh)*
March 13	L. Ron Hubbard's Birthday (Church of Scientology)
March 14	Meena Sankranti (Hindu)*
March 20	Ostara (Wicca)

March 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naw-Ryz (Baha'i) • Nowruz (Zoroastrian)
March 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Souramana Yugadi (Hindu)* • Chandramana Yugadi(Hindu)*
March 22 – April 21	Ramadan (Islam)
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 30	Ramnavami (Hindu)*

April 2023

Date	Observance
April 2	Palm Sunday
April 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)* • Lord's Evening Meal (Christian, Jehovah's Witness)
April 5-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorial of the Feast of the Lord's Passover (Church of God and Saints of Christ) • Passover (United Church of God) • Passover (Jewish)
April 8	Visakha Puja (Buddhist)
April 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Thursday (Christian) • First Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God) • Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)*
April 6-8	Theravadin New Year (Buddhist)
April 6-12	Days of Unleavened Bread (Philadelphia Church of God)
April 7	Holy Friday (Christian)
April 8	Lazarus Saturday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easter (Christian) • Palm Sunday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) • Shahadat – Amirul Mumineen (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
April 10	Easter Monday (Christian)
April 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread (Church of God and Saints of Christ) • Last Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God)
April 12-13	Laylatul Qadr (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*

April 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Thursday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) • Milad Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
April 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Friday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) • The Last Friday of the Great Lent (Eastern Orthodox Church) • Aakhir Jumo'a (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)* • Vaisakhi (Sikh)
April 16	Easter (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 17	Bright Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 18	Laylatul Qadr (Islam)*
April 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Day of Ridvan (Baha'i) • Eid al-Fitr (Islam Dawoodi Bohra)*
April 22	Eid al Fitr (Islam)*
April 25	The 11 th Panchen Lama's Birthday (Buddhist)
April 26	Yom Ha'Azmaut (Jewish)
April 29	Ninth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)

May 2023

Date	Observance
May 1	Beltane (Wicca)
May 2	Twelfth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)
May 9	Lag B'Omer (Jewish)
May 18	Ascension of Our Lord (Christian)
May 24	Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i)
May 25	Feast of Ascension (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
May 26	Buddha's Birthday/Buddha Day*
May 26-27	Shavuot (Jewish)
May 28	Pentecost (Christian)
May 29	Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)

June 2023

Date	Observance
June 4	Pentecost (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
June 12-19	Fast of the Holy Apostles (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
June 16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib (Sikh)
June 24	Litha (Wicca)

Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner
Acting Secretary, N.J. State Board of Education

Kathy Goldenberg, President
N.J. State Board of Education