

DRAFT

Religious/Ethnic Observances and/or Holy Days 2009-10

Some days may require absence from school or fasting or other specific observance. All absences will be reviewed on an individual case-by-case basis. If questions arise, it is suggested that the students bring a note from their religious leader. Also note that some holidays may vary slightly based on local custom, group preference or moon sightings.

BAHÁ'Í HOLIDAYS

Holidays begin at sunset the previous day.

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| Birth of the Báb | Oct. 20 – Bahá'í observance of the anniversary of the birth, in 1819 of “the Báb,” the prophet-herald of the Bahá'í faith. One of the nine holy days of the year where work and school are suspended for Bahá'ís |
| Birth of Baha'u'llah | Nov. 12 - Bahá'í celebration of the birth of their founder and teacher. Refrain from work |
| Day of Covenant | Nov. 26 - Baha'i celebration of the covenant given in the last will and testament of Baha'u'llah |
| Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha | Nov. 28 - Baha'i celebration of the rising of the spirit of Abdu'l-Baha to the heavenly dwelling |
| Bahá'í New Year's Day (Naw Rúz) | March 21 – Begins at sunset the previous day (March 20). Originally a Persian holiday, Naw-Rúz is one of the nine holy days of the year where work and school are suspended for Bahá'ís |
| First Day of Ridvan | April 21 - Baha'i commemoration of the twelve day period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is to be suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival |
| Declaration of the Bab | May 23 - Baha'i recognition of the declaration in 1844 by Ali Muhammed that he is the anticipated "Coming One" of all religions. Work is suspended |
| Ascension of Baha'u'llah | May 29 — Baha'i recollection of the death of Baha'u'llah, the founder. Observed by prayers and readings. Work is suspended |
| Martyrdom of the Bab | July 9 - Ali Mohammed was executed in 1850 by Persian political and religious powers. Observed by abstaining from commerce and work |

BUDDHIST OBSERVANCES

Bodhi Day(Rohatsu) **Dec. 8** – Buddhist celebration of the time when Prince Gautama took his place under the Bodhi tree, vowing to remain there until he attained supreme enlightenment

Nirvana Day **Feb. 15** – A regional observance of the death of Buddha

Magha Puja Day **March 11** - Buddhist celebration of the presentation of teachings by Lord Buddha to assembly of holy men

Celebration of Buddha's Birthday **April 8** - Founder of Buddhism, lived 563-480 B.C.

CHRISTIAN HOLIDAYS

Assumption	Aug. 15 - Roman Catholic Holy Day of Obligation; commemorates assumption of Mary into heaven
All Saints Day	Nov. 1 - A Catholic and Protestant commemoration of all the saints
Feast of the Immaculate Conception	Dec. 8 - Roman Catholic Holy Day of Obligation; commemorates the Virgin Mary's freedom from original sin at her conception
Christmas	Dec. 25 – Celebration of the birth of Christ. A federal holiday celebrated in all states and territories
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God	Jan. 1 - Roman Catholic Holy Day; celebrates the motherhood of Mary
Epiphany	Jan. 6 - Christian commemoration of the manifestations of the divine nature of Jesus Christ. The homage of the magi to the infant Jesus is honored by some. For others the Baptism of Jesus is the remembered event. A season of the Christian year from the close of Christmas to the beginning of Lent
Ash Wednesday	Feb. 25 - First day of Lent. Catholic priests place ashes in the middle of parishioners' foreheads during mass on this day
Lent	Feb. 25 – April 11 – A period of fasting and penitence observed by Christian churches; lasts 40 days, excluding Sundays, from Ash Wednesday to the Saturday before Easter
Orthodox Lent	March 2 – April 18 – Eastern Orthodox and Greek Orthodox Lent; period of fasting and penitence before Easter
Palm Sunday	April 5 – Christian celebration of the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The day begins Holy Week. It is observed by worship celebrations and parades using palm branches
Maunday Thursday	April 9 – Christian observance of the first Lord's Supper during Holy Week
Good Friday	April 10 - Observed by Christians the Friday before Easter. Commemorates Christ's crucifixion, death, and entombment
Easter	April 12 – Christian celebration of Christ's resurrection. Observed the first Sunday following the first full moon that occurs on or after the vernal equinox
Ascension	May 21 – Celebrated the Thursday approximately 40 days after Easter, to commemorate Christ's ascension into heaven. Roman Catholic Holy Day of Obligation
Pentecost	May 31 - Christian observance, considered the birthday of the Church, celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Easter; commemorates descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and disciples of Jesus

HINDU FESTIVALS

- Raksha Bandhan** **Aug. 16** – Hindu festival honoring the loving ties between brothers and sisters in a family. Sisters tie Rakhee -a hand made bracelet on the wrist of the brothers
- Krishna Janamashtami** **Aug. 24** – Birthday of Krishna, Avataar of Vishnu. A day of celebration, fasting and prayer
- Ganesa Chaturthi** **Sept. 3** – A Hindu festival honoring the god of prosperity, prudence and success. Images of Ganesa are worshipped to honor God Ganesh, Son of Shiva. Ganesa is considered the remover of obstacles from business and personal life
- Navaratri** **Sept. 30 – Oct. 8** - Nine days of fasting before Dasera; Hindu Festival of the divine mother honoring Durga, wife of Shiva, and seeking her blessings, celebrating feminine qualities of love, courage, and sacrifice
- Dasera/Vijaya Dashmi** **Oct. 9** – 10th day of Navaratri Hindu celebration of victory and valor. King Ravan is destroyed by God Vishnu Avataar Lord Rama. Victory of good over evil. Ram-Rajaya established- Peace on Earth
- Durga Puja** **Oct. 6** - Celebration of feminine values and strengths
- Diwali (Deepavali)** **Oct 28** - Celebration of God Visnu Avatar Ram's return to Avodhva after defeating King Ravan. Hindu Festival of Lights symbolizing the human urge to move toward the light. Gift exchanges, fireworks and festive meals. New Year follows. Jain celebration of Lord Mahavira's day of final liberation
- Karva Chauth** **Oct. 18** - Day of fasting and prayer to God Shiva for the long life of one's husband/Celebration of family values
- Goverdhan Puja** **Oct. 29** -God Krishna lifts Mt.Goverdhan to save peasants from natural disasters
- Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib** **Nov. 13** - Sikh honoring of the birth of the first Sikh teacher who lived from 1469-1539 c.e. Sacred readings, prayers, hymns, meals together, anointment of the Holy Book of the Sikh's
- Children's Day** **Nov. 14** - Former prime minister Nehru's birthday in India - celebrates *Children* by teaching values through story-telling
- Lodi/Shankrant** **Jan. 14** - Celebration of bountiful harvest
- Maha Shivaratri** **Feb. 23** - Married women pray to God Shiv/Parvati - God of marital bliss and harmony. A Hindu festival in honor of Lord Shiva and his marriage to Goddess Parvati. Ceremonies involving prayer and hymns take place mostly at night. Special foods are not used
- Gauri Purnima** **March 21** - Commemorates the appearance of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu incarnation of God Vishnu. Important Day of prayer and fasting for unmarried girls
- Holi** **March 11** - God Vishnu saves Holika and Prahlad from the fires created by Harnaya Kashyap. Hindu spring festival. It is observed in a colorful and boisterous manner. People shower each other with colored water and powder. Celebrates ties of humanity and brotherhood

Bhai Dauj

March 24 - Celebration of love among siblings

Ramanavami

April 3 – Birthday of God Rama, Avataar of Lord Vishnu. Hindu celebration of the birth of Lord Rama, hero of the religious epic poem, The Ramayana

Baisakhi (Vaisakhi)

April 13 - Celebration of Spring harvest bounty. Hindu start of the New Year. Greetings that wish good life in coming days are exchanged

JEWISH HOLIDAYS:

All holidays begin at sunset on the evening of the day before the date specified here if not already specified in comments.

Tisha B'Av	Aug. 10 – A Jewish day of fasting in remembrance of the destruction of the Temple in 586 b.c.e. and 70 c.e.
Rosh Hashanah	Sept. 30 – Oct. 1 - Begins at sunset, Sept. 29. Jewish New Year and holy days. Days of Renewed Responsibility. The first of the High Holy Days marked by solemn religious observance
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)	Oct. 9 - Begins at sunset, Oct 8. Jewish holy day devoted to prayer, fasting, and repentance
Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)	Oct. 14 - 15 - Begins at sunset, Oct. 13. Jewish festival of thanksgiving, harvest, and the remembrance of the Jews who wandered in the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt
Shemini Atzeret	Oct. 21 - Begins at sunset, Oct. 20. The closing day of the Jewish festival of Sukkot. A day of prayer
Simchat Torah	Oct. 22 - Begins at sunset, Oct. 21. Jewish holiday. Reading of the law (Torah) is concluded and begun anew in the synagogue
Hanukkah (Festival of Lights)	Dec. 22 - 29 – Begins at sunset, Dec. 21. Jewish holiday commemorating rededication of the Temple by the Maccabees. Primarily a children's festival – a time for fun, songs, games, and gift-giving. It starts on the 25 th day of the Jewish calendar month of Kislev and lasts for eight days and nights
Tu B'shvat	Feb. 9 – Jewish celebration of the coming of spring by preparation of foods native to Israel. It is also known as "New Year for Trees" – a method for determining the age of trees for tithing purposes
Purim	March 10 – Jewish celebration of the deliverance of the Jewish minority in Persia from genocide. Charity to the poor, sharing food with friends, and vigorous merrymaking mark the observance
Passover (Pesach), First Days	April 9 – 10 - Begins at sunset, April 8. Jewish festival marking the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt
Passover (Pesach), Concluding Days	April 15 – 16 - Begins at sunset, April 14. Jewish festival
Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom Hashoah)	April 21 - Begins at sunset, April 20. Honors the memory of six million Jewish martyrs and heroes who perished in the Nazi Holocaust
Shavuot (Festival of Weeks)	May 29 - 30 - Begins at sunset, May 28. Jewish festival that commemorates the giving of the law (Torah) to Moses on Mount Sinai

MUSLIM HOLIDAYS:

NOTE: Actual Islamic dates may vary one or two days based on actual sighting of the new crescent moon in each respective month. Holidays begin at sunset the previous day.

- Lailat al Bara'at** **Aug. 15** - Islamic Night of Forgiveness
- Lailat al Miraj** **Jul. 29** - Islamic observance of Mohammed's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension to heaven
- First day of Ramadan** **Sept. 1** - Beginning of the fasting month in which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset each day. The holiest period of Islam, honors the revelation of the Koran
- Lailatul- Qadr** **Sept. 26** – Islamic Nights of Destiny. First revelation of Qur'an to Prophet Mohammed. Observed with increased prayers in the last ten days of Ramadan
- *Eid al-Fitr** **Oct. 1** - Muslim festival to celebrate the end of Ramadan. (Month of Fasting)
Eid days are approximate dates. Eid day is per moon sighting as Muslims follow the lunar calendar.
- *Eid al-Adha** **Dec. 8** – Muslim festival in honor of Prophet Abrahams' sacrifice, which also marks the end of the Pilgrimage also known as Hajj
Eid days are approximate dates. Eid day is per moon sighting as Muslims follow the lunar calendar.
- Ashura** **Jan. 19** – An Islamic optional one day fast recognizing the Creation, Noah's departure from the ark, and the saving of Moses from Pharaoh. Prophet Muhammad's Grandson, Hussain, was martyred on this date in 683/684 AD
- Al-Hijra** **Dec. 29** – The start of the Islamic New Year, which is based on the lunar calendar and is also marked as the first day of the Islamic month of Muharram. Hijra also means migration, when prophet Mohamed 'pbuh" migrated from Makkah to Medina and set up the first Islamic state
- Milad an Nabi** **March 20** – Islamic commemoration of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad, founder of Islam, in about 570 c.e.

Note: Muslims have two basic festive holidays in a year. Marked with */Underlined above--
*Eid Al-Fitr, and *Eid Al-Adha. Other days listed above are days of significance, and may not necessarily indicate days of holidays.

SIKH HOLIDAYS

Maghi

Jan. 13 - Sikh commemoration of a battle in which forty Sikhs died for Guru Gobindh Singh Ji

Baisakhi (Vaisakhi)

April 13 – Celebration of Spring. Hindu start of the New Year. Greetings that wish good life in coming days are exchanged. In Sikhi the day commemorates the founding of the Khalsa, a distinctive Sikh brotherhood