



**Discussion Resolution
March 2, 2016**

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 2016 - 2017 school year:

2016-17 School-Year	Observance
July 2016	
July 2	Laylat as-Qadr (Islam)*
July 7-9	Eid al Fitr (Islam)*
July 9	Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i)
July 19	Asalha Puja Day (Buddhist) Guru Purnima (Hindu)*
August 16	Ulambana/Obon (Buddhist)
August 2016	
August 1	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 7	Naga Panchami (Hindu)*
August 14	Tish'a B'Av (Jewish)
August 18	Raksha Bandhan (Hindu)*
August 25	Krishna Janmashtami (Hindu)*
September 2016	
September 1	Ecclesiastical Year begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 5	Ganesha Chaturthi (Hindu)*
September 7	His Holiness Sakya Trizin's Birthday (Buddhist)
September 8	Nativity of Mary (Christian) Nativity of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
September 10	Hajj Day (Islam)*
September 11-14	Eid al Adha (Islam)*
September 14	Onam (Hindu)*; The Elevation of the Holy Cross (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
October 2016	
October 1-10	Navaratri (Hindu)*
October 3	Feast of Trumpets (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 3-4	Rosh Hashanah (Jewish)
October 11	Duserra (Hindu)*
October 12	Yom Kippur (Jewish)

	Day of Atonement (Christian, Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 17-23	Sukkot (Jewish) Feast of Tabernacles (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God)
October 20	Birth of B'ab (Baha'i) Installation of the Scriptures as Guru Granth (Sikh)
October 24	Last Great Day (Church of God, Philadelphia Church of God); Shemini Atzeret (Jewish)
October 25	Simcat Torah (Jewish)
October 30	Diwali (Hindu, Jain and Sikh)*
October 31	Goverdhan Puja (Hindu)*
November 2016	
November 1	All Saints' Day (Christian) Samhain-Beltane (Wicca)
November 2	All Souls' Day (Christian)
November 12	Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
November 14	Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Birthday (Sikh)
November 15	Nativity Fast begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
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	Ascension of 'Abdu'l Baha (Baha'i)
December 2016	
December 8	Bodhi Day (Buddhist) Immaculate Conception (Christian)
December 14	Mawlid an Nabi (Islam)*
December 21	Yule (Wicca and Christian)
December 25	Christmas (Christian) The Nativity of Christ (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
December 25-January 1	Hanukkah (Jewish)
December 26	Zarathosht Diso (Zoroastrian)
January 2017	
January 1	Gantan-sai (Shinto)
January 1 through 8	Holy Convocation (Church of God and Saints of Christ)
January 5	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib (Sikh)
January 6	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 14	Makar Sankranti and Pongal (Hindu)*
January 15	World Religion Day (Baha'i)
January 28	Chinese/Lunar New Year (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist)
February 2017	
February 1	Vasant Panchami (Hindu)*
February 2	Imbolic-Candlemas (Wicca and Christian);

	The Presentation of Our Lord to the Temple (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
February 11	Tu B'shvat (Jewish)
February 15	Nirvana Day (Buddhist)
February 25	Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)*
February 25 -28	Intercalary Days (Baha'i)
February 28	Shrove Tuesday (Christian)
March 2017	
March 1	Ash Wednesday (Christian)
March 12	Purim (Jewish)
March 13	L. Ron Hubbard's Birthday (Church of Scientology) Holi (Hindu)* Hola Mohalla (Sikh)
March 20	Ostara (Wicca)
March 21	Nowruz (Zoroastrian) Naw Ruz (Baha'i)
March 25	The Annunciation of the Theotokos (Eastern Orthodox Christian) The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (Christian)
March 27	Clean Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
March 28	Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian) Chandramana Yugadi (Hindu)* Souramana Yugadi (Hindu)*
April 2017	
April 1	Lazarus Saturday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 2	Palm Sunday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 5	Ramnavami (Hindu)*
April 9	Palm Sunday (Christian)
April 9-17	Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread (Church of God and Saints of Christ)
April 10	Passover (Philadelphia Church of God); Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
April 11	Lord's Evening Meal (Christian, Jehovah's Witness) Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)* First Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God)
April 11-14	Theravadin New Year (Buddhist)
April 11-17	Days of Unleavened Bread (Philadelphia Church of God)
April 11-18	Passover (Jewish)
April 13	Holy Thursday (Christian, Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 14	Holy Friday (Christian, Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 16	Easter (Christian, Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 17	Easter Monday (Christian) Last Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God) Bright Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 21	First Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)
April 24	Lailat al Miraj (Islam)*
April 25	The 11 th Panchen Lama's Birthday (Buddhist)
April 29	Ninth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)

May 2017	
May 1	Beltane (Wicca) Yom Ha'Azmaut (Jewish)
May 2	Twelfth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)
May 10	Buddha's Birthday/Buddha Day – Visakha Puja (Buddhist)
May 12	Lailat al Bara'ah (Islam)*
May 14	Lag B'Omer (Jewish)
May 23	Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i)
May 25	Ascension of Our Lord (Christian)
May 27	Ramadan (Islam)
May 29	Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
May 31 – June 1	Shavuot (Jewish)
June 2017	
June 4	Pentecost (Christian) Pentecost (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
June 16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib (Sikh)
June 21	Litha (Wicca)
June 29	Fast of the Holy Apostles (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

** 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.*

David C. Hespe, Commissioner
Secretary, NJ State Board of Education

Mark W. Biedron, President
NJ State Board of Education