

DATE: July 11, 2016

TO: All BVSD Teachers and Administrators

FROM: Dr. Ron Cabrera
Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services & Equity

RE: Religious Holidays - Expectations Regarding Major Religious Holidays for the 2016-17 School Year.
Special dates for consideration – Federal, State, Local, and Cultural

As part of BVSD's commitment to excellence and equity and the value of diversity, teachers and administrators are strongly discouraged from scheduling events, assignments, and assessments that might interfere with a student's ability to recognize a spiritual/religious holiday/day of worship.

Examples of past experiences that families have cited as problematic include:

- An elementary school picture day on Yom Kippur
- A high school homecoming dance on Rosh Hashanah
- Scheduling state testing during religious days, such as Passover
- A middle school test scheduled on Good Friday
- A marching band competition on Yom Kippur
- Scheduling Prom during the Sabbath (Friday at sunset through Saturday at sunset)
- Planning a fieldtrip on "Take Your Child to Work Day" (4th Thursday in April)

The attached calendar has been developed to help teachers and administrators avoid conflicts when planning lessons, assignments, assessments, and school-wide events.

Staff should consult this calendar when planning to ensure that major spiritual holidays do not conflict with due dates for assignments, test dates, or other significant events.

Though we can't list all religious holidays, accommodations should also be made for students of non-dominant religions when conflicts impact their ability to recognize their spiritual holidays. For holidays not listed, accommodations should be made when requested on a case-by-case basis.

When conflicts do occur, teachers should be as flexible and accommodating as possible to ensure that all students can celebrate their religious traditions equally. In these circumstances, students are not to be penalized for lateness of homework/assignments or for testing on a different date or the like. A positive, constructive dialogue with the student(s) in question will help to determine what necessary accommodations or adjustments should be made.

Thank you in advance.

As you begin planning the 2016-2017 calendar specific to your school and classroom, please check the below dates for conflicts. NOTE: Some dates vary slightly as they are determined by the lunar calendar.

Major Religious Holidays:

Ramadan - 6/6/16 (begins at sundown) through 7/7/16 (ends at sundown - Eid al-Fitr)
Rosh Hashanah - 10/2/16 (begins at sundown) through 10/4/16 (ends at sundown)
Yom Kippur - 10/11/16 (begins at sundown) through 10/12/16 (ends at sundown)
Sukkot - 10/16/16 (begins at sundown) through 10/23/16 (ends at sundown)
Sehmini Atzeret - 10/23/16 (begins at sundown) through 10/24/16 (ends at sundown)
Simchat Torah - 10/24/16 (begins at sundown) through 10/25/16 (ends at sundown)
Hanukkah - 12/24/16 (begins at sundown) through 1/1/17 (ends at sundown)
Christmas Eve - 12/24/16
Christmas - 12/25/16
Ash Wednesday - 3/1/17
Purim - 3/11/17 (begins at sundown) through 3/12/17 (ends at sundown)
Passover - 4/10/17 (begins at sundown) through 4/18/17 (ends at sundown)
Good Friday - 4/14/17
Easter - 4/16/17
Shavuot - 5/30/17 (begins at sundown) through 6/1/17 (ends at sundown)
5/26/17 (begins at sundown) through 6/26/17 (ends at sundown - Eid al-Fitr)

Other dates to consider:

Independence Day - 7/4/16
Labor Day - 9/5/16
Election Day - 11/8/16
Veterans Day - 11/11/16
Thanksgiving - 11/24/16
Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe – 12/12/16
CU Commencement – 12/15/16
Kwanza - 12/26/16 – 1/1/17
New Year's Eve - 12/31/16
New Year's Day - 1/1/17
Martin Luther King Day - 1/16/17
President's Day - 2/20/17
Take Your Child to Work Day 4/27/17
Cinco de Mayo - 5/5/17
CU Commencement - 5/13/17
Memorial Day - 5/29/17
Independence Day - 7/4/17