



Holy Days & Days of Significance Handbook



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Holy Days & Days of Significance Handbook

2024– 2025 Holy Days & Days of Significance

Holy Days are dates that are set aside for religious- or creed-based festivals and observances. Some religions, like Christianity, may use the Gregorian calendar for their Holy Days (i.e. Christmas is observed on December 25 every year). Other religions use different calendar systems, such as a solar calendar, a lunar calendar, or a combination of both (luni-solar calendar). As such, please be sure to note if an observance may begin on the evening before the listed date in the chart below. For example:

- » Holy Days from the Baha'i, Jewish, and Wiccan faith begin at sunset on the evening prior to the listed date, and end at sunset of the listed date.
- » Holy Days from the Islamic faith may vary by a day due to the lunar calendar.
- » The Anishinaabeg follow a lunar calendar, where a 'month' is the period from one full moon to the next. The moon names presented in this calendar are an example of the moon names commonly used in and around Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan and Anishnaabewi Gitchi-Gami. However, every community and region have their own way of recognizing moon cycles and harvesting times.

Days of Significance are dates that are designated to raise awareness or promote action about different social, cultural, or historical events. While these dates may be associated with a particular creed or belief, they are not religious observances. By recognizing Days of Significance, we can help promote a more inclusive and equitable society and climate.

Begin	Ends	Holy Day/Day of Significance	
4		National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQ+ People	Community Observance
5		World Teachers' Day	Community Observance
23	24	Simchat Torah	Judaism
10		World Mental Health Day	Community Observance
10		Durga Ashtami	Hinduism
11	12	Yom Kippur	Judaism
12		Vijaya Dashmi/Dussehra	Hinduism
14		Yfck_and_`=Yq	Community Observance
16	23	Sukkot	Judaism
16		International Pronouns Day	Community Observance
17		International Day for the Eradication of Poverty	Community Observance
20		Karva Chauth	Hinduism
21	25	National School Bus Safety Week	Community Observance
21	25	Media Literacy Week	Community Observance
24		Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Appreciation Day	Community Observance
31		Samhain	Wicca/Pagan
31		Halloween	Community Observance
Gashkadino-Giizis (Freezing Over Moon)			
Movember (Men's Health Awareness)			
4	10	Holocaust Education Week	Community Observance
Oct 31	1	Diwali	Hinduism/Jainism
1		Bandi Chhor Divas	Sikhism
2		Birth of the Báb	Bahá'í
3	9	Treaties Recognition Week	Community Observance
5	11	Veterans' Week	Community Observance
7		International Inuit Day	Community Observance
8		Indigenous Veterans' Day	Community Observance
11		Remembrance Day	Community Observance
15		Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib	Sikhism
11	15	Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week	Community Observance
20		Transgender Day of Remembrance	Community Observance
25		International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women	Community Observance
25		Day of the Covenant	Bahá'í

Category	Sub-category	Description	Value
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Requests for Creed-Based Accommodations

Lakehead District School Board will take reasonable steps to provide accommodation to students or staff who believe that the Board's operations or requirements interfere with their ability to exercise their creed beliefs and practices, to the point of undue hardship. A determination of undue hardship will be based on an assessment of costs of the accommodation, outside sources of funding, and health and safety risks to the individual and/or others at the Board.

It is expected that students and their families, as well as staff, will help the Board to understand their creed related needs and will work with the Board and its schools to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students or staff may request an accommodation to observe their creed beliefs, commonly in one or more of the following areas:

1. School Opening and Closing Exercises: At minimum, all public schools in Ontario are required to open or closed each day with the national anthem (PPM 108 & Education Act R.S.O. 1990). A student or employee who objects to all or part of opening or closing exercises for faith-based reasons will

Planning for Holy Days & Days of Significance

The intent of this guide is to provide Board members with information to promote diversity in their schools, celebrate the diversity of our community, and create awareness about creed-based observances which may prevent students and community members from participating in school events.

When planning events, consult this guide to ensure there is not a conflict with another observance, especially those marked as significant holy days. If a scheduling conflict is unavoidable, consider how you might maximize participation and ensure access for those who may not be able to attend. For example, are you able to provide flexible scheduling so people can attend on a different date as well?

Many creed-based observances may fall on the same date, or during time periods that are recognized provincially or federally as holiday/break periods. It is important for schools to recognize all observances as equally as possible during these periods. Recognition in schools can include, but is not limited to:

- Announcements
- Displays
- Bulletin boards
- Posters
- Student Work
- Assemblies
- Curriculum Connections

Recognition of Days of Significance and Holy Days is not meant to indoctrinate students or staff towards a certain creed or belief. Lakehead District School Board upholds and celebrates not only creed, but every right protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code. While staff and students may request accommodations or exemptions from participation in events or activities, the Board will continue to support learning and working environments which celebrate human rights, respect for differences, and anti-discrimination.