



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

TOWN OF EASTON

humanrights@easton.ma.us

Resource for Holiday Observance

This guide was prepared by the Town of Easton’s Human Rights Committee as a resource for teachers, coaches, and all school personnel to promote cultural proficiency. The purpose of the guide is to explain what “observing” the following holidays means in terms of a student’s ability to be present in school, complete work, or participate in any after-school activities, as well as dietary and other considerations.

Please note that this guide describes only major holidays that may fall on a school day (excluding legal holidays). We acknowledge that students may be absent for other religious or cultural observances beyond what is on this list, and we ask that school personnel treat such absences with understanding and accommodation.

± **Excused Absence**

† **Will be allowed 1 extra day after return to school to complete work**

‡ **Dietary considerations**

* **Holy days usually begin at sundown the day before this date**

** **Local or regional customs may use a variation of this date.**

KEY to Religions and Corresponding Icons

⊙ - Baha’i (nine-pointed star)

☸ - Buddhist (wheel of dharma)

† - Christian (cross)

ॐ - Hindu (om)

C* - Islam (crescent)

✋ - Jain (ahimsa hand)

☆ - Jewish (Star of David)

⚔ - Sikh (khanda)

✝ - Orthodox Christianity (orthodox cross)

Name of Holiday	Description	± Absence	† School work	‡ Food
Eid al Adha C*	Celebration of Ibrahim’s faith in God **September 1 – 4, 2017 Observed with prayer and festive meals.	✓	✓	--
Rosh Hashanah ☆	New Year *September 21 – 22, 2017 Festive meals and temple attendance	✓	✓	--
Yom Kippur ☆	Day of Atonement; holiest day of Jewish Calendar *September 30, 2017 24-hour fast, refrain from work and temple attendance. Festive meals before sundown and to break fast	✓	✓	✓
Diwali ॐ	Festival of lights. October 19, 2017 National holiday in India.	✓	✓	--
Hanukkah ☆	Festival of lights, celebrated for 8 nights. *December 13 – 20, 2017 Sundown candle-lighting & gift-giving	--	--	--
Ash Wednesday †	First day of Lent, a 40-day period of sacrifice; refrain from meat. February 14, 2018	--	--	✓



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Name of Holiday	Description	± Absence	† School work	‡ Food
	Forehead may be marked with cross of ashes			
Lunar/Chinese New Year 🌸	Pan-Asian celebration February 16, 2018 Family reunions, festive meals & gift-giving.	✓	✓	--
Holi 🌈	Celebration of spring and color. **March 3, 2018	✓	✓	--
Mahavir Jayanti 🙏	Celebrates the birth of Jain sage Mahavira. **March 29, 2018 Observed with fasting and prayers; refrain from work.	✓	✓	✓
Good Friday †	Commemorates crucifixion of Jesus March 30, 2018 Observed solemnly with fasting and refrain from work.	✓	✓	✓
Orthodox Good/Holy Friday †	Commemorates crucifixion of Jesus April 6, 2018 Observed solemnly with fasting and refrain from work.	✓	✓	✓
Passover ☆	Celebration of Exodus from Egypt *March 31 – April 7, 2018 Observed by festive ritual family meals Only consume unleavened grains	✓	✓	✓
Buddha Day 🌸	Commemorates life cycle of Buddha. **April 29, 2017 Temple observance and refrain from meat.	✓	--	✓
Ramadan ☾	Thirty days of daytime fasting * / ** May 15 – June 16, 2018 Ritual evening meal to break fast	✓	--	✓
Eid al Fitr ☾	Conclusion of Ramadan. *June 15 – 17, 2018 Celebrated prayers and feasting.	✓	✓	--

The Human Rights Committee welcomes any additional comments and information regarding this informational guide. Please email humanrights@easton.ma.us with your suggestions.

For more information, see:

- <http://www.wmcn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Accommodating-Our-Religious-Holiday-Observances2016-17-2.pdf>
- <https://diversity.missouri.edu/religions/holidays.php>
- <http://www.interfaith-calendar.org>