

Holy Days & Days of



Holy Days & Days of Significance Handbook	1
2023 – 2024 Holy Days & Days of Significance	2
Requests for Creed-Based Accommodations	11
Planning for Holy Days & Days of Significance	13

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 Aninshnaabewi 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.

- Avoid scheduling events at any time during days marked with this symbol

- Avoid scheduling events on the evening prior for days marked with this symbol

± - Dates marked with this symbol may vary by a day due to the Lunar calendar.

Autism Awareness Month
Caribbean Heritage Month
Islamic Heritage Month
Latinx Heritage Month
Learning Disabilities Month
Women's History Month

Sept 29 -
Oct 6

Sukkot

Judaism

National Day for Action for Murdered and Missing
Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited People

Community
Observance

5590 Dec 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 2021
Simchat Torah
Simchat Torah
Judaism

	13	Bandi Chhor Divas ◦	Sikhism
	13	New Year ◦	Hinduism
	13	Diwali/Lord Mahavir ◦	Jainism
	13-17	Workplace Bullying Awareness Week	Community Observance
	14	New Year/Enlightenment day of Gautamswami ◦	Jainism
	16	Louis Riel Day	Indigenous Worldview
	18	Gnan Panchami	Jainism
	20	Transgender Day of Remembrance	Community Observance
	20	World Children's Day	United Nations

			(Orthodox)
	16	Louis Riel Day	
	19	Ladyday/Spring Equinox	Wicca / Indigenous Worldview
	20	Naw Ruz (New Year) ○■	Bahá'i
	21	<u>International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination</u>	United Nations
	21	<u>World Down Syndrome Day</u>	Community Observance
	21	Eid-e-Navroz	Islam
	21	Navroze (New Year) ○■	Zoroastrianism
	22	World Water Day	Community

	20	First day of Ridvan ○ ◼	Bahá'i
	21	Mahavir Janmakalyanak (Birthday) ○	Jainism
	22	Zarathosht-no-diso	Zoroastrianism
	22	<u>Earth Day</u>	United Nations
	22-29	Pesach (Passover)	Judaism
	23 & 29	Pesach (Passover) ○ ◼	Judaism
	24	Administrative Professionals' Day	Staff Recognition
	28	Ninth day of Ridvan ○ ◼	Bahá'i
	28	National Day of Mourning	Government of Canada
	14-April	Daniel's Decision	
	31- May 1	Beltane	Wicca

May 2024

Asian Heritage Month

Jewish Heritage Month

June 2024

National Indigenous History Month

Pride Month

6

Anishinabek Nation Holiday
(Anishinaabe Chi-Naaknigewin) ○

10

Martyrdom &

	18	Sangha Day/Ullambana	Buddhism
	19	Raksha Bandhan	Hinduism
	20	Khordad Sal ◦■	Zoroastrianism
	26	Arbaeen	Islam
	26	Sri Krishna Janmaashtami ◦	Hinduism
	31	Paryushan Parva begins	Jainsim

While the Board attempts to ensure accuracy with the listed dates and creed-observances, we recognize the vast diversity of our community, different calendar systems, and research errors. If you would like to request an addition or amendment to this listing, please contact the Board office.

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 be exempted and given the option not to participate and to remain in the class or in an agreed-upon location.
2. **Prayer:** Schools should make every reasonable effort to accommodate the requirements for daily prayer by providing an appropriate location within the building for prayer when requested by students or staff. Some accommodation for late school arrival and/or early school leaving may be necessary. Prayer times change in some faiths according to the seasons.
3. **Dietary Requirements:** Schools should be aware of dietary restrictions of various faith groups. This awareness includes breakfast and lunch programs, snacks, overnight outdoor education activities and field trips that cover a meal-time period, and catering for special occasions and community events. Provision of halal, kosher or vegetarian options may be needed.
4. **Fasting:** Schools should accommodate students and staff with respect to fasting observances. Appropriate space other than the cafeteria or lunchroom should be designated during lunch period for fasting students. Field trip plans should also consider the needs of fasting students. Students might need exemptions or alteration of activities in some classes, e.g., physical education. For sporting or athletic activities during fasting periods, attempt to plan these events during time periods where a fasting student would have more energy (i.e. closer to the beginning of their fasting).
5. **Religious Attire:** Student/staff wearing of certain hairstyles and attire, such as, but not limited to: yarmulkes, turbans, hijab (headscarves), crucifixes, stars of David, should be permitted. It is worth noting that harassment based on religious attire or wearing articles of faith is one of the most common forms of discrimination. Staff attitudes are crucial to establishing a positive climate of understanding and respect for differences regarding faith-based attire.
6. **Accommodation of Religion Related Dress for Physical Education:** When a student requests an accommodation for dress code for participation in physical education activities including swimming, the school and family are encouraged to find a mutually agreeable accommodation. Health and Safety must be considered in the accommodation of dress. For example, a head scarf can be tucked into clothing, track pants may be worn instead of shorts. The curriculum requirements should be explained to the family, so the family has sufficient information to understand the physical education curriculum and to select available curriculum alternatives.

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.