



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

TOWN OF EASTON
 humanrights@easton.ma.us

Resource for Holiday Observance

2024-2025 School Year

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 fall during the school year, excluding winter and summer breaks.

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

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

† Will be allowed one (1) extra day after return to school to complete work

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

‡ Dietary considerations

Date	Name of Holiday	Description	± Excused Absence	† Extra Day for Work	‡ Dietary Considerations
2024	August 31 - September 7*	Paryushana Parva <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Festival of Forgiveness” - most important Jain holiday • 8-10 days of intense spirituality • Observed with prayer, meditation, and fasting 	--	--	✓
	October 2 - 4*	Rosh Hashanah ☆ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish New Year • Observed with festive meals and temple attendance 	✓	✓	--
	October 3 - 12	Navarathri ॐ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-day celebration of autumn and the goddess Durga • Observed with fasting, evening prayers, vegetarian meals,, visiting friends & family 	--	✓	✓
	October 11 - 12*	Yom Kippur ☆ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day of atonement • Holiest day of Jewish calendar • Observed with 24-hour fast; refrain from work; temple attendance; festive meal to end fast at sundown 	✓	✓	✓
	October 12	Dussehra ॐ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration the victory of good over evil 	--	--	--
	October 31 - November 1	Diwali ॐ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festival of lights 	✓	✓	--
	November 1	Bandi chhor Divas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day of liberation for Sikhs 	--	--	--
	December 25 - January 2, 2025*	Hanukkah ☆ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festival of lights • Celebrated for 8 nights; sundown candle-lighting and gift giving 	--	--	--
2025	January 7	Orthodox Christmas ‡ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration of the birth of Jesus 	✓	✓	--
	January 29	Lunar/Chinese New Year 🌸 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pan-Asian celebration • Family reunions, festive meals, and gift-giving 	✓	✓	--
	February 12	Magha Puja Day 🌸 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A festival in honor of the Buddhist community and a chance for reaffirmation 	--	✓	--



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrated with gifts, gathering, and sermons 			
February 28 - March 30*/**	Ramadan ☾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 days of daylight fasting with special attention to understanding one's inner self • Ritual evening meal to break fast 	✓	--	✓
March 5	Ash Wednesday †	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First day of Lent, a 40-day period of sacrifice • Forehead may be marked with cross of ashes; refrain from meat 	--	--	✓
March 5 - April 17	Lent †	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 40-day time of intense devotion • Observed by fasting, worship, and acts of charity 	--	--	✓
March 14**	Holi ☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration of spring and color 	✓	✓	--
March 20	Nouruz ☾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-week celebration of the New Year (rebirth of Earth & first day of spring) • Celebrated by eating and visiting family & friends 	✓	✓	--

March 30*	Eid-al-Fitr ☾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A three-day Muslim holiday signifying the end of the holy month of Ramadan • Celebrated by congregational prayers and visiting family and friends 	✓	--	✓
April 10	Mahavir Jayanti 🗑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrates the birth of Jain sage Mahavira • Observed with fasting and prayers; refrain from work 	✓	✓	✓
April 12 - 20	Pasech †	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemorates the resurrection of Jesus • Celebrated by a series of services and events 	--	--	--
April 12 - 20*	Passover ☆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration of exodus from Egypt • Observed by lengthy festive ritual family meals; only consume unleavened grains 	✓	✓	✓
April 13	Palm Sunday †	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration for honoring Jesus's entry into Jerusalem • Signifies the beginning of Holy Week • Observed by a special service, including the distribution of palm leaves 	--	--	--
April 18	Good Friday †	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemorates crucifixion of Jesus • Observed solemnly with fasting and refrain from work 	✓	✓	✓
April 18	Orthodox Good/Holy Friday †	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemorates crucifixion of Jesus • Observed solemnly with fasting and refrain from work 	✓	✓	✓
April 20	Orthodox Easter Sunday				
April 20	Easter Sunday †	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most important holy day for Christians • Commemorates the resurrection of Jesus • Observed by a special church service, gatherings, and other activities 	--	--	--
May 5**	Buddha Day 🌸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemorates life cycle of Buddha • Most important holiday in Buddhism • Temple observance and refrain from meat 	✓	--	✓




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June 6	Eid-a-Adha	• Major Islamic holiday: Feast of Sacrifice	--	--	--
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Key to Religions and Corresponding Icons


 Baha'i (nine-pointed star)


 Jain (ahimsa hand)


 Buddhism (wheel of dharma)


 Judaism (Star of David)

 Christianity (cross)

 Sikh (khanda)

 Hinduism (om)

 Orthodox Christianity (orthodcross)

 Islam (crescent)

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, visit http://www.easton.ma.us/boards_and_committees/humanrightscommittee/.