

Religious Observances FAQs

How does Okemos Public Schools approach religious observances?

Okemos Public Schools has made a commitment to celebrate and honor the rich cultural diversity of our students and our community. For many students in our schools, the observance of religious and cultural traditions is an important part of their personal, family, and community life. These traditions help students understand and preserve their own value systems, cultures, customs, and history. Students from religious traditions other than the Christian faith are often faced with the choice between attending school or attending holiday celebrations with their families and communities.

Students will probably be with their families or at a place of worship in observance of significant holidays. They will not be in school and/or not have time available to do the required homework. Absences to observe these holidays should be excused, and make-up privileges should be the same as the make-up privileges offered to a student who has an excused absence due to illness.

Who is eligible for religious observance accommodations?

All students are eligible for religious observance accommodations.

What types of accommodations are available for religious observance?

Accommodations can include rescheduling of exams, assignments, or classes, as well as alternative arrangements for attendance, to accommodate a religious observance.

How do I request a religious observance accommodation?

To request accommodations, students and/or parents should communicate their request to their teachers as soon as possible, preferably at the beginning of the semester. In order to give teachers time to plan for the accommodations, please provide at least a one-week notice.

What if there is a conflict between a religious observance and a mandatory event, class or exam?

Teachers should make every effort to avoid scheduling exams, presentations, and other events during major religious days (Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, etc.). If a teacher has scheduled such an exam, presentation, or other classroom project, they must be reasonably rescheduled for the student without academic penalty.

Where can I find more information about the OPS religious observance policy and calendar dates?

For more information and a calendar of holidays, please visit [Guidance for Religious Observances - 2024-25](#).

How can I learn more about different religions and their celebrations?

Michigan State University has links to information about many religions - Buddhist, Christian, Islamic, Jewish, Hindu, Pagan and Neopagan, Sikh - and about North American Indigenous ceremonies on its website. Click [here](#) for more information.