



### **ACSD Religious Expression Guidelines**

\*Per Board Policy, students are able to take Three (3) Religious Expression Holidays if the school calendar does not reflect this recognized holiday as a day off from school.

\*Students/Families must submit an Advanced Absence Form to the Principal of their school within Fourteen (14) Days of the start of the school year or enrollment.

\*Once approved, absences are excused with no academic penalty for all school work and assessments.

**The Following is a NON-Exhaustive list of potential holidays:**

#### **Christian Holidays (non-Sunday or not always recognized)**

- **Good Friday** (Friday before Easter) – solemn observance in many denominations
- **Epiphany** (January 6) – significant for some Eastern and Western Christians
- **Orthodox Christmas** (January 7) – observed by Eastern Orthodox Christians
- **Orthodox Good Friday/Easter** – often falls on different dates than Western calendar
- **All Saints' Day** (November 1) – especially for Catholic and some Protestant students
- **Ash Wednesday** – beginning of Lent
- **Ascension Day** – 40 days after Easter, celebrated by some denominations
- **Pentecost** – 50 days after Easter

#### **Jewish Holidays**

*(Note: Jewish holidays begin at sundown the night before the listed date)*

- **Rosh Hashanah** – Jewish New Year (2 days)
- **Yom Kippur** – Day of Atonement (most solemn fast day)
- **Sukkot** – Festival of Booths (especially first and last days)
- **Shemini Atzeret / Simchat Torah** – following Sukkot
- **Passover (Pesach)** – especially the first two and last two days
- **Shavuot** – Festival of Weeks
- **Purim** – festive but often observed with school absences in more observant families
- **Hanukkah** – typically not requiring absence, but first day may be significant for some

### **Muslim Holidays**

*(Dates vary based on lunar calendar; observance begins at sundown the night before)*

- **Eid al-Fitr** – celebrates the end of Ramadan
- **Eid al-Adha** – Festival of Sacrifice
- **Ramadan (entire month)** – students may request accommodations for fasting, especially during finals or athletic events
- **Laylat al-Qadr** – Night of Power (often in the last 10 nights of Ramadan; very sacred)

### **Hindu Holidays**

- **Diwali (Deepavali)** – Festival of Lights; major holiday
- **Navaratri / Dussehra** – nine-night festival; Dussehra is the 10th day
- **Holi** – Festival of Colors (may be religious or more cultural, but some families take off)

- **Krishna Janmashtami** – celebration of Krishna's birth
- **Maha Shivaratri** – night dedicated to Lord Shiva
- **Ganesh Chaturthi** – celebrates the birth of Lord Ganesha
- **Raksha Bandhan** – sibling honoring festival (not typically a day off, but notable)

### **Buddhist Holidays**

- **Vesak (Buddha Day)** – celebrates the birth, enlightenment, and death of Buddha
- **Bodhi Day** – celebration of Buddha's enlightenment (December 8 for some)
- **Magha Puja** – honors important events in Buddha's life (varies by tradition)
- **Uposatha Days** – days of intensified practice; may require observance in some sects

### **Other Religions / Observances**

#### **Sikh**

- **Guru Nanak Gurpurab** – celebrates the birth of Guru Nanak
- **Vaisakhi (Baisakhi)** – Sikh New Year and harvest festival

#### **Baha'i**

- **Naw-Rúz** – Baha'i New Year
- **Ridván** (12-day festival, especially the 1st, 9th, and 12th days)
- **Birth of the Báb** and **Birth of Bahá'u'lláh** – twin holy birthdays
- **Day of the Covenant** and **Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá**

#### **Pagan / Wiccan / Earth-Based Traditions**

- **Samhain** (October 31 - November 1)
- **Yule** (Winter Solstice)
- **Imbolc, Beltane, Lughnasadh, Ostara, Mabon** – seasonal sabbats