

Andover Public Schools serves children from many different religious and ethnic backgrounds. A goal of APS' *Theory of Action* is to create safe, caring, and culturally responsive classrooms and schools. With that goal in mind, the School Committee voted on a policy that defines the accommodation for religious and ethnic observances in such areas as attendance, homework, testing, etc.

The Committee voted to provide clarity on these accommodations for religious and ethnic observances in the APS Policy Manual- policy is listed below. The School Committee recognizes the list below may not include all holiday celebrated by various religions or cultures, but we have attempted to identify the major ones.

Religious and Ethnic Observances 2018-2019	
Holiday	Date
Rosh Hashanah (Day 1) *	Monday, September 10
Rosh Hashanah (Day 2)	Tuesday, September 11
Muharram *	Wednesday, September 12
Ganesha Chaturthi/ Samvatsari	Thursday, September 13
Yom Kippur *	Wednesday, September 19
First Day of Sukkot*	Monday, September 24
Navaratri	Tuesday, October 9
Dasera	Friday, October 19
Diwali	Wednesday, November 7
Chanukah/Hanukkah (First Day) *	Monday, December 3
Christmas Eve	Monday, December 24
Kwanzaa (until Jan 1)	Wednesday, December 26
Epiphany/ Armenian Christmas	Sunday, January 6
Lunar New Year	Tuesday, February 5
Holi	Thursday, March 21
Palm Sunday	Sunday, April 14
Good Friday	Friday, April 19
Passover (first day) *	Saturday, April 20
Easter Sunday	Sunday, April 21
Orthodox Good Friday	Friday, April 26
Orthodox Easter Sunday	Sunday, April 28
Ramadan*	Sunday, May 5- Tuesday, June 4
Eid al-Fitr *	Tuesday, June 4
Shavuot *	Sunday, June 9

*** Holidays begin at sundown the day before**

ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC OBSERVANCES

The Andover Public Schools serve children from many different religious and ethnic backgrounds. Out of respect for our students' different religious and ethnic traditions, and to ensure fair and sensitive treatment of all students, the district shall:

- At the time of publication of the approved school calendar for a given school year, provide a list of those major religious and ethnic holidays during that school year whose observance may require absence from school or other accommodations, and encourage students and families to notify the Superintendent of any omissions from the list;
- Not schedule the first day of the school year on a holiday included in the above list;
- Impose no penalty or detriment on students who participate in observances of their and/or their family's major religious and ethnic holidays and treat any absence related to such observance as without penalty;
- Provide ample and flexible accommodations to allow students to make up subject material, assignments, and assessments within a reasonable time (assuming students will not do schoolwork or study during their absence);
- Take major religious and ethnic holidays into consideration when scheduling test preparation, tests, and long-term assignments when these are within the purview of the district;
- Avoid scheduling one-time events (e.g., field trips, athletic events, music or theatre performances, auditions, group photographs, back-to-school functions, and graduation) when possible on major religious and ethnic holidays, keeping in mind that some major religious holidays begin at sundown on the preceding evening (e.g., Jewish and Muslim Holidays);
- Not require students observing major religious or ethnic holidays to participate or face penalties for their non-participation in school-scheduled events, such as in try-outs, athletic contests, or music performances;
- Not prevent coaches and advisors from holding optional athletic practices on major religious and ethnic holidays;
- Not deprive any student absent from school because of a religious or ethnic holiday of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence;
- Encourage students and families to make their observances known far enough in advance to individual teachers so that they can jointly plan appropriate accommodations prior to the absence or holiday observance.

SOURCE: Andover