

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
225 WEST STATE STREET
TRENTON, N.J. 08625

June 1, 1970

TO BOARDS OF EDUCATION

According to the terms of Chapter 322, P.L. 1951, regarding pupil absence from school because of religious holidays, the Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, is charged with the responsibility of prescribing such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the law.

The law provides that:

1. No pupil who is absent from school because of a religious holiday may be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence.
2. If a pupil misses a test or examination because of a religious holiday, he must be given the right to take an alternate test or examination.
3. To be entitled to the privileges set forth above, the pupil must present a written excuse signed by a parent or person standing in place of a parent.
4. Any absence because of a religious holiday must be recorded in the school register or in any group or class attendance record as an excused absence.
5. Such absence must NOT be recorded on any transcript or application or employment form or on any similar form.
6. The Commissioner, with the approval of the State Board of Education, is required:
 - (a) To prescribe such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act.
 - (b) To prepare a list of religious holidays on which it shall be mandatory to excuse a pupil. The list, however, is to be a minimum list. Boards of Education, at their discretion, may add other days to the list for the schools of their districts.

The following is a list of religious holidays for the 1970-71 school year:

1970-71

October 1 & 2	Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah)
October 15 & 16	1st & 2nd Day of Tabernacles (Sukkot)
October 22	8th Day of Tabernacles (Sukkot)
October 23	Rejoicing of the Law (Simhat Torah)
December 8	Feast of the Immaculate Conception
December 23	1st Day of Hanukkah
December 25	Christmas
December 30	8th Day of Hanukkah
January 1	New Year's Day
January 6	Feast of the Epiphany
January 7	Eastern Orthodox Christmas
January 14	Eastern Orthodox New Year's Day
January 19	Eastern Orthodox Feast of the Epiphany
January 27	Chinese New Year's Day
February 23	Shrove Tuesday
February 24	Ash Wednesday
March 1	Eastern Orthodox Lent
April 8	Holy Thursday
April 9	Good Friday
April 15	Eastern Orthodox Holy Thursday
April 16	Eastern Orthodox Holy Friday
April 16	7th Day of Passover
May 20	Ascension Day
May 27	Eastern Orthodox Ascension Day
May 31	2nd Day of Feast of Weeks (Sauvot)

The Board of Education has the right to add any bona fide religious holiday to the list for its own schools. Not every parent will ask for his child to be excused on every day listed as a religious holiday for members of his faith. Some parents will likely ask for an excuse for only a part of some of the days listed. It will be observed that there are times when the religious holidays of more than one faith fall on the same day.

If any questions arise concerning the administration of this act, please notify the Commissioner of Education at once. Your questions and suggestions are helpful to us in the preparation of this bulletin each year.

Sincerely,



Carl L. Marburger
Commissioner of Education