

Calendar of Main Jewish Religious Observances and Resource Guide

This calendar and resource guide is designed to encourage public awareness of Jewish religious observances. We hope that it will help administrators and teachers avoid scheduling examinations, special day or night programs, and graduation ceremonies at times that conflict with Jewish observances. There is wide variation of religious Jewish practices. Therefore, some students and staff members will be absent while others might not. Please note that all Jewish religious observances begin at sunset the preceding evening and end at nightfall, approximately one hour after sunset. For a list of all faith holidays visit: interfaithcalendar.org/index.htm.

Religious Observance	2018-2019 School Year	2019-2020 School Year	2020-2021 School Year	2021-2022 School Year
	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Rosh Hashanah*	Sep 10-11 (Begins sunset Sep 9)	Sep 30-Oct 1 (Begins sunset Sep 29)	Sep 19-Sep 20 (Begins sunset Sep 18)	Sep 7-Sep 8 (Begins sunset Sep 6)
Yom Kippur*	Sep 19 (Begins sunset Sep 18)	Oct 9 (Begins sunset Oct 8)	Sep 28 (Begins sunset Sep 27)	Sep 16 (Begins sunset Sep 15)
Sukkot	Sep 24-25 (Begins sunset Sep 23)	Oct 14-15 (Begins sunset Oct 13)	Oct 3-4 (Begins sunset Oct 2)	Sep 21-22 (Begins sunset Sep 20)
Shemini Atzeret	Oct 1 (Begins sunset Sep 30)	Oct 21 (Begins sunset Oct 20)	Oct 10 (Begins sunset Oct 9)	Sep 28 (Begins sunset Sep 27)
Simchat Torah	Oct 2 (Begins sunset Oct 1)	Oct 22 (Begins sunset Oct 21)	Oct 11 (Begins sunset Oct 10)	Sep 29 (Begins sunset Sep 28)
Chanukah	Dec 3-10 (Begins sunset Dec 2)	Dec 23-30 (Begins sunset Dec 22)	Dec 11-18 (Begins sunset Dec 10)	Nov 29-Dec 6 (Begins sunset Nov 28)
	Spring 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2021	Spring 2022
Purim	March 21 (Begins sunset Mar 20)	March 10 (Begins sunset Mar 9)	Feb 26 (Begins sunset Feb 25)	March 17 (Begins sunset March 16)
Passover*	Apr 20-27 (Begins sunset Apr 19)	Apr 9-16 (Begins sunset Apr 8)	Mar 28-Apr 4 (Begins sunset Mar 27)	April 16-23 (Begins sunset April 15)
Shavuot*	Jun 9-10 (Begins sunset Jun 8)	May 29-30 (Begins sunset May 28)	May 17-18 (Begins sunset May 16)	June 5-6 (Begins sunset June 4)

*Observances which are most likely to result in absences.



The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) serves as the central public affairs arm of the organized Jewish community, representing over 60 synagogues and Jewish organizations in the Bay Area. JCRC produced this guide. **Visit our website for additional resources: www.jcrc.org**

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This document is available for download from jcr.org/what-we-do/resources/

The Jewish calendar is a lunar/solar calendar; therefore, the dates of these holy days, festivals, and days of remembrance will vary from year to year. Even though the dates of the Jewish religious observances will be different each year, they will always be observed in the same season. The Jewish Sabbath (Shabbat) begins each week on Friday at sunset and ends Saturday at nightfall (approximately one hour after sunset). Traditionally observant Jews will refrain from school, work and many activities.

Fall Observances

Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) This two-day observance marks the beginning of the holiest time of the year for Jews. *School or work will be missed on these holy days and nights.*

Yom Kippur (Day Of Atonement) This is the most solemn day of the Jewish year and signals the end of the Ten Days of Penitence. It is devoted to fasting, prayer, and synagogue services. *School or work will be missed on this holy day and night.*

Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) Sukkot is a harvest festival of thanksgiving. To commemorate the dwellings of the ancient Israelites during the harvest, many families build temporary huts (Sukkot) in which they eat and even sleep. *School or work might be missed by some for the first two days and nights.*

Shemini Atzeret The “eighth day of assembly” is a religious observance at the conclusion of Sukkot. *School or work might be missed by some.*

Simchat Torah Celebrates the conclusion of the year-long cycle of reading the Torah (the five books of Moses) and the beginning of a new cycle and marks the end of the fall season of special religious observances. *School or work might be missed by some.*

Winter Observances

Chanukah (Festival of Lights) This eight-day observance is a celebration of religious freedom and commemorates the re-dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem in 165 B.C.E. Families celebrate in their homes by lighting candles for eight nights, exchanging gifts and eating special foods. *No school or work is missed.*

Purim (Feast of Lots) Based on the biblical Book of Esther (The Megillah), Purim celebrates the foiling of a plot to kill the Jews in ancient Persia. A ritual of Purim is to read the story from The Megillah of how Esther and Mordecai prevented Haman from exterminating the Jews. *School activities might be missed by those who attend synagogue for the evening observance of Purim*

Spring Observances

Pesach (Passover) This eight-day festival of freedom-celebrates the deliverance of the ancient Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Families gather for a traditional meal, or Seder, on the first two nights, when the story is retold and symbolic foods are eaten. Many students will eat matzo instead of bread, and other dietary restrictions may be observed. *School or work might be missed by some for the first two and last two days and nights of this observance.*

Shavuot (Festival of Weeks) Coming in late Spring, this two-day observance celebrates the giving of the Torah (the Five Books of Moses) on Mount Sinai, and commemorates ancient Israel’s acceptance of the Torah and its obligations. *School or work might be missed by some; please take note when scheduling commencement ceremonies.*

This guide prepared by the Jewish Community Relations Council: www.jcrc.org

For more info on Jewish religious observances and Judaism:

www.myjewishlearning.com - www.judaism.about.com - www.jewfaq.com

For curricular materials that follow the California standards:

www.icsresources.org