

# Larkspur School District

## 2008-09 Religious Calendar

The Larkspur School District has made a commitment to celebrate and honor the cultural diversity of our students and our community. As the District strives to meet the needs of each child, we also strive to reflect the contributions and interests of diverse cultural, religious and social groups in our vision and mission.

We are a public school district that is fundamentally secular in nature. We do not promote any particular religion. It does not mean, however, that we ignore religious observances. As a public school, we have an obligation and an opportunity to accommodate and celebrate the diversity of our students and families. Every member of our school community—students, parents, teachers, support staff and administrators—has an important role in this process. 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 the students understand and preserve their own value systems, cultures, customs and history. Our role in the district is to understand the customs related to diverse religious and cultural groups, so that we can show respect for their integrity and at the same time provide a school and classroom climate in which staff feel confident that they have the opportunity to be optimally effective.

We have created and will disseminate a calendar that identifies annual holidays observed by many nations and peoples worldwide.

The annual calendar includes the following:

- Name of religious observance
- Religious or cultural group affiliation
- Dates of observance

The guidelines that follow are for use by staff in the planning and scheduling of classroom, school building, and district-wide activities.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS GUIDELINES**

**Holiday observances of major significance** to a religious group are indicated on the calendar. The following guidelines apply for all students:

1. Major exams, projects, presentations or homework assignments should not be due on the days of the holiday observance nor the first student day following the observance (see BP 6154 Make Up Work for excused absences).
2. Reviews for major exams or quizzes should not be given.
3. Standardized tests should not be given.
4. Tryouts; for example, teams, plays, etc., should not be scheduled.
5. One-time or major events (graduation ceremonies, elections, etc.) should not be scheduled.
6. Interscholastic athletic games should be scheduled in a manner that minimizes conflict with the designated holidays. *Scheduling of an athletic event on a holiday must be reviewed by the Superintendent or designee.* Board members will be notified well in advance when there is a conflict.
7. Interscholastic athletic practices are allowed.

School district employees may arrange for students to participate in one-time or major events on holidays if the scheduling of these events is not controlled by our employees. Scheduling of such events must be approved by the site principal and the Superintendent or designee.

Students will probably be with their families or at a place of worship in observance of these holidays. They will not be in school and/or not have time available to do the required homework. In addition, teachers should be aware that some students may be fasting for long periods during these observances. Absence 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.

***Parents, for school year planning purposes, please let us know if your child/children will be missing school to observe any of the holidays listed below. To the extent students observe religious holidays not on this calendar, students and parents are encouraged to have a conversation with the student's teacher(s) in advance regarding these guidelines and appropriate accommodations.***

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## **2008-09 RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Observance</b>	<b>Description</b>
9/01/08	Mon	First Day of Ramadan	The beginning of the Islamic holy month in which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset each day. Ramadan ends on 10/01/08.
9/30/08	Tues	Rosh Hashanah	Jewish New Year and holy days. Days of renewed responsibility. Begins at sunset on 9/29/08.
10/02/08	Thurs	Id al-Fitr	Muslim day of feasting to celebrate the end of Ramadan. Festival of breaking of the fast.
10/09/08	Thurs	Yom Kippur	Day of Atonement; most solemn of Jewish holy days. Observed with fasting, prayer and repentance. Begins at sunset on 10/08/08.
12/08/08	Mon	Id al-Adha	Islamic Feast of Sacrifice. The most important feast of Islam. It concludes the Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, and is a three-day festival recalling Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to Allah.
12/25/08	Thurs	Christmas	Christian celebration of the birth of Christ.
1/6/09	Tues	Epiphany - Orthodox Christmas	Observed by Eastern and Greek Orthodox Christians who follow the Julian calendar.
4/09/09	Thurs	Pesach/Passover	Jewish festival marking the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. Begins at sunset on 4/08/09.

4/10/09	Fri	Good Friday	Observed by Christians the Friday before Easter. Commemorates Christ's crucifixion, death and entombment.
4/12/09	Sun	Easter	Christian celebration of Christ's resurrection. Observed the first Sunday following the first full moon that occurs on or after the vernal equinox.
4/17/09	Fri	Orthodox Good Friday	Observed by Eastern and Greek Orthodox Christians who follow the Julian calendar.
4/19/09	Sun	Orthodox Easter	Observed by Eastern Orthodox and Greek Orthodox religions.

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**\* THESE RELIGIOUS CALENDAR GUIDELINES ARE MODELED AFTER THOSE USED BY THE ANN ARBOR SCHOOL DISTRICT AND REFERENCED BY THE LARKSPUR SCHOOL DISTRICT'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES AT ITS APRIL 23, 2008 MEETING.**