

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

RSU 2 is committed to fostering an environment where all students are supported as learners and as individuals. This policy ensures that students are free to celebrate religious holidays with their families and community. By supporting the students and their families in their celebration of religious holidays, this policy helps build cooperation and good rapport with the communities and institutions of the district.

1. **Multicultural school calendar:** RSU 2 shall include a list of major holidays for Christians and Eastern Orthodox Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus along with the official school calendar distributed to parents, faculty, staff, and administrators each year. These holidays shall also be listed on the RSU 2 website and district-wide electronic calendars.
2. **Excused absence:** Missing a school day or official activity to celebrate a major religious holiday shall be considered and treated as an excused absence for purposes of making up school work, sports and extracurricular activities, attendance awards, and other relevant school functions.

Children who miss school due to a religious observance shall remain eligible for school based attendance awards.

3. **Consideration of holidays:** To the best of their abilities, RSU 2 administrators and school principals shall avoid planning school-wide events on religious holidays. Such events include but are not limited to: field trips, assemblies, parent-teacher conferences, concerts, theater performances, Back to School Night, Homecoming, Picture Day, and district testing. Major religious holidays recognized by RSU 2 include:
 - Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter, and Christmas
 - First day of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and first day of Passover
 - First day of Ramadan, Eid ul Fitr (the last day of Ramadan), Eid ul Adha, and the 10th of Muharram
 - First day of Diwali, Janmashtami
 - Vesek (Buddha Day)
4. **Ramadan fasting:** Muslim students who are fasting during Ramadan shall be allowed to spend lunch outside of the cafeteria at a location to be determined by the school principal.
5. **Food events during Ramadan and Passover:** The RSU shall distribute to all RSU 2 staff, the dates of fasting or observing dietary restrictions for Ramadan and Passover. RSU 2 staff shall avoid scheduling official school work related activities that involve consuming food or beverage during these times.

Prior to recommending the upcoming school year calendar to the RSU 2 Board, the Superintendent shall consult with local leaders from the interfaith community who shall provide a listing of dates of major religious holidays to be included on the RSU 2 official calendar.

First Reading: 6/7/18

Approved: 10/4/18