

GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

The recognition of holidays of different religions presents a natural and convenient opportunity for providing learning experiences to develop understanding, appreciation, and respect for religious diversity.

1. The holidays to be recognized must be representative of the diverse religions of the world and must be of historical and cultural significance to the religions they represent.
2. All religions must be treated with equal dignity, in a context based upon the premise that the time and resources devoted to the recognition of religious holidays be a very small part of that devoted to the total educational program.
3. All religions whose holidays are recognized must be afforded respect: no religions, nor the right to disbelieve, shall be advanced or disparaged.
4. Recognition of religious holidays must be a secular education experience directed solely to enhancing tolerance of and respect for religious diversity and must be developmentally- and age-appropriate, accurate in content, and objective in presentation.
5. All programs and materials used for recognizing religious holidays must support curriculum objectives.
6. Decorations that are a part of the custom and folklore of a religious holiday that have no direct religious meaning or bearing may be displayed.
7. Performance in the arts that recognize religious holidays must be for artistic, not religious reasons. The design and total effect of a performance must adhere to this purpose.
8. Musical concerts may include sacred music and traditional music of a religious holiday provided they are balanced with selections that reflect the customs and folklore as well as festive and seasonal characteristics associated with the holiday. Religious music must not predominate.
9. Parents shall have the right to have their children excluded from any classroom or school program involving the recognition of religious holidays. This request must be made in writing to the building principal.