

Absence to observe Religious Holyday

The Littleton Public Schools serves children from different religious backgrounds. The Littleton School Committee maintains a deep and sincere respect for religious diversity throughout the community. The Committee recognizes there are conflicts between observing important religious holydays and mandates relative to days of instruction within the school year. As such, it shall be the policy of the Littleton School Committee that:

1. Littleton School District shall close schools for Yom Kippur, Good Friday and Diwali.
2. For other religious holydays, students shall be allowed an excused absence on a day chosen by the student's parent/ legal guardian in order to participate in his or her religious observances of that day.

So that students who use an excused absence to participate in religious observances of his or her choice on a normally scheduled school day are not penalized in any manner for missed schoolwork of the day, such students:

1. Shall be allowed to participate in their religious observances without detriment to their education or grades.
2. Shall not be held accountable for tests, quizzes and homework and other one-time events (field trips, athletic events, music performances, theater plays, and productions, audition, and back to school functions), on such days.
3. Shall be allowed to make up tests, quizzes, homework, and other one-time events within a period agreed to by the student's teacher and the parent/ legal guardian. If the parent/ legal guardian and teacher cannot come to an agreement, the matter shall be referred to the principal who will determine the make-up period.
4. Long-term assignments shall not be due the day of, nor the day following such a holyday.

Further:

1. Any pupil absent from school because of a religious holyday shall not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence.
2. Students whose conscientious observation of a religious holyday conflicts with participation in a school-scheduled event such as try-outs, athletic contest, theatricals, or concerts, shall not be required to participate nor penalized for their non-participation.
3. Any absence because of a religious holyday shall be recorded in the school register, or in any group or class attendance record, as an excused absence.

4. Such absence shall NOT be recorded on any transcript, application, employment form, or any similar form.

To facilitate teachers' ability to plan for circumstances set forth above, the student/ parent/ legal guardian must present to the principal a written excuse signed by a parent/ legal guardian as soon as feasible, but in no case any later than five school days in advance.

This policy should not prevent coaches and/ or advisors from holding practices or scheduling contests for events on holydays in which school is in session.

Adopted: November 19, 2009
Reviewed: November 15, 2012
Reviewed: February 25, 2016
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