



The Public Schools of Brookline
Brookline Town Hall
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Linus J. Guillory Jr., PhD
Superintendent

September 2024

Dear Families,

I am pleased to be able to share the annual list of religious and cultural observances. For those of you who are returning parents and guardians, this letter and list will be familiar. For those families who are new to the school district, please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the information below to understand the purpose and intent behind this annual message.

The students in the Public Schools of Brookline represent a diverse community of learners. Celebrating this diversity is one of the key characteristics of our district. PSB's core value of "Respect for Human Differences" calls on us to honor Brookline's diversity and value the varied perspectives and experiences that enrich each of our schools.

The assignment of homework over religious/cultural holidays is an issue often raised by parents and students. Following is a set of procedures that guide the practice of assigning homework, as aligned with the School Committee's Homework Policy. By following these procedures, we demonstrate our commitment to providing students with the opportunity to more fully observe religious and cultural holidays and celebrations.

The list of specific holidays and dates for the 2024-2025 school year is attached.

Category 1:

What this means: Absences by staff and students impact the ability to conduct classes on this date or during this time. Designated as "days of low attendance", certain category 1 holidays are often embedded within school vacations.

Instructions: No homework will be assigned in any class for all students on the last day of school before a category 1 holiday. Homework assignments, projects, presentations, or other assignments cannot be due until at least the second school day after the holiday, even in the case of a longer school vacation. The same policy applies for the administration of tests.

Category 2:

What this means: School remains in session because these holidays are not considered to be a "day of low attendance". However, they are still celebrated by a significant portion of our school population.

Instructions: No homework will be assigned in any class for all students on the last day of school before the category 2 holiday. Homework assignments, projects, presentations, or other assignments cannot be due until at least the second school day after the holiday, even in the case of a longer school vacation. The same policy applies for the administration of tests.

Category 3:

What this means: School remains in session because these holidays impact a smaller number of our students than in the prior two categories.

Instructions: Students who are unable to complete a homework assignment due to this type of holiday should inform their teacher, who will arrange with the student an alternative time for completion of work, without loss of credit. The attached list includes the most common category 3 dates, but it is not inclusive of all possible dates.

Thanksgiving Break

In addition to the religious/cultural celebrations outlined above, no homework will be assigned over the Thanksgiving break. Projects, presentations, or other assignments will not be due until at least the second day following the Thanksgiving break. The same policy applies for the administration of tests.

In all of the situations described above, teachers are asked to comply with both the "letter" and the "spirit" of this guidance. For example, please do not "double up" on homework assigned before a holiday.

Athletics

Our athletic programs are another important aspect of a student's educational experience. Regardless of the category, coaches are advised of and sensitive to the religious and cultural needs of their student-athletes and families. There will be no athletic consequence for missing games and/or practices due to religious observances. Moreover, Brookline High School does not schedule league or non-league contests on any of the category 1 dates. Non-mandatory practices may occur on category 1 dates with prior approval by the Athletic Director.

Providing students with the opportunity to fully observe these religious and cultural holidays is a tangible way to demonstrate our commitment to diversity in Brookline.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linus J. Guillory Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Linus J. Guillory Jr., PhD
Superintendent

The Public Schools of Brookline
Religious and Cultural Observances
2024-2025

Category 1

Rosh Hashanah (Day 1)	Thursday, October 3, 2024
Yom Kippur	Saturday, October 12, 2024
Christmas	Wednesday, December 25, 2024
Lunar New Year	Wednesday, January 29, 2025
Good Friday	Friday, April 18, 2025
Easter	Sunday, April 20, 2025

Category 2

Eid al Fitr	Monday, March 31, 2025*
Passover (Day 1)	Sunday, April 13, 2025
Eid al-Adha	Saturday, June 7, 2025*
Diwali	Friday, November 1, 2024

Category 3**

Rosh Hashanah (Day 2)	Friday, October 4, 2024
Sukkot (2 Days)	Thursday, October 17, 2024
	Friday, October 18, 2024
Winter Solstice	Saturday, December 21, 2024
Hanukkah	Thursday, December 26, 2024
Kwanzaa	Thursday, December 26, 2024
Nowruz	Friday, March 21, 2025
Passover (other dates)	Monday, April 14, 2025
	Saturday, April 19, 2025
	Sunday, April 20, 2025
Good Friday (Eastern Orthodox)	Friday, April 18, 2025
Easter (Eastern Orthodox)	Sunday, April 20, 2025
Shavuot	Monday, June 2, 2025

Thanksgiving Break

Thursday & Friday, November 28-29, 2024

**Tentative. Holidays on the Islamic calendar are confirmed only after a lunar sighting. Therefore, this date is subject to change following actual astronomical observations closer to the actual holiday.*

***This list is not inclusive of all possible category 3 dates.*

