


# MEMORANDUM

**Sylvia R. Reyna, Ph.D.**  
**Chief of Administration**

100 N. University Dr., SW 208-A Fort Worth, Texas 76107  
OFFICE 817.814.2700 FAX 817.814.2705  
sylvia.reyna@fwisd.org



TO: All Principals and Staff Members

FROM: Sylvia R. Reyna, Ph.D. 

RE: Cultural Awareness—Jewish Religious Holidays

DATE: March 30, 2012

In the spirit of enhancing our cultural awareness and in the hope of addressing issues faced by some of our students, specifically our Jewish students, we ask for your support to ensure that students are excused from school on designated religious holidays. We want to provide our students every opportunity to observe their religious holy days without any penalty. This also includes students of other faiths whose religious holy days do not occur during scheduled District holidays.

Expressly, a student whose absence is excused for observing a religious holy day and, in accordance with (TEC-§25.087), may not be penalized for that absence and must be counted as if the student attended school for purposes of calculating the average daily attendance. Further, a student whose absence is excused under this state attendance law must be allowed a reasonable time to make up school work missed on those days. Please note that if the student satisfactorily completes the school work, the day of absence must be counted as a day of compulsory attendance.

In addition to our regulatory obligations, we want to ensure that all staff members are sensitive to student participation in events, activities, projects, exams or other school-related events during designated holy days and, as such, we encourage you not to schedule such types of events during the holy days. When scheduling events after school, please note that Jewish observance begins in the evening preceding the holy day and, therefore, the student would likely be unable to participate.

So that you and your teachers can adequately prepare calendars, event schedules and lessons, we are providing you with the dates of Jewish holy days for the remainder of this school year and for the following two years. As you may know, the Jewish calendar is based on a lunar cycle and holidays do not occur on the same date or even the same month year to year.

### Primary Jewish Holidays

<b>Holiday</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>
<b>Rosh Hashanah</b>	Wednesday evening, Sept. 28 Thursday, Sept. 29 Friday, Sept. 30	Sunday evening, Sept. 16 Monday, Sept. 17 Tuesday, Sept. 18	Wednesday evening, Sept. 4 Thursday, Sept. 5 Friday, Sept. 6
<b>Yom Kippur</b>	Friday evening, Oct. 7 Saturday—Oct. 8	Tuesday evening, Sept. 25 Wednesday, Sept. 26	Friday evening, Sept. 13 Saturday, Sept. 14
<b>Passover</b>	Friday evening, April 6 Saturday, April 7 Sunday, April 8	Monday evening, March 25 Tuesday, March 26 Wednesday, March 27	Monday evening, April 14 Tuesday, April 15 Wednesday, April 16

We appreciate your support in informing your staff of these dates and in taking our students' religious needs into consideration in scheduling special events or activities. We respect all cultures and, though we may not have a great number of Jewish students, knowing and meeting the needs of all our faith communities makes their experiences with our District all the more positive.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to call me at (817) 814-2700. Again, thank you for your cooperation.