



JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties

MAIN OFFICE

121 Steuart Street, #301
San Francisco, CA 94105
Tel: 415.957.1551
Fax: 415.979.0981
Website: www.jcrc.org

PENINSULA REGION

5150 El Camino Real
Suite #D-15
Los Altos, CA 94022
Tel: 650.961.1922
Fax: 650.961.1929

MARIN/SONOMA REGION

200 N. San Pedro Road
San Rafael, CA 94903
Tel: 415.472.5128
Fax: 415.499.0308

EAST BAY REGION

300 Grand Avenue
Oakland, CA 94610-4826
Tel: 510.839.2900 X211
Fax: 510.839.3996

Dear Educator:

We hope this has been a satisfying school year for you. We greatly appreciate the sensitivity you have shown in the past in accommodating Jewish families at times of their religious observances. Enclosed please find the *Seven-year Calendar of Major Jewish Religious Observances* that we send periodically to assist schools in avoiding conflicts when planning events.

In 2008, the *Rosh Hashana* evening observances fall on the **evenings** of **Monday, September 29, and Tuesday, September 30**. The *days* of *Rosh Hashana* observances occur on **Tuesday, September 30, and Wednesday, October 1**. The **evening** observance of *Yom Kippur* falls on **Wednesday, October 8**. The **day** of *Yom Kippur* observance falls on **Thursday, October 9**. It is important to note that observances occurring during the day typically include synagogue services that usually continue with family gatherings in the home during the evening. Therefore, scheduling of school events should avoid nights on the dates of these important daytime observances.

Virtually all Jewish students and staff members can be expected to observe the first evening and day of *Rosh Hashana*, and many will observe the second evening and day of *Rosh Hashana*. The evening and day of *Yom Kippur* is generally observed by all. Students should be given ample opportunity to make up work they have missed during their absence for religious observances as is required by Education Code Section 48205(a) (7) (b).

There are different degrees of observance within the Jewish community, similar to the differing practices within other religious denominations. Those who observe in a traditional manner will observe both days of *Rosh Hashana* and will also observe the other holidays listed on the calendar. An increasing number of Jewish families in the Bay Area observe the Sabbath according to traditional requirements. As with all Jewish holy days, the Sabbath is observed from sundown until nightfall the next day. This means that from sundown Friday until nightfall Saturday those observing the Sabbath traditionally do not ride in a car. We ask that you be responsive to your community when scheduling one-time-only events such as graduation. We suggest when you are aware that members of your school community follow traditional practices, you make every effort to schedule school events so that all can participate.

JCRC is a beneficiary of
the Jewish Community
Federation and the
Jewish Federation of
the Greater East Bay

A word about Passover—in 2009, Passover will be observed from the night of Wednesday, April 8, through the night of Wednesday, April 15. The first and second nights of Passover, April 8, and April 9, are very significant family gatherings that commemorate the escape of the Jewish people from slavery in ancient Egypt. Often schools schedule special events such as plays or musicals during this period in the spring. Most Jewish students and their families are not able to participate if such school events are scheduled for the first or second nights of Passover.

We also call your attention to *Purim* that will be observed by attendance in synagogues the *night* of Monday March 9, 2009.

We would very much appreciate your communicating this information to teachers, parent groups, and others in your school community who are responsible for scheduling events. Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Bob Kane, Chair
Education Task Force