

Jewish Community Relations Council School Committee

August, 2011

Dear Faculty Member,

We are writing in the spirit of cooperation in hopes of solving a problem that Jewish students often face: being penalized academically or in extracurricular activities because of a necessary absence due to religious observance. We thank you ahead for consideration in supporting our requests for these students.

The Jewish calendar is based on a lunar cycle, and for this reason, holidays do not occur on the same date or even the same month year to year. All students understand that it is their responsibility to make up all work missed on a day when they are absent from school for religious observance. We ask for your consideration in not planning exams on the days when many Jewish students will not be in school, or the following day, if the holiday involves a full day in the synagogue or with family that precludes study. This year, this accommodation applies to the following dates:

Jewish children observing the holidays of Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover in synagogue and /or with family will be **absent Wednesday eveing Sept. 28, Thursday and Friday, Sept 29 and 30.**

Please avoid scheduling exams/long-term assignments to be due on these dates, Wednesday, Sept. 28, Thursday and Friday, Sept 29 and 30.

Please avoid scheduling performances, travel games, Parents Night, or other school events after school on the above dates and on the preceding evenings, since Jewish observance begins in the evening preceding a holy day, corresponding this coming year to **Wednesday evening, Sept 28, Thursday evening, Sept. 29, Friday evening, October 7, Saturday (day), October 8, and Friday evening, April 6.**

In addition to these holidays, a child of a more ritually observant tradition may celebrate other Festivals in the Jewish calendar including Sukkot, Simchat Torah and Shavuot: (Please see calendar for dates and for brief explanations of the holidays.)

We realize that relatively few Jewish students attend our local schools. While we believe that our requests deserve accommodation, we also would simply deeply appreciate it. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

If you require additional information concerning Jewish holidays and observance pertinent to your considerations, please contact any of the Rabbis listed below.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Rob Cabelli
Beth Israel Synagogue
252-8431

Rabbi Batsheva Meiri
Congregation Beth Ha Tephila
253-4911

Rabbi Shaya Susskind
The Chabad House
505-0746

And the Jewish Community Relations Council School Committee