

**Instruction****CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

The Governing Board recognizes the importance of having students join together to celebrate events of cultural or historical significance or to acknowledge the contributions of outstanding individuals. Besides helping students to appreciate their pluralistic heritage, holidays, ceremonies and observances can enhance their sense of community, instill pride in our country, and contribute to a positive school climate. On days designated by the Board, staff shall provide students with appropriate commemorative exercises so that they may acquire the knowledge, skills, and principles essential for informed, responsible citizenship in a democratic society

*(cf. 6111 - School Calendar)*  
*(cf. 6141.2 - Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs)*  
*(cf. 6142.94 - History-Social Science Instruction)*  
*(cf. 6142.3 - Civic Education)*  
*(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)*

District schools shall be closed on the holidays specified in Education Code 37220 and on any other day designated as a holiday by the Board. The Board may, by adoption of a resolution, revise the date upon which schools close in observance of any holiday except Veterans Day, which shall be celebrated on its actual date. (Education Code 37220)

In addition, the Board may, through the adoption of a resolution, authorize the display of symbolic flags or banners in support of specific awareness months.

*(cf. 6144 - Controversial Issues)*

*Legal Reference:***EDUCATION CODE**

*37220-37222.20 Holidays and commemorative events*

*44015.1 Week of the school administrator*

*45203 Paid holidays*

*45460 Classified employee week*

*52720-52730 Patriotic exercises and instruction*

**GOVERNMENT CODE**

*430-439 Display of flags*

*3540-3549.3 Meeting and negotiating*

**UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 36**

*174 Time and occasion for display of flag*

*175 Position and manner of display of flag*

**COURT DECISIONS**

*Newdow v. Rio Linda Union School District, 597 F.3d 1007, 1012 (9th Cir. 2010)*

*West Virginia State Board of Education et al v. Barnette et al, 319 U.S. 624 (1943)*

## **CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES (continued)**

### *Management Resources:*

#### *WEB SITES*

*CDE:* <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

*California Department of Education, History/Social Science Instructional Materials:*

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/im>

Policy  
adopted: October 26, 1999  
revised: August 22, 2000  
revised: October 27, 2020

**VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Visalia, California

**CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES****Holidays**

District schools shall be closed on the following holidays: (Education Code 37220)

New Year's Day	January 1
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Third Monday in January or the Monday or Friday of the week in which January 15 occurs
Lincoln Day	The Monday or Friday of the week in which February 12 occurs
Washington Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Juneteenth National Independence Day	June 19
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	The Thursday in November designated by the President
Christmas Day	December 25

*(cf. 6141.2 - Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs)*

In addition, schools shall be closed on: (Education Code 37220)

1. Any day appointed by the Governor as a holiday
2. Any day appointed by the President as a holiday, including by executive order or by signing into law legislation that creates a nationwide federal holiday
3. Any other day designated as a holiday by the Governing Board and/or negotiated with employee organizations

**CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES** (continued)**Commemorative Exercises**

Holidays which fall on a Sunday shall be observed the following Monday. Holidays which fall on a Saturday shall be observed the preceding Friday. If any of the above holidays occurs under federal law on a date different from that indicated above, the Governing Board may close the schools on the date recognized by federal law instead of on the date above. (Education Code 37220)

*(cf. 6111 - School Calendar)*

District schools shall hold exercises in accordance with law to commemorate the following special days: (Education Code 37220, 37221, 45460)

U.S. Constitution and Citizenship Day	On or near September 17
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	The Friday before the day schools are closed for this holiday
Abraham Lincoln's Birthday	The school day before the day schools are closed for this holiday
Susan B. Anthony Day	February 15
George Washington's Birthday	The Friday preceding the third Monday in February
Black American Day	March 5
Conservation, Bird, and Arbor Day	March 7
Classified Employee Week	Third week in May
School Board Recognition Month	January
Week of the School Administrator	First full week of March
Cesar Chavez Day	March 31
California Poppy Day	April 6
John Muir Day	April 21
Day of the Teacher	Second Wednesday in May
Native American Day	Fourth Friday in September
Bill of Rights Day	December 15

**CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES** (continued)

Commemorative exercises shall be integrated into the regular educational program to the extent feasible.

*(cf. 6142.94 - History-Social Science Instruction)*

*(cf. 6142.3 - Civic Education)*

**Patriotic Exercises**

Each school shall conduct patriotic exercises daily, which may include the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States and/or instruction that promotes understanding of the concepts of "pledge," "allegiance," "republic," and "indivisible" and understanding of the importance of the pledge as an expression of patriotism, love of country, and pride in the United States. (Education Code 52720, 52730)

At elementary schools, such exercises shall be conducted at the beginning of each school day. (Education Code 52720)

At secondary schools, such exercises shall be conducted during the homeroom period.

A student may choose not to participate in the flag salute or Pledge of Allegiance for personal reasons.

**Display of Flag**

The flag of the United States and the flag of California shall be displayed during business hours at the entrance or on the grounds of every district school and on or near the district office. At all times, the national flag shall be placed in the position of first honor. (Government Code 431, 436; 4 USC 6)

When displayed on a building or on a flagstaff in the open, the national flag shall be displayed only from sunrise to sunset unless properly illuminated during the hours of darkness. The flag should not be displayed during inclement weather unless an all-weather flag is used. (4 USC 6)

The national flag shall fly at half-staff on the following occasions: (4 USC 7)

1. For 30 days from the death of the President or a former President
2. For 10 days from the death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives
3. From the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a secretary of an executive or military department, former Vice President, or the Governor of a state

**CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES** (continued)

4. On the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress
5. On Memorial Day, until noon only
6. On Peace Officers Memorial Day (May 15), unless it falls on Armed Forces Day
7. Upon a proclamation from the Governor in the event of the death of a present or former official of the state government or a member of the Armed Forces from the state who has died while serving on active duty
8. On other occasions by order of the President and in accordance with presidential instructions or orders

Regulation  
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revised: August 22, 2000  
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