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## AB-395 Holidays. (2025-2026)

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

### ASSEMBLY BILL

NO. 395

Introduced by Assembly Member Gabriel  
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bains, Bauer-Kahan, and Hadwick)  
(Coauthor: Senator Stern)

February 03, 2025

An act to add Section 37224 to, and to add Article 12 (commencing with Section 66095) to Chapter 2 of Part 40 of Division 5 of Title 3 of, the Education Code, and to amend Sections 11131 and 54961 of the Government Code, relating to holidays.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 395, as amended, Gabriel. Holidays.

Existing law designates specific days as holidays in this state. Existing law designates holidays on which public schools are required to close.

This bill would require, commencing with the 2026–27 school year, the governing board of a school district, a county office of education, or the governing body of a charter school to consider making efforts to avoid scheduling the first day of class and high school graduation, if applicable, on a date for which the governing board ~~or of the school district, the~~ county office of ~~education~~ *education, or the governing body of the charter school* knows, or has reason to know, that members of the public would be unable to participate or be present due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday. The bill would require the governing board ~~or the of a school district, a~~ county office of ~~education, education, or the governing body of a charter school~~, in considering and making a determination of which dates to avoid, to actively seek input from the affected community and consider any other relevant sources to ensure inclusive public participation.

The Donahoe Higher Education Act sets forth the missions and functions of California's public segments of higher education and their respective institutions of higher education. The California State University, under the administration of the Trustees of the California State University, the California Community Colleges, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and the University of California, under the administration of the Regents of the University of California, are 3 of the segments. Provisions of the act apply to the University of California only to the extent that the Regents of the University of California act, by appropriate resolution, to make them applicable.

This bill would require, commencing with the 2026–2027 academic year, the governing board of a community college and the California State University, and would request the University of California, to make every reasonable effort, when developing academic calendars, to avoid calendaring an institutional event, as defined, on a date for which the institution of higher education knows, or has reason to know, that members of the public would be unable to participate or be present due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday. The bill would require the governing board of a community college and the California State University, and would request the University of California, in considering and making a determination of which dates to avoid, to seek input from the student and faculty organizations on campus.

The Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act and the Ralph M. Brown Act require, with specified exceptions, that all meetings of specified governmental bodies be open and public and all persons be permitted to attend. Existing law prohibits a state agency, as defined, or a legislative body of a local agency, as defined, from conducting any meeting, conference, or other function in any facility that prohibits the admittance of any person, or persons, on the basis of ancestry or a specified characteristic, that is inaccessible to disabled persons, or where members of the public may not be present without making a payment or purchase.

This bill would require a state agency to make every reasonable effort to avoid conducting any meeting, conference, or other function on a date for which the state agency knows, or has reason to know, that members of the public would be unable to participate or be present due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday, including, among others, Eid al-Adha, Rosh Hashanah, and Diwali. The bill would also encourage a legislative body of a local agency to consider making efforts to avoid conducting any meeting, conference, or other function on a date for which the legislative body knows, or has reason to know, that members of the public would be unable to participate or be present due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday, including, among others, the holidays listed above.

By imposing new duties on school districts and community college districts, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires local agencies, for the purpose of ensuring public access to the meetings of public bodies and the writings of public officials and agencies, to comply with a statutory enactment that amends or enacts laws relating to public records or open meetings and contains findings demonstrating that the enactment furthers the constitutional requirements relating to this purpose.

This bill would make legislative findings to that effect.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

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## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1.** Section 37224 is added to the Education Code, to read:

**37224.** (a) Commencing with the 2026–27 school year, the governing board of a school district, a county office of education, or the governing body of a charter school shall consider making efforts to avoid scheduling the first day of class and high school graduation, if applicable, on a date for which the governing board ~~or of the school district, the~~ county office of ~~education~~ *education, or the governing body of the charter school* knows, or has reason to know, that members of the public would be unable to participate or be present due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday.

(b) In considering and making a determination of which dates to avoid, the governing board ~~or of a school district, a~~ county office of ~~education~~ *education, or the governing body of a charter school* shall actively seek input from the affected community and consider any other relevant sources to ensure inclusive public participation.

**SEC. 2.** Article 12 (commencing with Section 66095) is added to Chapter 2 of Part 40 of Division 5 of Title 3 of the Education Code, to read:

## Article 12. Academic Calendar

**66095.** (a) Commencing with the 2026–27 academic year, the governing board of a community college and the California State University shall, and the University of California is requested to, make every reasonable effort when developing academic calendars to avoid calendaring an institutional event on a date for which the institution of higher education knows, or has reason to know, that members of the public would be unable to participate or be present due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday.

(b) As used in this section, “institutional event” means an event on the academic or institutional calendar for which students are mandated to attend, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- (1) Student orientation.
- (2) Student housing move-in day.
- (3) Academic examination days.
- (4) The beginning or ending of an academic term.
- (5) Commencement ceremonies.

(c) In considering and making a determination of which dates to avoid, the governing board of a community college and the California State University shall, and the University of California is requested to, seek input from the student and faculty organizations on campus prior to the calendaring of institutional events.

**SEC. 3.** Section 11131 of the Government Code is amended to read:

**11131.** (a) As used in this section, “state agency” means and includes every state body, office, officer, department, division, bureau, board, council, commission, or other state agency.

(b) A state agency shall not conduct any meeting, conference, or other function in any facility that prohibits the admittance of any person, or persons, on the basis of ancestry or any characteristic listed or defined in Section 11135, that is inaccessible to disabled persons, or where members of the public may not be present without making a payment or purchase.

(c) A state agency shall make every reasonable effort to avoid conducting any meeting, conference, or other function on a date for which the state agency knows, or has reason to know, that members of the public would be unable to participate or be present due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- (1) Eid al-Adha.
- (2) Eid al-Fitr.
- (3) Feast of the Nativity.
- (4) Maha Shivaratri.
- (5) The first and last two days of Pesach, also known as Passover.
- (6) Rosh Hashanah.
- (7) Yom Kippur.
- (8) Diwali.
- (9) Dussehra.

**SEC. 4.** Section 54961 of the Government Code is amended to read:

**54961.** (a) A legislative body of a local agency shall not conduct any meeting in any facility that prohibits the admittance of any person, or persons, on the basis of ancestry or any characteristic listed or defined in Section 11135, that is inaccessible to disabled persons, or where members of the public may not be present without making a payment or purchase. This section applies to every local agency as defined in Section 54951.

(b) A legislative body of a local agency is encouraged to consider making efforts to avoid conducting any meeting, conference, or other function on a date for which the legislative body knows, or has reason to know, that members of the public would be unable to participate or be present due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- (1) Eid al-Adha.
- (2) Eid al-Fitr.
- (3) Feast of the Nativity.
- (4) Maha Shivaratri.
- (5) The first and last two days of Pesach, also known as Passover.
- (6) Rosh Hashanah.
- (7) Yom Kippur.
- (8) Diwali.
- (9) Dussehra.

(c) No notice, agenda, announcement, or report required under this chapter need identify any victim or alleged victim of tortious sexual conduct or child abuse unless the identity of the person has been publicly disclosed.

**SEC. 5.** The Legislature finds and declares that Section 4 of this act, which amends Section 54961 of the Government Code, furthers, within the meaning of paragraph (7) of subdivision (b) of Section 3 of Article I of the California Constitution, the purposes of that constitutional section as it relates to the right of public access to the meetings of local public bodies or the writings of local public officials and local agencies. Pursuant to paragraph (7) of subdivision (b) of Section 3 of Article I of the California Constitution, the Legislature makes the following findings:

By encouraging local agencies to avoid conducting any meeting, conference, or other function on a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday, this act furthers the purpose of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and promotes greater public access to the public meetings of local agencies.

**SEC. 6.** If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.