

September 7, 2018

A few points to consider as you throw open the windows and let a long-awaited cool breeze blow through your classroom...

1. The **first faculty meeting of the year will be pushed back one day** (from Wednesday 9/19 to Thursday 9/20) because the earlier date conflicts with Yom Kippur. My apologies for the scheduling error and the relatively short notice on the change. If the new date is a problem for you, please let me know.
2. Speaking of **Jewish holidays**, please review the below document (sent to all Hingham principals for distribution this week) and be sensitive to students who may be missing classes in the weeks ahead.
3. Also for your calendar: The **first freshman advisory meeting** of the school year will be held on **Tuesday 9/18** (Day 4) during the second half of G Block. The next is scheduled for Tuesday 10/2 (Day 7) during the second half of C Block. Stay tuned for a full schedule of advisory meetings.
4. In case you missed [this news](#): **Ben Louchheim** and **Melissa McCash** enjoyed an exceptional professional development opportunity over the summer. In support of their second-year Holocaust & Human Behavior course, they traveled to Washington DC to visit the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. For HHS teachers, the learning never stops!
5. Thank you for surviving (I should say THRIVING) despite the heat wave (and the truly ridiculous temperatures in many parts of the building) throughout the first week of school. I am grateful to work among such warriors.

Have a great weekend!

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A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE JEWISH CALENDAR

Rabbi Shira Joseph

The Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar, following the cycle of the moon. There are 29 and 1/4 days in each monthly cycle. That makes the lunar calendar 11 days short every year when compared to our Gregorian Solar calendar. Every two years or so, an entire month is added to our yearly calendar so that it is back in sync with the solar calendar. This is much the way that leap year works when we add an extra day. Adding a month means that it would appear that the Jewish holidays "swing" early or late from year to year. However, as we rabbis like to say, "The Jewish holidays fall exactly where they should because they are always the same date on the Hebrew calendar!"

Of course the confusion for secular planning is that Jewish holidays are on a different date on our secular calendar every year. In addition you should note that our holidays begin at sundown the night before the day is mentioned for celebrating the holiday. Therefore, a secular calendar identifies that Rosh Hashana (the Jewish New Year) begins this year on Monday, September 10, 2018; our observance starts the evening of the 9th and the Jewish community would not be able to attend programming the evening of the 9th or throughout the next day. Some of our holy days, such as Rosh Hashana are two days long and many Jews will be in the synagogue on September 11th as well.

While I am well aware that this might seem confusing, I hope that the three year calendar below will be helpful and clarify some of the observance dates for the Jewish liberal community in which scheduling significant events should be avoided.

Holiday	5779 (2018-2019)	5780 (2019-2020)	5781 (2020-2021)
Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) Observance 1st and 2nd day and starts the evening before	Sep 10-11	Sep 30-Oct 1	Sep 19-20
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) Observance for Kol Nidre starts the evening before	Sep 19	Oct 9	Sep 28
Simchat Torah (Rejoicing with the Torah) Observance for Consecration starts the evening before	Oct 2	Oct 22	Oct 11
Hanukkah Observance starts the evening before (Festival of Lights continues for 8 Days)	Dec 3-10	Dec 23-30	Dec 11-18
Pesach (Passover-7 Days) Observance 1st and 2nd days and evenings before	Apr 20-21 Apr 22-25 Apr 26-27	Apr 9-10 Apr 11 -14 Apr 15-16	Mar 28-29 Mar 30-Apr 2 Apr 3-4
Shavuot (Festival of Weeks) Observance for Confirmation starts the evening before	June 9-10	May 28-30	May 17-18