
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 395 (Gabriel) - Holidays

Version: July 8, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: ED. 7 - 0, JUD. 13 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: This bill requires specified state and local entities, including local educational agencies, the California Community Colleges (CCCs) and the California State University (CSU), and requests the University of California (UC), to make efforts to avoid calendaring events and meetings on days observed as religious, cultural, or ancestral holidays.

Fiscal Impact:

- By authorizing a person who has suffered harm as a result of a violation of the bill's provisions to bring a civil action for injunctive relief, this bill could result in additional, unknown cost pressures to the courts to adjudicate these cases (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund). The actual costs will depend on the number of cases filed and the amount of court time needed to resolve each case. It typically costs about \$1,000 to operate a courtroom for one hour. While the courts are not funded on a workload basis, an increase in workload could result in delayed court services and put pressure on the General Fund to fund additional staff and resources.
- The Chancellor's Office for the CCCs estimates Proposition 98 General Fund costs in the low thousands of dollars for each community college district per year to make the necessary updates to academic calendars and additional state operations costs in the low thousands of dollars to update guidance on academic calendars.
- The UC indicates that any costs resulting from the bill would be minor and absorbable.

Background: Existing law provides that the school year begins on the first day of July and ends on the last day of June. It requires public K-12 schools to close on specified holidays, including: January 1; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Lincoln Day; Washington Day; Memorial Day; July 4; Labor Day; Veterans Day; Thanksgiving Day; December 25; all days appointed by the Governor or the President of the United States for a public fast, thanksgiving or holiday; and, any other day designated as a holiday by the governing board of the school district.

Existing law provides that every community college district is to be under the control of a board of trustees, known as the governing board, which has the authority to establish, maintain, operate, and govern one or more community colleges within its district as

specified. Requires the governing board of each community college district to take numerous actions, including to determine the district's academic calendar, including the holidays it will observe.

Existing law establishes the CSU system, made of 23 campuses, and bestows upon the CSU Trustees, through the Board of Trustees, the power, duties, and functions with respect to the management, administration, and control of the CSU system.

Existing law establishes the UC as a public trust to be administered by the Regents and grants the Regents full powers of organization and governance subject only to legislative control as necessary to ensure the security of funds, compliance with terms of its endowments, and the statutory requirements around competitive bidding and contracts, sales of property, and the purchase of materials, goods, and services.

Proposed Law: This bill provides that, 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 rescheduling the first day of class and high school graduation, if applicable, on a date for which the governing board of the school district, the county office of 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.

This bill requires a governing board of a school district, a county office of education, or the governing body of a charter school to actively seek input from the affected community and consider any other relevant sources to ensure inclusive public participation in considering and making the determination in 1).

This bill provides that, commencing with the 2026-27 academic year, the governing board of a community college and the CSU shall, and the UC is requested to, make good faith, reasonable efforts 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. This bill allows a person who has suffered harm as a result of a violation of this section may bring a civil action and provides that the remedy available in that action shall be injunctive relief. The bill specifies that to prevail in an action for injunctive relief, the plaintiff shall demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the violation was due to bad faith, willful misconduct, or callous disregard on the part of the defendant.

This bill provides that "institutional event" means an event on the academic or institutional calendar for which students are mandated to attend, including, but not limited to: student orientation, student housing move-in day, academic examination days, the beginning or ending of an academic term, and commencement ceremonies. The bill provides that, in considering and making a determination of which dates to avoid, the governing board of a community college and the CSU shall, and the UC is requested to, seek input from the student and faculty organizations on campus prior to the calendaring of institutional events.

This bill requires 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 due to the ritual observance of a religious, cultural, or ancestral holiday, including, but not limited to: Eid-al-Adha, Eid-al-Fitr, Feast of the Nativity, Maha Shivaratri, the first and last two days of Pesach, also known as Passover, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Diwali, and Dussehra. This bill allows a person who has suffered harm as a result of a violation of this section may bring a civil action and provides that the remedy available in that action shall be injunctive relief. The bill specifies that to prevail in an action for injunctive relief, the plaintiff shall demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the violation was due to bad faith, willful misconduct, or callous disregard on the part of the defendant.

This bill provides that a legislative body is encouraged to make 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, the holidays specified above.

Related Legislation: AB 268 (Kalra, Chapter 358, Statutes of 2025) adds Diwali to the list of state holidays, and authorizes public schools to close and state employees to take a certain type of leave in recognition of Diwali.

AB 2883 (Low, Chapter 972, Statutes of 2023) authorizes each campus of the CSU, and requested each campus of the UC, to observe a specified date, known as "Lunar New Year," as a holiday, and be closed on that day.

Staff Comments: This bill does not require K-12 schools to change their calendars but rather requires them to consider making efforts to avoid scheduling the first day of class and high school graduation on a date 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. Postsecondary educational institutions would be required to make good faith, reasonable efforts when developing academic calendars to avoid calendaring an institutional event on a date for which the institution of higher education knows 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. This bill also requires state agencies, and encourages local agencies, to make good faith, reasonable efforts to avoid scheduling specified business on dates that the agencies 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, specified holidays. According to the author, "No one should have to choose between practicing their faith and their education. Unfortunately, this has been an ongoing dilemma for minority communities when important meetings and academic milestones are scheduled on significant religious or cultural holidays. AB 395 takes a proactive approach to respecting the diverse traditions of Californians, and furthers the intent and purpose of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by ensuring that state institutions work for all communities."