



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB3036

Introduced 1/28/2026, by Sen. Laura Ellman

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.208  
105 ILCS 5/26-1

from Ch. 122, par. 26-1

Amends the School Code. Provides that the statement included in the State Board of Education's list of the identified days and dates of cultural, religious, or other observances shall also encourage schools to avoid, if possible, scheduling significant academic deadlines or major school events on the identified days and dates of cultural, religious, or other observances. Provides that upon the posting and distribution of the list, a district superintendent shall distribute information to all faculty and staff about upcoming days and dates of cultural, religious, or other observances. Requires these days and dates to also be acknowledged and posted on official school or administrative calendars. With respect to a child being excused from attending school because of religious reasons, provides that if the exact date of the absence cannot be determined more than 5 days in advance due to the use of a lunar or other nonfixed calendar, notice of the child's absence shall be given as soon as reasonably possible. Provides that any child excused from attending school because of religious reasons shall be granted reasonable academic accommodations without penalty. Requires a district superintendent's procedures regarding a student's absence for religious reasons to include guidance on adjustments to academic schedules, assignments, or major school events.

LRB104 18421 LNS 31863 b

STATE MANDATES  
ACT MAY REQUIRE  
REIMBURSEMENT

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by renumbering and  
5 changing Section 2-3.206 and by changing Section 26-1 as  
6 follows:

7 (105 ILCS 5/2-3.208)

8 Sec. 2-3.208 ~~2-3.206~~. Scheduling guidance for major school  
9 events.

10 (a) As used in this Section, "major school event" means a  
11 school sanctioned or sponsored event that is part of a school  
12 or school district's locally created school calendar for the  
13 year, including, but not limited to, events or activities that  
14 would be difficult for a student to make up.

15 (b) The State Board of Education, in consultation with  
16 stakeholders, shall identify dates during the year of cultural  
17 or religious significance to the student population and in  
18 which students may have out-of-school commitments or otherwise  
19 be unable to participate in a major school event.

20 By July 1 of each year, the State Board of Education shall  
21 prominently post on its website and distribute to each school  
22 district a nonexhaustive list of the identified days and dates  
23 of cultural, religious, or other observances for, at a

1 minimum, the school year that begins in the next calendar year  
2 as a resource for making scheduling decisions for major school  
3 events. The list shall include a statement encouraging schools  
4 to be mindful of the days and dates of cultural, religious, or  
5 other observances that impact student participation as schools  
6 plan major school events. The statement shall also encourage  
7 schools to avoid, if possible, scheduling significant academic  
8 deadlines or major school events on the identified days and  
9 dates of cultural, religious, or other observances.

10 (c) The list of cultural, religious, or other observances  
11 under subsection (b) shall additionally include a statement  
12 indicating that the list is only for scheduling guidance  
13 purposes and does not affect a student's right to be excused  
14 from attendance because of the observance of a religious  
15 holiday pursuant to Section 26-2b of this Code, regardless of  
16 whether the religious holiday appears on the list.

17 Upon the posting and distribution of the list, the State  
18 Board of Education shall also inform school districts that the  
19 list is nonexhaustive and that a school district may include  
20 additional days and dates on its locally created school  
21 calendars based on community feedback or demographics.

22 The State Board of Education shall additionally distribute  
23 the list each year to relevant associations or entities as  
24 determined by the State Board of Education.

25 (d) Upon the posting and distribution of the list under  
26 subsection (b), a district superintendent shall distribute

1 information to all faculty and staff about upcoming days and  
2 dates of cultural, religious, or other observances. These days  
3 and dates shall also be acknowledged and posted on official  
4 school or administrative calendars.

5 (Source: P.A. 104-115, eff. 8-1-25; revised 10-10-25.)

6 (105 ILCS 5/26-1) (from Ch. 122, par. 26-1)

7 Sec. 26-1. Compulsory school age; exemptions. Whoever has  
8 custody or control of any child (i) between the ages of 7 and  
9 17 years (unless the child has already graduated from high  
10 school) for school years before the 2014-2015 school year or  
11 (ii) between the ages of 6 (on or before September 1) and 17  
12 years (unless the child has already graduated from high  
13 school) beginning with the 2014-2015 school year shall cause  
14 such child to attend some public school in the district  
15 wherein the child resides the entire time it is in session  
16 during the regular school term, except as provided in Section  
17 10-19.1, and during a required summer school program  
18 established under Section 10-22.33B; provided, that the  
19 following children shall not be required to attend the public  
20 schools:

21 1. Any child attending a private or a parochial school  
22 where children are taught the branches of education taught  
23 to children of corresponding age and grade in the public  
24 schools, and where the instruction of the child in the  
25 branches of education is in the English language;

1           2. Any child who is physically or mentally unable to  
2 attend school, such disability being certified to the  
3 county or district truant officer by a competent physician  
4 licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in  
5 all its branches, a chiropractic physician licensed under  
6 the Medical Practice Act of 1987, a licensed advanced  
7 practice registered nurse, a licensed physician assistant,  
8 or a Christian Science practitioner residing in this State  
9 and listed in the Christian Science Journal; or who is  
10 excused for temporary absence for cause by the principal  
11 or teacher of the school which the child attends, with  
12 absence for cause by illness being required to include the  
13 mental or behavioral health of the child for up to 5 days  
14 for which the child need not provide a medical note, in  
15 which case the child shall be given the opportunity to  
16 make up any school work missed during the mental or  
17 behavioral health absence and, after the second mental  
18 health day used, may be referred to the appropriate school  
19 support personnel; the exemptions in this paragraph (2) do  
20 not apply to any female who is pregnant or the mother of  
21 one or more children, except where a female is unable to  
22 attend school due to a complication arising from her  
23 pregnancy and the existence of such complication is  
24 certified to the county or district truant officer by a  
25 competent physician;

26           3. Any child necessarily and lawfully employed

1 according to the provisions of the Child Labor Law of 2024  
2 may be excused from attendance at school by the county  
3 superintendent of schools or the superintendent of the  
4 public school which the child should be attending, on  
5 certification of the facts by and the recommendation of  
6 the school board of the public school district in which  
7 the child resides. In districts having part-time  
8 continuation schools, children so excused shall attend  
9 such schools at least 8 hours each week;

10 4. Any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in  
11 attendance at confirmation classes;

12 5. Any child absent from a public school on a  
13 particular day or days or at a particular time of day for  
14 the reason that he is unable to attend classes or to  
15 participate in any examination, study, or work  
16 requirements on a particular day or days or at a  
17 particular time of day because of religious reasons,  
18 including the observance of a religious holiday or  
19 participation in religious instruction, or because the  
20 tenets of his religion forbid secular activity on a  
21 particular day or days or at a particular time of day. A  
22 school board may require the parent or guardian of a child  
23 who is to be excused from attending school because of  
24 religious reasons to give notice, not exceeding 5 days, of  
25 the child's absence to the school principal or other  
26 school personnel, except that if the exact date of the

1 absence cannot be determined more than 5 days in advance  
2 due to the use of a lunar or other nonfixed calendar,  
3 notice shall be given as soon as reasonably possible. Any  
4 child excused from attending school under this paragraph 5  
5 shall not be required to submit a written excuse for such  
6 absence after returning to school. Any child excused from  
7 attending school under this paragraph 5 shall be granted  
8 reasonable academic accommodations without penalty. A  
9 district superintendent shall develop and distribute to  
10 schools appropriate procedures regarding a student's  
11 absence for religious reasons, including, but not limited  
12 to, guidance on adjustments to academic schedules,  
13 assignments, or major school events, how schools are  
14 notified of a student's impending absence for religious  
15 reasons, and the requirements of Section 26-2b of this  
16 Code;

17 6. Any child 16 years of age or older who (i) submits  
18 to a school district evidence of necessary and lawful  
19 employment pursuant to paragraph 3 of this Section and  
20 (ii) is enrolled in a graduation incentives program  
21 pursuant to Section 26-16 of this Code or an alternative  
22 learning opportunities program established pursuant to  
23 Article 13B of this Code;

24 7. A child in any of grades 6 through 12 absent from a  
25 public school on a particular day or days or at a  
26 particular time of day for the purpose of sounding "Taps"

1 at a military honors funeral held in this State for a  
2 deceased veteran. In order to be excused under this  
3 paragraph 7, the student shall notify the school's  
4 administration at least 2 days prior to the date of the  
5 absence and shall provide the school's administration with  
6 the date, time, and location of the military honors  
7 funeral. The school's administration may waive this 2-day  
8 notification requirement if the student did not receive at  
9 least 2 days advance notice, but the student shall notify  
10 the school's administration as soon as possible of the  
11 absence. A student whose absence is excused under this  
12 paragraph 7 shall be counted as if the student attended  
13 school for purposes of calculating the average daily  
14 attendance of students in the school district. A student  
15 whose absence is excused under this paragraph 7 must be  
16 allowed a reasonable time to make up school work missed  
17 during the absence. If the student satisfactorily  
18 completes the school work, the day of absence shall be  
19 counted as a day of compulsory attendance and he or she may  
20 not be penalized for that absence; and

21 8. Any child absent from a public school on a  
22 particular day or days or at a particular time of day for  
23 the reason that his or her parent or legal guardian is an  
24 active duty member of the uniformed services and has been  
25 called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately  
26 returned from deployment to a combat zone or

1 combat-support postings. Such a student shall be granted 5  
2 days of excused absences in any school year and, at the  
3 discretion of the school board, additional excused  
4 absences to visit the student's parent or legal guardian  
5 relative to such leave or deployment of the parent or  
6 legal guardian. In the case of excused absences pursuant  
7 to this paragraph 8, the student and parent or legal  
8 guardian shall be responsible for obtaining assignments  
9 from the student's teacher prior to any period of excused  
10 absence and for ensuring that such assignments are  
11 completed by the student prior to his or her return to  
12 school from such period of excused absence.

13 Any child from a public middle school or high school,  
14 subject to guidelines established by the State Board of  
15 Education, shall be permitted by a school board one school  
16 day-long excused absence per school year for the child who is  
17 absent from school to engage in a civic event. The school board  
18 may require that the student provide reasonable advance notice  
19 of the intended absence to the appropriate school  
20 administrator and require that the student provide  
21 documentation of participation in a civic event to the  
22 appropriate school administrator.

23 (Source: P.A. 102-266, eff. 1-1-22; 102-321, eff. 1-1-22;  
24 102-406, eff. 8-19-21; 102-813, eff. 5-13-22; 102-981, eff.  
25 1-1-23; 103-721, eff. 1-1-25.)