

Celebrate Everything: Holidays, Celebrations and Days of Recognition

As the Louis Riel School Division works to create a culture of equity and inclusion, it is important that we develop an understanding of the people in our community. One way to do this is through learning about the many celebrations that are often left off of traditional school calendars. This list is by no means exhaustive and if you have information to add, we encourage you to contact us using the [contact form](#). To learn more about how celebrating everything can enhance a sense of belonging, check out this [article](#) by Dr. Abdulrehman, a local psychologist who focuses on diversity and inclusion.

Date(s)	Diversity/Culture Celebration	Explanation
January 1	New Year's Day	Celebrated within most Western countries.
January 1	Oshogatsu	Japanese New Year
January 1	Sudanese Independence Day	This is the National Day of Sudan and commemorates independence from Egypt and Britain on this day in 1956.
January 6-7	Orthodox Christmas	
January 13	Malanka	Ukrainian and Belarusian New Year's Eve.
January 13 or 14	Lohri	A popular Punjabi folk festival celebrating the arrival of longer days after the winter solstice.
January 14 or 15	Makar Sankranti or Maghi	The day of Maghi is observed to honour the heroic fight of the Chali Mukte, or the Forty Liberated Ones, who sacrificed their own lives defending an attack by the imperial army marching in pursuit of Guru Gobind Singh.
January 26	Republic Day of India	Republic Day is a public holiday in India, when the country marks and celebrates the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect.
January 27	International Holocaust Remembrance Day	A day to raise remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust.
January/February	Lunar New Year (date changes)	Lunar New Year is celebrated by most Asian countries.
	Chinese New Year (date changes)	The festival signals the beginning of spring, and the start of a new year according to the Chinese lunar calendar.
	Saraswati Puja (date changes)	A Hindu religious event offering prayers to the Goddess of Education.
February	Louis Riel Day aka Family Day (date changes)	The day is named in honour of Louis David Riel, a spiritual and political leader of one of Canada's 3 largest indigenous people, the Métis. He is considered the founding father of Manitoba. It gives the habitants



		of the province of Manitoba in Canada the chance to celebrate family and community.
	Black History Month	Events and festivities that honour the legacy of Black Canadians and their communities.
	Ethnic Equality Month	An awareness month to honor the differences and commonalities we all bring to the table.
	Pink Shirt Day (date changes, last Wednesday of February every year)	Pink Shirt Day's mission is to create a more kind, inclusive world by raising awareness and funds for anti-bullying initiatives.
	Ganesh Jayanti (date changes)	A Hindu festival celebrating the birthday of Ganesha, the lord of wisdom
	Mardi Gras (date changes)	Celebrated in France on Shrove Tuesday marking the close of the pre-Lenten season. The French name Mardi Gras means Fat Tuesday, from the custom of using all the fats in the home before Lent in preparation for fasting and abstinence.
	Lantern Festival (date changes)	A Chinese festival that people celebrate with lanterns marks the final day of the traditional Chinese New Year celebrations.
	Maghi-Purnima (date changes)	A Hindu festival especially for worshippers of Lord Vishnu. Millions of devotees take a holy bath on this day, they also perform charity work.
	Festival du Voyageur	Western Canada's largest Francophone event that continues to showcase the joie de vivre and spirit of the Voyageur.
February - April	Lent (dates change)	Lent is a 40-day season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday.
February 11	International Day of Women and Girls in Science	Annual observance to promote the full and equal access and participation of females in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields.
February 14	Valentine's Day	An annual festival to celebrate romantic love, friendship and admiration.
February 15	International Angelman Day	International Angelman Day spreads awareness for a rare neuro-genetic disorder called Angelman syndrome. The day also encourages us better to understand this condition and the necessity for more research.
February 21	International Mother Language Day	Worldwide annual observance to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism.
February 28	Rare Disease Day	Rare Disease Day is an observance held on the last day of February to raise awareness for rare diseases and improve access to treatment and medical representation for individuals with rare diseases and their families.
February/March	Carnival in Ecuador (dates change)	Carnival in Ecuador is a popular national holiday as the original tradition of this festival lies with the Huarangas



March

	natives who threw flowers, water and flour in honor of the second moon of the year.
Ayyám-i-Há	A period of celebration devoted to charity, gift-giving and festivities prior to the annual period of fasting.
Maha Shivarati (date changes)	One of the major festivals in Hinduism dedicated to worshipping Lord Shiva. People celebrate Maha Shivratri by fasting, keeping vigil and doing pujas at homes and temples.
Purim (date changes)	The Jewish community in Persia was saved from genocide on the festival of Purim. Purim includes celebrating and giving charity, with friends.
Holi (date changes)	Holi is a Hindu festival that celebrates spring, love, and new life.
Hola Mohalla (dates change)	During this festival, processions are organised in the form of army type columns accompanied by war-drums and standard-bearers and proceeding to a given spot or moving in state from one gurdwara to another.
Francophone Heritage Month	The celebration of the French language.
Bahá'í Naw-Rúz	Every year Baha'is celebrate Naw-Ruz, the beginning of a new year in the Baha'i Calendar. Naw Ruz marks the end of the 19-day Baha'i Fast, which is a period of reflection and profound spiritual reinvigoration. Naw-Ruz is a celebration of a "spiritual springtime" that symbolizes both individual renewal and mankind's revitalization.
The Month of Fasting	Bahá'is from the age of 15 abstain from food and drink between sunrise and sunset. There are exemptions, including for those who are ill, elderly, traveling, pregnant or breastfeeding.
March 1	Zero Discrimination Day
	Highlights how people can become informed about and promote inclusion, compassion, peace and, above all, a movement for change.
March 3	Hinamatsuri/ Doll's Day/ Girl's Day
	A day to celebrate female children and pray for their continued health and happiness in Japan. Families display ceramic dolls dressed in the ornate, decorative robes of the ancient imperial court.
March 8	International Women's Day
	A day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.
March 17	St. Patrick's Day
	Saint Patrick's Day is a cultural and religious celebration held on the death date of Saint Patrick, the foremost patron saint of Ireland.
March 20 or 21	Kurdish Newroz
	Newroz is the Kurdish celebration of the Persian new year holiday "Nowruz." Over the years, Newroz has come to represent new beginnings, as well as an opportunity to support the Kurdish cause.
March 21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
	Observed annually, it commemorates the day police in Sharpeville, South Africa, opened fire and killed 69



March/April

April

April 1

April 2

April 4

April 4 or 5

April 12

April 13 or 14

April 14/15

April 15

April 20-21

		people at a peaceful demonstration against apartheid “pass laws” in 1960.
	Laylat al-Qadr	The night in which the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad
	Celebrate Diversity Month	It strives to help people gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other and their differences. To celebrate April diversity celebrations, consider new ways you can integrate diversity into your life.
	Good Friday (date changes)	Christian holiday commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus/
	Easter (date changes)	Christian holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus/
	Passover (date changes)	Passover, is a Jewish holiday celebrating the exodus of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
	Velykden – Orthodox Easter (date changes)	Ukrainian Easter.
	Hanuman Jayanti (date changes)	Hanuman Janmotsav is a Hindu religious festival that celebrates the birth of Hindu God Hanuman, who is highly venerated throughout India and Nepal.
	Ramadan (dates change)	Observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection, and community.
	Autism Awareness Month	April is World Autism Month, an annual opportunity for a dedicated conversation about autism spectrum disorder.
	April Fool’s Day	April Fool’s Day is observed in many Western countries and is an occasion for playing tricks.
	World Autism Awareness Day	A day to acknowledge and advocate for the rights of individuals with autism around the world. The goal of World Autism Day is to increase awareness about Autism signs, symptoms, and information.
	Refugee Rights Day	A day to bring attention to the 1985 Supreme Court of Canada ruling recognizing that refugee claimants are entitled to fundamental justice.
	Qingming Festival	Qingming Festival is when Chinese people traditionally visit ancestral tombs to sweep them.
	International Day of Pink	The International Day of Pink is a worldwide anti-bullying and anti-homophobia event held annually during the second week of April.
	Vaisakhi	A harvest festival mostly celebrated in northern India before it became important to Sikhs.
	Polia Boishakh	Celebrates Bengali New Year’s Day.
	Guru Nanak’s Birthday	He was the founder of Sikhism and is the first of the ten Sikh Gurus. His birth is celebrated worldwide as Guru Nanak Gurpurab.
	Eid al-Fitr	Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting, and is celebrated during the first



		three days of Shawwāl, the 10 th month of the Islamic calendar.
April 21	First Day of Ridvan	A 12-day festival in the Bahá'í faith. It is the day on which Bahá'u'lláh declared His mission as a Messenger of God.
April 22	Earth Day	An annual event to demonstrate support for environmental protection.
April/May	Yom Hashoah (dates change)	Holocaust Remembrance observed by Jews in synagogues and at other Jewish community events.
May	Mother's Day (date changes)	Mother's Day is a celebration honoring the mother of the family or individual, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society.
	Asian Heritage Month	Recognizes the contributions and influence of Asians and Pacific Islanders to the history, culture, and achievements of Canada.
	Jewish Heritage Month	Recognize the contributions of Jews in Canada's social, economic, political, and culture fabric. To remember, celebrate, and educate future generations.
	Asian Gold Ribbon Day (date changes)	A campaign for social change and to initiate wide-spread visibility against anti-Asian hate and racism.
May 1	Ukrainian Labour Day aka May Day	May Day is an annual Ukrainian national holiday to honor workers' rights and achievements.
May 1	May Day aka International Workers' Day	May Day is massively celebrated in Cuba with workers marching with their colleagues to the Revolution Square, where special cultural and musical events are held as well as speeches from leading figures.
May 5	Red Dress Day	A day to bring awareness and a call for Canadians to speak out on violence against Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people,
May 5	Cinco de Mayo	Honours Mexico's defeat of the French army.
May 9	Ukrainian Victory Day	It is a day to remember victory over the Nazi regime during World War II.
May 16	Day of the Boy Child	This is a day dedicated for the whole world to focus on boys and their wellbeing.
May 21	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	To promote diversity and dialogue issues.
May 24	Declaration of the Báb	A day to celebrate Bab, who was the forerunner of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith.
May 29	Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh	A day marking the passing of Bahá'u'lláh in 1892.
June	National Indigenous History Month	Time to recognize the rich history, heritage, resilience, and diversity of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Peoples.
	Pride Month	Historically in Canada, Pride gatherings emerged from large-scale protests for 2SLGBTQAI+ rights and freedoms. Today communities and allies come



		together to highlight the resilience, celebrate the talent and recognize the contributions of 2SLGBTQAI+ communities.
	Dragon Boat Festival (date changes)	This festival is made to commemorate the attempt of rescuing Qu Yuan, a Chinese poet and politician. The local people start the tradition of throwing sacrificial cooked rice into the river for Qu Yuan, while others believed that the rice would prevent the fishes in the river from eating Qu Yuan's body.
	Father's Day (date changes)	Father's Day is a holiday of honouring fatherhood and paternal bonds, as well as the influence of fathers in society.
	Race Unity Day (date changes)	To combat racism by focusing attention on racial prejudice.
	Festa Junina (June Festival)	A set of religious celebrations in Brazil. This national tradition celebrates the end of the rainy seasons, the rural life, and the beginning of harvest.
June 12	Philippines Independence Day	A day commemorating the declaration of Philippine independence from Spain in 1898.
June 20	World Refugee Day	To celebrate and honour refugees from around the world.
June 20 or 21	Summer Solstice	
June 21	National Indigenous Peoples Day	A day recognizing and celebrating the culture and contributions of the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Indigenous Peoples of Canada.
June 23-24	Saint John's Eve	Saint John's Eve, is the eve of celebration before the Feast Day of St John the Baptist.
June 24	Midsummer Celebration	Midsummer is a celebration of the season of summer usually held at a date around the summer solstice. It has pagan pre-Christian roots in Europe.
June 27	Canadian Multiculturalism Day	Honours the many cultural communities that help build a strong and vibrant society.
June 28	Constitution Day	Constitution Day is a Ukrainian public holiday. It commemorates the anniversary of the approval by the Verkhovna Rada of the Constitution of Ukraine.
June/July	Hajj (dates change)	The pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, which every adult Muslim must make at least once in his or her lifetime.
	Eid al-Adha or The Feast of Sacrifice (dates change)	Is celebrated by Muslims all over the world for three to four days that involves animal sacrifice, prayers, and family gatherings.
	Hijri New Year or Islamic New Year (date changes)	The day that begins the new lunar Hijri year.
July 1	Canada Day	Canada Day is a federal statutory holiday celebrating the anniversary of Canadian Confederation.



July 5	Independence Day	Independence Day, also known as the Fifth of July, is the national independence holiday of Venezuela,
July 9 or 10	Martyrdom of the Báb	This holiday commemorates the 1850 execution of the co-founder of the Baha'i faith, the Báb, in Persia.
July/August	Íslendingadagurinn (dates change)	A celebration of Icelandic culture in Manitoba.
August	Raksha Bandhan /Rakhi (date changes)	Hindu celebration of the unique bond between a brother and his sister. The festival is observed on the full-moon day in the month of Shravan.
August 1	Emancipation Day	The anniversary of when Britain abolished slavery in the British Empire.
August 9	International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples	To raise awareness and protect the rights of the world's Indigenous population.
August 13-15	Bon Odori/ Obon Festival	During Obon, people take time to honor their ancestors. It is believed that the deceased spirits of relatives and loved ones come back to visit the living on these days.
August 15	Independence Day	Indian Independence Day commemorating the nation's independence from the United Kingdom on 15 August 1947.
August 24	Independence Day	Independence Day of Ukraine is the main state holiday in modern Ukraine in honour of the Declaration of Independence of 1991.
September	Mid-Autumn Festival (dates change)	The tradition of this holiday is focusing on family reunion, people usually celebrate this holiday with eating mooncakes and gazing the full moon. (The moon is always full on this day)
	Ukrainian Heritage Month	
	Rosh HaShanah (date changes)	Jewish New Year.
September 11 or 12	Geez	Eritrean New Year
September 16	Mexican Independence Day	A day to celebrate the moment Father Hidalgo called for Mexico's liberation for Spain in 1810.
September 27	World Tourism Day	Promotes tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability and offers leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide.
September 30	Truth and Reconciliation Day/ Orange Shirt Day	A statutory holiday to recognize the legacy of the Canadian Indian residential school system.
September/October	Sukkot (dates change)	Sukkot is a Jewish festival and is both an agricultural festival of thanksgiving and a commemoration of the forty-year period during which the children of Israel wandered in the desert after leaving slavery in Egypt, living in temporary shelters as they traveled.
	Yom Kippur/ Day of Atonement	The holiest day of the year in Judaism. A chance to change fate through prayer, repentance, and charity.



	(date changes)	
	Navaratri (dates change)	A biannual Hindu festival honouring the Mother Goddess Durga for killing the demon, Mahishasura.
	Eid Milad ul-Nabi (date changes)	The birthday of the Prophet of Islam, Hazrat Mohammad Saheb.
October	Oktoberfest	These popular celebrations, which feature beer and German food, are an attempt to reproduce the Bavarian sense of <i>gemütlichkeit</i> —cordiality.
	Thanksgiving (date changes)	Thanksgiving is an annual Canadian holiday and harvest festival, held on the second Monday in October, celebrating the harvest and other blessings of the past year.
	Latin American Heritage Month	An opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about the outstanding achievements and contributions of Hispanic people.
	Vijayadashami/Durga Puja/Dussehra (date changes)	An important Hindu festival which signifies the victory of good over evil. This annual festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervour by Hindus across the world on the tenth day of the Navratras.
	Dyslexia Awareness Month	In addition to raising awareness, Dyslexia Awareness Month helps society understand dyslexia better, which in turn helps those with it.
October 11	Day of the Girl Child	The purpose of this day is to spread awareness about the gender-based discriminations that girls face in our society and to bring change in the attitude towards girls.
October 31	Halloween	Halloween’s origins can be traced back to the ancient Celtic festival known as Samhain, which was held on November 1 in contemporary calendars. It was believed that on that day, the souls of the dead returned to their homes, so people dressed in costumes and lit bonfires to ward off spirits.
October/November	Diwali (dates change)	A festival of lights and one of the major festivals celebrated by Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs. The festival usually lasts five days and is celebrated during the Hindu lunisolar month Kartika.
	Bhai Phonta/ Bhai Dooj/ Bhai Tika (date changes)	The festival is centered on rituals where brothers and sisters honour each other. Sisters bless their brothers for a long, happy and healthy life. Brothers on the other hand promise to protect their sisters and exchange of gifts happen between them.
November	Guru Nanak Gurburab on Katak Pooranmashi (date changes)	Sikh celebration of Guru Nanak’s birthday.
	American Thanksgiving	Celebrates the harvest and other blessings of the past year. Thanksgiving is modeled on a 1621 harvest feast shared by the English colonists (Pilgrims) of Plymouth and the Wampanoag people.



November 2	The Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos)	A Mexican holiday where families welcome back the souls of their deceased relatives for a brief reunion that includes food, drink and celebration.
November 11	Remembrance Day	Remembrance Day is a memorial day observed by the Commonwealth since the end of the First World War in order to remember all those who have fought and died in the line of duty to keep us free.
November 30	Independence Day	This day marks Barbados' Independence from the United Kingdom.
December	Hanukkah (dates change)	A Jewish festival honouring the recovery of Jerusalem and subsequent rededication of the Second Temple at the beginning of the Maccabean revolt against the Seleucid Empire in the 2nd century BCE.
	Universal Human Rights Month	People are encouraged to come together and stand up for equality, justice, and the dignity of all humans.
December 6	Saint Nicholas Day	Marks the anniversary of the death of the third-century Catholic saint who inspired the modern versions of Santa Claus.
December 10	Human Rights Day	To honour the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
December 12-24	Jólasveinar (Yule Lad Visits)	Kids don't just get a visit from Santa Claus on Christmas Eve. Iceland also has the 13 Yule Lads ("Jólasveinar"), who descend from the mountains to wreak mischief in the nights leading up to Christmas.
December 13	Sankta Lucia Day	St. Lucia's Day, festival of lights celebrated in Sweden, Norway, and the Swedish-speaking areas of Finland on December 13 in honour of St. Lucia (St. Lucy).
December 16-24	Las Posadas	A Mexican religious festival honouring the journey that Joseph and Mary made from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a place to give birth to Jesus.
December 18	International Migrants Day	Aims to raise awareness about the challenges and difficulties of international migration.
December 21/22	Winter Solstice	
December 24	Christmas Eve	Christmas Eve is observed as a full or partial holiday in anticipation of Christmas Day.
December 25	Christmas Day	Christian celebration of Jesus' birth.
December 26- January 1	Kwanzaa	Kwanzaa is a weeklong celebration honoring African heritage in African American culture.
December 31	New Year's Eve	The Greeks celebrated the new year on the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year.
No dates associated	Griha Pravesh Puja	A Hindu act of worship that is usually undertaken before moving into a new house to protect it from any negative energy.



Quinceañera

A quinceañera is a celebration of a girl's 15th birthday. It has pre-Columbian roots in Mexico and is widely celebrated by girls throughout Hispanic culture.

Iso Omo Lorukou

A naming ceremony in Nigeria eight days after the baby is born.