



New York Public Schools to Close for Muslim Holidays

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, who once considered himself a communist, has announced that the public schools of the city will be closed for two Muslim holy days, Eid al-Fitr (celebration shown) and Eid al-Adha. De Blasio had pledged as a candidate in 2013 to close schools on the two Muslim holidays. And so, his announcement is a fulfillment of a campaign promise to his Muslim constituents. According to the *New York Times*:



The announcement was all the more striking for its timing, as Muslim-Americans face fresh scrutiny in the wake of terrorist attacks in Europe and new violence in the Middle East. In January, Duke University abruptly canceled plans to start broadcasting the Muslim call to prayer from the school's chapel bell tower after threats of violence.... Last week, three Brooklyn men were arrested and charged with plotting to join the Islamic State terrorist organization.

New York, of course, was also the victim of the worst terrorist attack in American history. But it is also home to a large and growing Muslim population, and the mayor's announcement suggests that that population has reached a threshold where Muslim holidays should be given the same stature as (say) Christmas by the government.

The *New York Times* further reports:

The exact timing of the holy days changes year to year because they are based on a lunar calendar. In the coming school year, classes will start a day earlier in September to account for Eid al-Adha, which falls on Sept. 24, a Thursday, in 2016. Eid al-Fitr falls during the summer.

In other words, the school closures will affect only one day in the regular school calendar. Eid al-Adha is the Festival of Sacrifice commemorating the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son to God. That episode is in the Old Testament (Genesis 22), but it is not a Jewish holiday. Eid al-Fitr marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. It is signaled by the sighting of the crescent moon, which is the symbol of Islam.

Nationally, some six school districts have granted days off for the two Muslim holidays. The five others are Cambridge, Massachusetts; Dearborn, Michigan; Burlington, Vermont; and Paterson and South Brunswick, New Jersey. In Montgomery County, Maryland, officials decided to eliminate all religious holidays in their 2015-16 school calendar rather than recognize the Muslim holidays. Rosh Hashana and Christmas would simply be considered days off.

Mayor de Blasio also announced that schools would be closed on the Chinese Lunar New Year in deference to his Chinese-American constituents. He is also under pressure from Indian-Americans to close the schools on the Hindu festival of Diwali.

Now that the Muslims have achieved victory in America's largest city with school closings on the Muslim holidays, will they then insist that New York's schoolchildren be taught something about the Muslim religion? Should they not be taught that what happened on 9/11 is not a true reflection of this



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very peaceful religion? In fact, this benign idea has already found its way into the curricula of a number of public schools across the country.

Indeed, there is a website, “Islam in Our Schools,” the purpose of which is to expose to parents and the public “the light treatment and revisionist history given Islam in public schools.” Here’s an interesting case revealing the arrogance of public school administrators:

The Thomas More Law Center (TMLC) today announced its representation of John Kevin Wood, and his wife, Melissa, in their battle with La Plata High School in Maryland over the Islamic indoctrination of their 11th-grade daughter in her World History class. Their daughter was required to complete assignments where she had to affirm that “There is no god but Allah” and the other Five Pillars of Islam.

The case gained national attention when the school banned John Wood from entering school property after he objected to the religion of Islam being taught in his daughter’s history class and demanded that she be given an alternative assignment. The school refused.

Wood, a former Marine who served in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and lost friends in that action, saw firsthand the destruction caused in the name of Allah and that Islam is not “a religion of peace;” and he would not budge from his position.

Commenting on the case, Richard Thompson, TMLC’s President and Chief Counsel stated: “Adding insult to injury, in an arrogant and unnecessary display of power, La Plata’s principal issued a written ‘No Trespass’ notice, which denied this former Marine who stood in harm’s way defending our country — which included the principal and her staff — any access to school grounds. The school’s actions not only dishonored John Wood’s service, but the service of all men and women in our Armed Forces who defended our nation from Islamic violence. True to his Marine training, John Wood stood his ground. He did not retreat. Yes, his daughter has received a failing grade in her World History Class. But the story is not yet over.”

The website cites other cases as well: At Porter Ridge High School in Indian Trail, North Carolina, students study Islam as part of the state-approved curriculum. A worksheet is part of the program in which assertions are made about Islam that are certainly questionable. It is all a subtle form of propaganda to get the student to become sympathetic to the Islamic faith.

On Florida’s Atlantic Coast, some 200 or more local parents and activists showed up at Volusia County’s school board meeting to protest the public school use of a textbook that devotes a whole chapter to Islam but exactly zero chapters to any other religions. The textbook, called simply “World History,” contains a 32-page chapter fondly devoted to “Muslim Civilizations.” Sections include descriptions of the Koran, the growth of the Muslim empire, and the Five Pillars of Islam.

Will these American public school students also be taught about the Barbary Wars, in which Americans were kidnapped and enslaved by Muslims in North Africa? It was America’s first war, under President Thomas Jefferson. How many public schools in America will teach about it?



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