



For many Muslims in Canada, Ramadan is more than a time of fasting and prayer—it is a period of deep reflection, generosity, and gratitude. Ramadan occurs in the 9th month of the Islamic calendar and is expected to begin on February 28, 2025, and will continue for 30 days, ending on March 29/30, 2025.

This is a time of high importance for Canada's Muslim population and extends through the diverse range of ethnicities, languages, and cultural backgrounds from regions such as South Asia, West Asia, Africa, and North America. This month is a time of giving, emphasizing compassion, generosity, empathy, and gratitude, as well as deep reflection and self-discipline. Fostering culturally aware practices in workplaces, schools, and leadership spaces helps create inclusive environments where everyone feels a sense of belonging and strengthens the broader school community.

Key Understandings:

Students and staff during Ramadan may partake in fasting from dawn to sunset, refraining from eating and drinking. Their fast begins after suhur, a pre-dawn meal, and ends at sunset with a meal also known as iftar. However, fasting is not required for children, the elderly, pregnant or nursing women, individuals who are ill, and travelers. It is important to remember not every person observes Ramadan the same way, and by opening spaces for conversations with students and families we are cultivating welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environments.

Fasting (Sawm):

- Observed from dawn to sunset, including abstaining from food, drink (including water), smoking, and sometimes medication.
- The breaking of the fast begins with suhur (pre-dawn meal), and ends at sunset with iftar, the meal to break the fast.

Prayer & Spiritual Commitment:

- Increased prayers, including Taraweeh (night prayers) at mosques.
- Potential request time or space for daily prayers to occur at school.

Physical & Mental Well-being:

- Energy levels fluctuate; productivity and focus may shift, and accommodations can be made.
- Avoid scheduling physically demanding activities that will harm or negatively impact students.

Day-to-Day Considerations:

- Flexible scheduling or break accommodations can support fasting individuals.
- Awareness of fasting can reduce unintentional exclusion, like mandatory lunch meetings.

Eid al-Fitr Celebration:

- Marks the end of Ramadan with prayers, community gatherings, and festivities.
- It is a significant holiday, and time off may be needed.

School Context:

Ramadan is a time to reaffirm our collective commitment to peaceful coexistence and to stand against all forms of hatred and discrimination around Islamophobia.

Acknowledge Ramadan Respectfully: Engage with student leaders, family/community to bring forward an understanding of this time of year and its meaning to your school community. Incorporate this into communications within your school site (i.e. announcements, weekly messages).

Accommodate Meetings & Workloads: Consider adjusting timing, reducing food-centered gatherings, and being flexible to the needs of students partaking in more strenuous activities (i.e. physical education).

Staff Awareness: Ensure all school staff are aware of Ramadan and can support students, both in and out of classroom activities. For example, designate a space in the school during lunch hour where students do not have to explain why they are not eating (or not fasting).

Offer Prayer Spaces: Designate quiet spaces for daily prayers.

Recognize Eid al-Fitr: Allow time off for celebration and avoid scheduling important events. Often you will hear “Eid Mubarak” as this is a point of connection and relational understanding that can be formed between individuals and communities.

Resources:

- [Toronto District School Board: Ramadan and the Duty to Accommodate](#)
- [We Are Teachers: What teachers should know about Ramadan.](#)
- [University of Alberta: Supports during the month of Ramadan](#)
- [Islamic Relief Canada – Educational resources on Ramadan](#)
- [Teaching Tolerance \(Learning for Justice\) – Strategies for inclusive classrooms during Ramadan](#)
- [Surrey School District: Guidance on Ramadan in Schools](#)
- [Government of Canada: A snapshot of the Muslim Population](#)

Suggested Readings:

