

Customary Celebrations & Activities in U.S. Elementary Public Schools



This parent resource supports inclusive participation and awareness for all students in customary celebrations that are typical in many US public schools.

This information about typical school celebrations is provided to further support EL students and their families for a better understanding of school activities they will witness and may choose to be a part of.

Customary Celebration Awareness enables families to choose if and how their students participate, ensuring everyone is included.

Typically, at the beginning of the school year, your student may receive a school or classroom calendar. Sometimes these are sent home in folders for each month of the school year.

On the calendar, you may notice holidays and special celebrations marked or highlighted. We encourage parents and caregivers to ask questions and learn about these customs so that you and your child have the chance to participate, if they so choose, in any upcoming celebrations that might be happening. Often, English learner students miss out on the chance to participate in events because they are unaware of school celebrations happening in the US school and classroom culture.

The following typical celebrations are described to make you aware of activities that might be typically celebrated within the school setting. Be sure to ask your school about any of these and how your school might be celebrating them.



Birthdays

Birthdays are typically personal celebrations, but many schools will have the option for you to bring cupcakes or celebrate your child's birthday in a special way if it falls on a school day. Be sure to ask the front office for their policies on birthdays. If allowed, many parents often

bring cupcakes or a special treat for the class. There is no cultural expectation beyond this. Your child might receive a special sticker or pencil at school or be sung to as a celebration of their birthday.



Federal Holidays

Elementary schools in the US typically observe and celebrate the following federal holidays by closing school for the day and/or by engaging in classroom and school activities such as patriotic music, flag ceremonies, and classroom discussions about the historical significance of the holidays.

Juneteenth (June 19th)

A federal holiday in celebration of the end of slavery in the United States. (No school on this day)

Independence Day (July 4th)

A federal holiday in celebration of United States independence from Britain. (No school on this day)

Memorial Day (May 29th)

A federal holiday honoring fallen soldiers who died while serving the United States. (No School on this day)

Veterans Day (November 11th)

A federal holiday honoring the service of those who have served in the military. (No School on this day)

President's Day (3rd Monday of February)

Celebrates the first president of the United States George Washington and all presidents after. (Usually no school on this day)



Back to School Events

At the beginning of the school year many elementary schools organize events to welcome students and their families. This is done so that parents can have the opportunity to meet teachers, tour the school, and learn about the upcoming year.

Open House

An event which allows parents to come tour the school and meet their children's teachers.

PTO (Parent Teacher Organization)

An organization where parents are given the opportunity to volunteer and work with other parents by organizing and helping their children and their classrooms for school events. This group usually holds monthly meetings for the adults.

Ice-cream and Socials

Events that offer dessert and fun activities for to celebrate and build relationships with the community.



More Celebrations

Black History Month (February)

February is recognized as Black History Month in the US and elementary schools often dedicate time to learning about the achievements and contributions of African Americans throughout history. This may involve classroom projects, presentations, guest speakers, or school performances.

Read Across America (March 2nd)

Read Across America is a celebration of reading (literacy) that happens to also be on the birthday of a well known children's author, Dr. Seuss. Elementary schools often celebrate this day with reading activities and dress up days inspired by characters from children's books. Your child will often be allowed to pick a book character they want to dress up as. Many of these costumes are made with items already in the home. Dressing up is an optional but fun activity that many schools offer. Check with your school about this!

Red Ribbon Week (in the month of October)

This month celebrates the prevention of drugs and violence. Sometimes your child will be allowed to be silly and have fun in their dress on different days of the week during this month. Examples of this might be: on Monday they can wear

silly socks, Tuesday have silly hair, Wednesday wear the color red, and so on. This is usually not mandatory and depends on the school guidelines. You can choose for your child to participate in these optional and fun activities.

Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is in celebration of love, and in school settings, students will often have a party or exchange cards and candy with one another. In some schools, students will be allowed to bring a cardboard shoe box to school and decorate it to hold the cards and candy they have received from their classmates. It is customary to bring a piece of candy or a note for classmates.

Easter

This holiday, at the school level, is a celebration of spring and, sometimes, the Easter bunny. The Easter bunny is a warm and fluffy character that may bring children plastic decorated eggs filled with candy. Your child might receive or make these easter eggs at school or even have an easter egg hunt. An easter egg hunt is where the adults hide the eggs for students to find and collect – often in a bucket or basket. This is done for fun and in celebration of spring.



School Activities

Science Fair

Organized event where your child creates and presents a science project for their classmates and the school community. Often times they award projects based on first, second, and third place.

Field Trips

Enriching activities for classes outside of school, that require parent permission. These often include trips to the zoo, museum and other educational places. Often parents can volunteer and join their child and class on these trips. Be sure to ask if this is a possibility at your school!

Winter Holiday Celebrations

Many elementary schools hold winter holiday celebrations to acknowledge various cultural traditions. These celebrations may include songs,

school performances, and displays that represent different winter holidays such as Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or Diwali. There is typically a winter break off of school, in celebration of this that is about a period of two weeks. Your child will be able to be at home with family celebrations during this time. The week before the break there are celebrations on designated days where kids make crafts or art work, and can even come to school in their pajamas for winter snacks and movies!

Class parties

A school day with a party that is organized by the teacher for the class.



End-of-Year Celebrations

Towards the end of the school year, elementary schools will often organize events to commemorate students' achievements. These celebrations may include the following:

Award/graduation ceremonies

A school wide celebration that parents can attend that has a ceremony of your student graduating to the next grade level and/or that presents awards of their character or academics recognized throughout the year.

Talent Shows

A school wide celebration that parents can attend where your student has signed up to participate in showcasing their talent like singing or dancing.

Field Day

An all-day school wide celebration that parents can attend that has multiple outdoor activities and games your child's class can participate in. There are often fun snacks that can be bought, or that are given, at these events.

It is important to note that celebrations may vary across different schools and districts, as they reflect the cultural diversity and local preferences of the communities they serve.

美国公立小学的习俗庆典和相关活动



这份为家长提供的资源，是用来帮助家长认识一些传统庆祝活动（通常在美国公立学校课堂上进行），并鼓励家长参与其中。

为了进一步支持英语为非母语的学生及其家长更好地了解学校庆祝活动、并更多地选择参加，我们提供这些典型学校庆祝活动的信息。

通过让家长选择参与这些习俗庆典，能提高庆典意识，并增加包容性。

通常，在学年初，学生会收到一份学校或教室的日历。有时候，这些日历会在学生的文件夹中，每个月被带回家。

在日历上，你会注意到有些节日和庆祝活动被特别标记，突出显示了。针对这些活动，我们鼓励家长能清楚理解活动形式和意义（不明白的情况，可以寻求帮助），以便您和您的孩子有机会选择参与即将举行的任何庆祝活动。由于对美国学校文化和课堂中的学校庆祝活动缺乏了解，有时候，英语为二语的学生会错过课堂上举办的活动选择的机会。

为了让您了解学校通常会庆祝的活动，以下是一些典型的庆祝活动。请确保向学校询问这些活动，并询问学校如何庆祝它们。



生日

生日通常是个人的庆祝活动，但许多学校会提供机会让您带一些纸杯蛋糕，或以特别的方式庆祝。如果孩子在上课的那天正好是生日。请务必向前台询问学校关于生日庆祝的政策。如果允许庆祝，许多家长通常会带来纸杯蛋糕或一些特别的食物，并送到班级。除此以外，没有其他文化意义上的期望。您的孩子可能会在学校收到特别的贴纸或铅笔，或者唱生日歌庆祝生日。



联邦假日

美国的小学通常会庆祝和纪念以下联邦假日。学生在这类假日会放假，并通过课堂和学校活动来参与庆祝，如演唱爱国音乐、举行升旗仪式，以及进行有关假日历史意义的课堂讨论。

Juneteenth (6月19日)

美国庆祝废除奴隶制度的联邦假日。（当天不上学）

Independence Day 独立日(7月4日)

美国庆祝脱离英国独立的联邦假日。（当天不上学）

Memorial Day 阵亡将士纪念日(5月29日)

美国纪念在服役期间牺牲的士兵的联邦假日。（当天不上学）

Veterans Day 退伍军人节(11月11日)

美国纪念曾在军队服役的人的联邦假日。（当天不上学）

President's Day 总统日(2月的第三个星期一)

美国庆祝第一任总统乔治·华盛顿和之后的所有总统的联邦假日。（当天不上学）



返校活动

在学年开始时，许多小学都会组织活动来欢迎学生和他们的家人。这样做是为了让家长有机会见到老师，参观学校并了解即将到来的一年。

Open House 开放日

开放日是一个让家长来参观学校并见到孩子的老师的活动。

PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) (家长教师组织) - 家长会

家长会是一个会议，让家长们有机会自愿参与并与其他家长合作，为学校活动组织和帮助他们的孩子和教室。

Ice-cream and Socials 冰淇淋和社交活动

冰淇淋和社交活动是为了庆祝和建立与社区的关系，提供甜点和有趣的活动。



更多的庆祝活动

Black History Month (February) 黑人历史月

在美国，二月被公认为黑人历史月，小学通常会抽出时间学习和了解非裔美国人在历史上的成就和贡献。这可能涉及到课堂项目、演讲、嘉宾讲师或学校表演。

Read Across America (March 2nd) (3月2日) - 跨美洲阅读活动

是一个庆祝阅读和识字的活动，碰巧也是著名儿童作家德鲁·苏斯博士的生日。小学通常会通过阅读活动和以儿童书籍角色为主题的着装日来庆祝这一天。通常情况下，孩子们可以选择一个他们想要扮演的书籍角色。许多这样的服装可以使用家中已有的物品制作。特别的着装活动是一个可选但有趣的活动，许多学校都提供。请向您的学校咨询相关信息！

Red Ribbon Week (in the month of October) (10月) - 红丝带周

红丝带周是为了庆祝预防药物和暴力。通常在这一周，如果孩子选择，在不同的日子里可以穿着滑稽有趣的服装。例如，星期一可以穿着滑稽的袜子，星期二可以弄个滑稽的发型，星期三穿红色衣服，以此类推。这不是强制的，是可选的，如果您选择让孩子参加，会很有趣。

Valentine's Day 情人节

情人节是为了庆祝爱情，在学校里，学生们通常会举行派对或互相交换卡片和糖果。在一些学校，他们可以带一个纸板鞋盒到学校，并将其装饰起来，用来保存同学们送的卡片和糖果。通常在那一天，可以给同学们带一块糖果或一张便条。

Easter 复活节

在学校层面上，复活节是春天和复活节兔的庆祝活动。复活节兔是一个温暖而有生命力的角色，会给孩子们带来装饰有糖果的塑料彩蛋。您的孩子可能会在学校收到或制作这些复活节彩蛋，甚至可能会参加复活节彩蛋寻找活动。复活节彩蛋寻找活动是成年人在户外隐藏彩蛋，供学生们寻找和收集（通常会使用桶或篮子来装这些彩蛋）。这是为了娱乐和庆祝春天。



学校活动

Science Fair 科学展览

科学展览是一个学校组织的活动，您的孩子会为同学和学校社区创建并展示一个科学项目。通常会根据项目的优秀程度进行评奖，有一、二、三等奖。

Field Trips 校外郊游

校外郊游是课外的活动，需要父母的许可。这些活动通常包括参观动物园、博物馆和其他教育场所。父母通常可以自愿参加，并与孩子和班级一同参加这些活动。请确保向学校询问是否有这样的可能性！

Winter Holiday Celebrations 冬季假日庆祝活动

许多小学举办冬季假日庆祝活动，以了解各种文化传统。这些庆祝活动可能包括歌曲、学校表演。这往往代表着不同的冬季节日，如圣诞节、光明节、庆祝非洲文化的节日库旺扎或庆祝印度教的节日排灯节。通常有一个为期约两周的寒假，以庆祝这个假期，您的孩子将能够与家人一起在家庆祝。放假前一周会有指定的庆祝日，孩子们可以制作手工艺品，甚至可以穿着睡衣来学校享用冬季小吃和观看电影！

Class parties 班级聚会

由老师为班级组织的派对。



年末庆典

在学年末，小学通常会组织一些活动来纪念学生这学年的收获和成就。这些庆祝活动可能包括以下内容：

Award/graduation ceremonies 颁奖/毕业典礼：

全校范围的庆祝活动，家长可以参加，其中有一个仪式让学生升到下一个年级，或者表彰他们在一年中所取得的品德或学术成就。

Talent Shows 才艺表演

全校范围的庆祝活动，家长可以参加，学生可以报名参加展示自己的才艺，如唱歌或跳舞。

Field Day 运动会

全校范围的全天庆祝活动，家长可以参加，包括多种户外活动和游戏，你的孩子所在的班级可以参与其中。通常会提供小吃，或者在这些活动中赠送小吃。

值得特别注意的是：学校和地区的庆祝活动可能会因反映所服务社区的文化多样性和当地偏好而有所不同。