

Cultural Appreciation at JBE

The purpose of our Cultural Appreciation is to recognize various cultures represented within our school and beyond. It is designed to bring awareness as well as to celebrate and appreciate differences. Each month a different culture will be recognized. Parents of the different cultures are welcome to come out to speak with students in your class about their culture. Teams can be used for virtual presentations, if virtual is more convenient for presenters.

The goals of multicultural education include:

- Creating a safe, accepting and successful learning environment for all.
- Increasing awareness of global issues.
- Strengthening cultural consciousness.
- Strengthening intercultural awareness.
- Teaching students that there are multiple historical perspectives.
- Encouraging critical thinking.
- Preventing prejudice and discrimination.

September

Hispanic-Latino Heritage

National Hispanic Heritage Month honors the culture, heritage, and contributions of Hispanic Americans each year. The event began in 1968 when Congress deemed the week including September 15 and 16 National Hispanic Heritage Week to celebrate the contributions and achievements of the diverse cultures within the Hispanic community. The dates were chosen to commemorate two key historic events: Independence Day, honoring the formal signing of the Act of Independence for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua (September 15, 1821), and Mexico's Independence Day, which denotes the beginning of the struggle against Spanish control (September 16, 1810). It was not until 1988 that the event was expanded to month-long period, which includes El Dia de la Raza on October 12, which celebrates the influences of the people who came after Christopher Columbus and the multicultural, multiethnic society that evolved as a result; Chile's Independence Day on September 18 (El Dieciocho); and Belize's Independence Day on September 21. Each year a different theme for the month is selected and a poster is created to reflect that theme.

October

Italian American Heritage

Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month is celebrated by proclamation of the President and Congress in the United States to honor the achievements and contributions of Italian immigrants and their descendants living in the United States, particularly in the arts, science, and culture.[1] Events are held throughout the month celebrating and educating the public about Italian-American history and culture.[2] It was first celebrated in 1989. The heritage month is in October to coincide with Columbus Day, the American national holiday traditionally celebrated on October 12, now celebrated on the second Monday in October. Heritage Months are usually proclaimed by nations to celebrate centuries of contributions by a group to a country. In tribute to all Italian Americans, the US Congress, by Pub.L. 101–128, designated the month of October 1989 as "Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month." Congress again proclaimed October as Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month for 1990 (Pub.L. 101–460) and 1993/1994 (Pub.L. 103–309). Within the authority of the Executive Branch, the President of the United States has also issued a proclamation in 1989[3] and 1990[4] by George H.W. Bush, in 1993[5] by Bill Clinton, and in 2010[6] by Barack Obama.

November

American Indian Heritage

In response to an effort by many to gain a day of recognition for the great influence American Indians have had upon the U.S., Congress designated a week of October to celebrate Native American Awareness Week in 1976. Yearly legislation was enacted to continue the tradition until August of 1990, when President Bush approved the designation of November as National American Indian Heritage Month. Each year a similar proclamation is issued. President Clinton noted in 1996, "Throughout our history, American Indian and Alaska Native peoples have been an integral part of the American character. Against all odds, America's first peoples have endured, and they remain a vital cultural, political, social, and moral presence." November is an appropriate month for the celebration because it is traditionally a time when many American Indians hold fall harvest and world-renewal ceremonies, powwows, dances, and various feasts. The holiday recognizes hundreds of different tribes and approximately 250 languages, and celebrates the history, tradition, and values of American Indians. National American Indian Heritage Month serves as a reminder of the positive effect native peoples have had on the cultural development and growth of the U.S., as well as the struggles and challenges they have faced.

December

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Although December has not been designated a special heritage month, it does contain celebratory days that are recognized internationally. On December 10 in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The document set forth the basic civil standard of economic, political, and social rights that should be guaranteed to every person. Each December, the commitment to this universal document of rights is renewed and celebrated. In addition, the United Nations has established December 3 as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This international observance was established to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also aims to foster awareness of the importance of integrating persons with disabilities into every aspect of life.

February

African American History

In 1926 Dr. Carter G. Woodson instituted the first week-long celebration to raise awareness of African Americans' contributions to history. Prior to this time, little information could be found regarding African American history. Important achievements were left out of history books, and there was a general misconception that African Americans had made little contribution to U.S. society or history. 50 years later, the week became a month, and today February is celebrated as African American History Month. The month of February was chosen because it celebrates the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, both of whom dramatically affected the lives of African Americans. Frederick Douglass (1817-1895) was a writer, lecturer, editor, and civil rights activist who escaped slavery at age 21 and went on to campaign for the abolition of slavery, establish a newspaper, and hold the office of Minister to Haiti. He was a major voice in the anti-slavery/civil rights movement of his time. Abraham Lincoln (born February 12, 1809), as the sixteenth president of the United States, issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, thereby declaring that all slaves within the Confederacy would be permanently free. Each year, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, founded by Dr. Woodson, sets the theme for the month.

March

Irish American Heritage

Congress designated March as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1991 and the president issues a proclamation commemorating the occasion each year. Originally a religious holiday to honor St. Patrick, who introduced Christianity to Ireland in the 5th century, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into a celebration of all things Irish. The world's first St. Patrick's Day parade occurred on March 17, 1762, in New York City, featuring Irish soldiers who served in the English military. This parade became an annual event, with President Truman attending in 1948.

April

Jewish American Heritage

In April of 2006, President George W. Bush declared May would be Jewish American Heritage Month. This declaration came from fervent efforts of Jewish community leaders to recognize the 350+ year history of Jewish contributions to American culture. When resolutions to recognize this community moved to the House of Representatives (December 2005) and later to the Senate (February 2006), they were passed unanimously. The Jewish American Heritage Month Coalition, created in March 2007, spearheads the implementation and execution of the annual celebration that occurs every May.

May

Asian Pacific Heritage

The roots of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month can be traced back to 1976, when Jeanie Jew, president of the Organization of Chinese American Women, contacted government officials in response to the lack of Asian Pacific representation in the U.S. bicentennial celebrations that same year. The observance began in 1979 as Asian Heritage Week, established by congressional proclamation. In May 1990, the holiday was expanded further when President George Bush signed a proclamation making it month-long for that year. On October 23, 1992, Bush signed legislation designating May of every year Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The month of May was chosen to commemorate two significant events in history: the immigration of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States on May 7, 1843, and the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869 (Golden Spike Day). The diversity and common experiences of the many ethnic groups are celebrated during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month with numerous community festivals as well as government-sponsored activities.