



REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ISPORTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS**  
DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue  
Pasig City, Philippines



Sama-Sama  
sa DECS

*Tanggapan ng Kalihim*  
*Office of the Secretary*

OCT 29 2001

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ORDER**

No. 53, s. 2001

**STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF RELIGIOUS  
RIGHTS OF STUDENTS**

To : Undersecretaries and Assistant Secretaries  
Regional/Bureau Directors  
Schools Division Superintendents  
Principals of Public and Private Schools

1. Pursuant to the Constitutional guarantee on the rights of citizens to freedom of religion and non-discrimination on the basis of sex, religion, creed or color, all schools should strive to ensure that these rights of students are protected and strengthened.
2. The National Youth Commission has called attention to the plight of Muslim students attending schools where certain policies and practices infringe on their religious rights.
3. In view thereof, all schools, both public and private, are directed to review their policies to ensure that these are sensitive to the religious rights of students.
4. In the specific case of Muslim students, the following policies shall be adopted:
  - a. Female Muslim schoolchildren should be allowed to use their veil or headdress (*hijab*) inside the school campus
  - b. In Physical Education (PE) classes, Muslim girls shall not be required to wear shorts; they shall be allowed to wear appropriate clothing in accordance with their religious beliefs
  - c. Muslim students shall not be required to participate in non-Muslim religious rites.
5. Department field offices are hereby enjoined to ensure that these policies are strictly complied with in all schools under their jurisdiction.
6. For immediate and wide dissemination.

DepEd-RSR 0000006

**RAUL S. ROCO**

Secretary

*A: \deped sorder re religion\rcb 19oct.*

**Reference:**

**DECS Order: No. 120, s. 1999**

**Allotment: 1—(D.O. 50-97)**

**To be indicated in the Perpetual Index  
under the following subjects:**

**POLICY  
RELIGION  
STUDENTS**