



Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Education**

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16 JUL 2013

DepEd O R D E R  
No. **32** s. 2013

**REITERATING DECS ORDER NO. 53, S. 2001**  
(Strengthening the Protection of Religious Rights of Students)

To: Undersecretaries  
Assistant Secretaries  
Bureau Directors  
Directors of Services, Centers and Heads of Units  
Regional Directors  
Schools Division/City Superintendents  
Heads, Public Elementary and Secondary 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 that these rights of students are protected and strengthened.

2. The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos has called for strict implementation of the policy on the right of Muslim Filipino women to wear *hijab*/veil. Hence, the Department of Education (DepEd) reiterates its policy on the protection of religious rights of students as contained in DECS Order No. 53, s. 2001 entitled **Strengthening the Protection of Religious Rights of Students**, to wit:

In specific case of the 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 be allowed to wear appropriate clothing in accordance with their religious beliefs; and
- c. Muslim students shall not be required to participate in non-Muslim religious rites.

3. Furthermore, while the Department supports and promotes the right of Muslim Filipino women to wear the *hijab*/veil, it does not compel Muslim Filipino women to wear it.

4. For Muslim Filipino women who are wearing the veil that covers the entire face (*ustadja*) and have been hired as ALIVE teachers, the following conditions are strongly suggested:

- a. Wearing such veil covering the entire face is allowed outside the classroom.

- b. Once the *ustadja* is in the classroom she is requested to remove the veil for the following reasons:
  - i. For proper identification of the teachers by the pupils, thus promoting better teacher-pupil relationship; and
  - ii. In support of effective language teaching, recognition and discrimination of letters and their sounds are enhanced. Lip formation significantly helps in the correct production of the letter sounds.
5. Immediate dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is desired.

  
**BR. ARMIN A. LUISTRO FSC**  
Secretary

Reference:

DECS Order No. (53, s. 2001)

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

POLICY  
RELIGION  
PUPILS  
STUDENTS  
TEACHERS