

Purpose/Background

Rocky View Schools respects and values all students regardless of their cultural or faith backgrounds. We allow students to wear religious symbols if they do not violate school policy and if these symbols are not used in a way that disrespects others.

Rocky View Schools does not and shall not tolerate any discriminatory acts involving racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice by its employees or students.

Procedures

The Supreme Court of Canada and Canadian Human Rights decisions affirm the right of Khalsa Sikhs to wear the kirpan. The kirpan is a symbol of courage, self-sacrifice, and defense of the weak and righteousness. Wearing the kirpan is a requirement of being a Khalsa Sikh. A kirpan is not a weapon and strict religious rules prohibit its use as such. It is never to be removed from its sheath and for safety reasons, it is to be affixed securely in the sheath.

School Accommodation

Rocky View Schools supports Khalsa Sikh students and staff who wear a kirpan. The kirpan should:

- ◆ Be small (approximately 8 – 12 cm in length including handle),
- ◆ Be sufficiently secure to render removal difficult, and
- ◆ Not be worn visibly, but under the wearer's clothing.

If the kirpan is not worn by students or staff in a manner as outlined above, the school principal will contact the Area Director to discuss next steps moving forward.

Reference:

RVS Policy 19 Respectful Learning and Working Environments
Alberta Education Act Sections 33, 52, 53, and 197
Alberta Human Rights Act