



Faith Based School Policy

School Values and Mission Statement

OUR MISSION

Khalsa School Calgary is an educational institution that aspires to academic excellence by maintaining a spiritual environment which instills the highest standard of moral and humanitarian values.

OUR CORE VALUES

MEDITATE (NAAM JAPO)

Achieving and sustaining a positive outlook of the creator through a balance between the mind, body and soul.

HONEST LIVING (KIRT KARO)

Earning your livelihood through honest means and hard work.

SHARING (VANDD SHAKO)

Volunteering your time, knowledge and earnings with those in need.

Faith Philosophy

Whereas:

This Faith Based School Policy shall apply to all aspects of the School's operations in the School's provision of faith- based education, programming and services.

Faith Based Education at the School

- Khalsa School Calgary is a Sikh faith-based school that is directly supported by the Gurdwara, and by our community. In all matters of faith, we take our direction from our Board and the Gurdwara. As a Sikh School we respect the beliefs, values and practices of all other religions, and we welcome all students and families who wish to join us. We have a number of unique attributes of which the staff, students and community are very proud. The three fundamental pillars of academic excellence, personal and character development and a “Khalsa” attitude” underpin our teaching and learning community.
- Members of the Sikh faith follow the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Sikhs are not to have hate or animosity towards any person, regardless of race, caste,

colour, creed, gender, or sexuality. Included below are several of these teachings from the Guru Granth Sahib Ji:

- *Recognize the Lord's Light (Spirit) within all, and do not consider social class or status; there are no classes or castes in the world hereafter (Guru Granth Sahib Ji, 349).*
 - *All beings and creatures are His; He belongs to all (Guru Granth Sahib Ji, 425).*
 - *One God is the only treasure of peace; I have heard that He is eternal and imperishable. He is entirely pervading water, land and sky; He is composed in each and every heart. He looks alike upon the high and the low, the ant and the elephant. Friends, companions, children and relatives are all created by Him. O Nanak, one who is blessed with the Naam, enjoys Lord's love and affection (Guru Granth Sahib Ji, 319).*
- the school ensures the availability of a faith-based program of studies for students whose parents desire an educational setting which operates in accordance with its philosophy, beliefs, core values, vision, and ethical standards;
 - the School's belief in its religious obligation to teach Sikhism is consistent with its organizational purpose and operation

Alberta's School Act

- the best educational interests of the student are the paramount considerations in the exercise of any authority under the *School Act*;
- students are entitled to welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and nurture a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self;
- the Board of Directors of Khalsa School Calgary ("Board") establishes this Faith Policy in relation to all aspects of the School's operations in its provision of faith-based education, including in relation to the Board's obligation to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that includes the establishment of a code of conduct for students that addresses bullying behavior;

Parents' Rights Respecting their Children's Education

- parents have a right and a responsibility to make decisions respecting the education of their children as reflected in the *School Act* preamble;
- sections 1(c) and 1(g) of *Alberta's Bill of Rights* recognizes and declares that in Alberta there exists without discrimination by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or gender expression, the following human rights and fundamental freedoms, namely the freedom of

a) *Alberta School Act*, RSA 2000, c S-3: preamble, sections 2, 3, 16, 28
 b) *Alberta Bill of Rights*, RSA 2000, c A-14: preamble, sections 1 and 2
 c) *Alberta Human Rights Act*, RSA 2000, c A-25.5: sections 7, 8 and 11
 d) 2017 Bill 24, Third Session, 29th Legislature, 66 Elizabeth II ("Bill 24")
 e) *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1990), article 5

religion and the right of parents to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children;

- the School's students and parents have voluntarily selected an education infused with Sikh beliefs and values;
- parents have the right to be notified of school organized activities that their children are participating in; however, the school will always act in the best interest of the children and would only withhold information from parents should there be any indication that notification would put the child in harms way;

School Commitment to providing a Safe, Caring, Welcoming and Safe Learning Environment

- the School is committed to providing a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment in keeping with the vision, mission, and faith foundation of the School;

Principles Arising in the Context of Canadian Law

1. Consistent with its mission and vision, the Board is committed to a safe, caring, respectful, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all students. This environment shall be one that recognizes and respects student diversity, equity of learning opportunity for all students, respect for human rights, and that fosters a sense of belonging of all students within a respectful school community.
2. This Policy does not define one set of human needs as greater than another. This Policy supports and respects the individuality of all students and aims to create a positive and supportive environment focused on providing the best possible learning opportunity for each student.
3. The School believes that all students have the right to:
 - a) be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
 - b) be welcomed in a positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel;
 - c) have access to appropriate supports, services, and protections;
 - d) have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence.
4. The School reserves the right to argue that the School, parents and students have a freedom of religion and that none of these entities may be forced in law to adhere to or refrain from a particular set of reasonably held religious beliefs or the individual's ability to act in accordance with his or her religious practice or belief.

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5. *Alberta's Bill of Rights*, RSA 2000, c. A-14:
 - a) recognizes and declares that in Alberta there exist without discrimination the freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and association and the right of parents to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children;
 - b) states that every law of Alberta shall, unless it is expressly declared by an Act of the Legislature that it operates notwithstanding the Alberta Bill of Rights, be so construed and applied as not to abrogate, abridge or infringe or to authorize the abrogation, abridgment or infringement of any of the rights or freedoms herein recognized and declared.

6. As noted in sections 3(1) and (2) of the *School Act*:
 - a) All education programs offered and instructional materials used in schools must reflect the diverse nature and heritage of society in Alberta, promote understanding and respect for others and honour and respect the common values and beliefs of Albertans;
 - b) For greater certainty, education programs and instructional materials referred to in subsection (1) must not promote or foster doctrines of racial or ethnic superiority or persecution, religious intolerance or persecution, social change through violent action or disobedience of laws.

7. Any limitation which is not reasonable and justifiable in the circumstances could have the effect of abrogating, abridging, or infringing upon the right of parents to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children.”

8. When addressing matters of human rights, whether in a classroom, club or activity setting, the Board, principal, teachers and other staff will act reasonably in the best interests of the student. In keeping with established jurisprudence, the school, the principal, teachers and other staff are free to act and communicate the school's animating faith and/or values in a respectful manner, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - a) The School's teachers and staff may describe and explain the school's faith and/or value community beliefs, doctrines and ethical beliefs from the faith/perspective, and need not be required to adopt a neutral position;
 - b) The School's teachers and staff will maintain a respectful tone of debate — both by conveying their own contributions in a respectful way, and by ensuring dialogue proceeds in accordance with respect, tolerance and understanding for those who hold different beliefs and practices;
 - c) Where the context of the classroom discussion requires it, the School's teachers may identify the School community's animating beliefs and/or values beliefs, why the School community follows those beliefs and/or values.

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