

Siberian Region Bans Halloween Festivities at Schools

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Andrei Lyubimov / Moskva News Agency

Far East Russia's republic of Sakha (Yakutia) has banned Halloween celebrations at schools across the region, local media [reported](#) Friday.

Sakha's Deputy Education Minister Alevtina Argunova circulated a letter to school principals demanding that they cancel all Halloween celebrations in classrooms, according to the news website SakhaDay.

Instead, Argunova was said to have encouraged school administrations to replace Halloween activities with those that "strengthen spiritual moral values, develop ideas of patriotism and preserve historical heritage."

It was not immediately possible to verify the letter's authenticity, but Russia's state-run news agency RIA Novosti said it [confirmed](#) the ban with the regional education ministry.

While Halloween is not widely celebrated in Russia, some officials have [waged](#) a war against

the holiday amid the country's turn toward conservative and religious values.

Sakha's ban on school Halloween celebrations comes amid another controversy surrounding the holiday.

Schools in a handful of Russian regions [plan](#) to replace Halloween with pumpkin-themed religious festivities, [prompting warnings](#) from Orthodox priests that pumpkins are not associated with Jesus.

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