

Committee for Public Education and International Youth and Students for Social Equality (Australia)

Public forum: COVID-19 and the escalating assault on educators and students

13 July 2020

Committee for Public Education and International Youth and Students for Social Equality (Australia) online public forum Saturday July 18, 4 p.m. (AEST)

Globally, the coronavirus pandemic is still spiralling out of control, thanks to the premature lifting of safety restrictions by corporate-driven governments. The lives of educators and students are directly threatened. They are being pushed back into unsafe classrooms, where social distancing is impossible, so that all workers can be forced back to producing profits for the corporate elite.

At the same time, governments of all stripes are starving schools and universities of funds, and slashing jobs, wages and conditions. They are exploiting the crisis to deepen decades of cuts to public education. Students face escalating fees and larger class sizes as well as worsening mass unemployment.

The Committee for Public Education (CFPE) and International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Australia are holding an online public forum this Saturday July 18 to discuss the critical issues posed.

US President Donald Trump's tweet last week that "SCHOOLS MUST OPEN IN THE FALL!!!" is only the crudest diktat. In Australia, Labor and Liberal-National governments alike have been in the forefront internationally of escalating demands for a full return to face-to-face teaching in schools and campuses, despite the resurgence of COVID-19 to new heights.

Scores of school outbreaks, one in Melbourne with more than 140 infections, have exposed the official lies that they are not hot spots of transmission. Yet the

concerns of staff and parents have been brushed aside.

Everywhere too, the thoroughly pro-business education trade unions are enforcing the return to classrooms and assisting the destruction of jobs and conditions.

The forum will discuss the need for a unified struggle by educators, parents and students against this assault and the formation of safety action committees, completely independent of the unions, in schools and universities to protect lives and coordinate this struggle.

All school teachers, staff and parents, university workers and students across Australia and internationally are warmly invited to participate.

Please click the link below to join the forum:
<https://zoom.us/j/95747836323?pwd=SDZFaFI0dE56dVQ2SDdDVDZyY2c0UT09>

Password: 345359

Or Telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location): Australia: +61 731 853 730 or +61 861 193 900 or +61 8 7150 1149 or +61 2 8015 6011 or +61 3 7018 2005 Webinar ID: 957 4783 6323 Password: 345359

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