CFPE online meeting: The global fight for educator and student safety in the COVID-19 pandemic

The CFPE (Australia)
20 November 2020

The Committee for Public Education invites educators, students and working people in Australia and internationally to participate in an online meeting on Sunday November 29 at 10.00 am (AEDT), on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on schools, college, universities and other educational institutions.

The inability and refusal of governments throughout the globe to implement the necessary measures to protect the lives of educators, students and their families has resulted in untold and needless deaths. The CFPE calls for the formation of educator rank-and-file safety committees to carry out this task.

The international panel discussion will feature educators and *World Socialist Web Site* reporters from Australia, North America, Britain and continental Europe.

Panelists will discuss the deadly consequences of the decision by governments around the world to force schools to stay open despite staggering infection rates and deaths. Hospitals and health services are being overwhelmed in the US, UK and countries across Europe, leaving workers to die in the most appalling conditions.

Despite government and teacher union claims that schools are safe, the reality is that increasing numbers of educators and students are becoming infected and dying. Schools are major vectors for virus transmission. A new report by the American Academy of Pediatrics found 1.04 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 among children as of November 12, accounting for 11.5 percent of all infections in the United States. A similar British report earlier this month revealed that over 50 percent of COVID-19 infections were taking place in education institutions.

Keeping schools open has nothing to do with the well-being and education of young people, and is instead centrally about maintaining the ability of parents to work in order to guarantee the profits of the banks and corporations.

In opposition to the homicidal policy of supposed “herd immunity”—tacitly endorsed and policed by the teacher unions globally—educators, students, parents are taking matters into their own hands. In the US, teachers have responded with walk-outs, strikes and sick-outs; in Greece, students have carried out occupations; in Britain, parents have organised school boycotts; and in France, teachers have gone on strike, with students blockading schools.

Education rank-and-file safety committees have been formed in the US, Europe and internationally. Panelists at the CFPE meeting will report on their experiences of organising the defence student and educator safety, independently of and in opposition to the teacher trade unions, and will elaborate an internationalist and socialist political perspective to take forward this struggle.

Register in advance for this webinar to be held on Sunday November 29 at 10.00 a.m. (AEDT); Saturday 6 p.m. US Eastern Time; and Saturday 11 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_41cSzz-mR2-j7UTbaDGa2A

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

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