

European educators support the struggle of Chicago teachers against the unsafe opening of schools

European rank-and-file education safety committees
3 February 2021

The rank-and-file education safety committees in Germany and the UK have adopted the following statement of solidarity with the protesting teachers in Chicago. We call on our readers to spread the word and support the resolution.

We, the rank-and-file safety committees of educators and students in Europe, express our support for and solidarity with the ongoing struggle by educators in Chicago. In the third-largest school district in the United States, teachers are taking a stand to save lives and prevent the deadly reopening of schools as the coronavirus pandemic rages out of control.

Across Europe, governments are pursuing the same homicidal policy as in the US of placing profits before lives and pushing to keep schools open. Whether it is Boris Johnson in the UK, the Grand Coalition of the Social Democrats and Christian Democratic Union in Germany, the Macron government in France, or elsewhere, the policy is the same.

The reason for this is clear to us: schools are being used as holding pens for children, and teachers are being employed as babysitters in unsafe conditions, so that parents can be forced to return to work and corporate profits can be maintained throughout the pandemic.

This is despite consistent evidence and warnings by scientists that schools play a major role in the transmission of the virus, with new, more contagious variants such as the one first identified in the UK are already firmly established and spreading internationally.

The trade unions will not organize any opposition to this policy. On the contrary, they either call openly for keeping schools open, as in France, or, where they have

called for temporarily closing schools, as in the UK, it has only been after teachers had already begun to take mass action to prevent schools from opening.

If there is to be a struggle against the reopening policy, it must be organized independently by educators, students and parents. That is why the struggle developing in Chicago is of the utmost significance. It points the way forward for workers and students internationally.

We, the rank-and-file committees of educators and students in Europe, pledge to do everything we can to make this struggle known in Europe, and to make it the spearhead for an international political general strike, for the closure of schools and non-essential workplaces, and the implementation of a scientific plan to combat the pandemic.



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