

Educators across the US West Coast support October 24 webinar: “How to End the Pandemic”

West Coast Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committees
22 October 2021

The West Coast Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committees fully support the fight for the global elimination of COVID-19 in order to save millions of lives worldwide. We recognize that the first step toward fighting for an end to the pandemic is a scientific understanding of COVID-19 and the measures involved in a globally coordinated elimination strategy.

At a meeting of our committees last Saturday, October 16, we voted unanimously to attend and promote the upcoming webinar organized by the *World Socialist Web Site* and the International Workers Alliance of Rank and File Committees (IWA-RFC) entitled, “How to End the Pandemic.” We pledged to build the October 24 meeting in order to help generate the widest possible attendance and to broadly share the science presented at this meeting.

A current myth being presented by the mainstream media, as well as federal and state governments, is that COVID-19 is swiftly becoming endemic and therefore we all must learn to “live with the virus.” Despite the bombardment of a “return to normal” narrative, official daily new cases in the US remain near 85,000, still higher than all prior stages of the pandemic aside from the peak weeks of the devastating winter 2020-21 surge. Eighty-five percent of counties in the US are facing ongoing high levels of community transmission according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In the past two months alone, there have officially been over 10 million cases and over 114,000 deaths.

Recent Kaiser Family Foundation data shows that COVID-19 was the number one cause of death for people ages 35-54 in September. Across all age groups, COVID-19 remains a leading cause of death, while

during last winter’s surge the virus killed more people than heart disease.

In the schools, the past two months have been a disaster, with over 2 million children officially infected and at least 180 children killed by COVID-19. One in seven children are experiencing Long COVID, meaning that roughly 280,000 children of the 2 million infected in the past two months across the US will likely experience long-term effects of COVID-19, including flu symptoms, neurological issues and organ failure.

As the data clearly shows, the pandemic is not over, mass infection and deaths continue to climb in the US and internationally, and all indicators point to the very real possibility of the virus further mutating and the pandemic continuing to intensify unless we take aggressive measures that are coordinated globally to stop this from happening.

The entire political establishment has doubled down on promoting “herd immunity” policies that will continue to result in further unnecessary deaths and illness. This includes the use of openly right-wing policies such as lifting restrictions entirely in order to reach natural immunity, as well as the use of inadequate mitigation measures that focus solely on mask or vaccination mandates to slow the spread of the virus. We say that mitigation, outside of any plan to eliminate or eradicate COVID-19, is still a policy of mass infection.

At our recent rank-and-file meeting, we discussed these conditions on the pandemic. David Moore, a member of the Northern California Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee and recent gubernatorial candidate in the California recall election for the Socialist Equality Party, presented the latest scientific

developments regarding COVID-19, including a recent study assessing the impacts of the pandemic in Iran.

Another myth currently being presented is that a combination of vaccinations and COVID-19 infections in a population will lessen the impacts of future waves of the virus. Moore explained during his report that there is no evidence that “herd immunity” is anywhere near being reached across the planet, noting that the Iran study reveals that “herd immunity” through natural infection may not even be possible given the virulent character of the virus. Researchers concluded that despite several waves of infection and high attack rates in many provinces in largely unmitigated areas, “herd immunity” through natural infection has not been achieved.

Moore also shared that the data shows that the third and most recent fifth waves in Iran had significantly intensified impacts on younger age groups. Finally, the study revealed extremely high attack rates in multiple provinces, indicating that in these areas there were more cases of COVID-19 than there were people in the province, showing high rates of reinfection and an increase in severity of the virus as more people became infected.

All of this data points to the necessity for an end to the pandemic. When left in the hands of the political establishment, they will choose to protect their interests, which as we have seen so clearly over the past 19 months rests in maintaining a steady flow of profits, even at the expense of countless human lives.

A look at the accumulated wealth of US billionaires since the beginning of the pandemic shows an increase of \$2.1 trillion, a massive sum of money for a handful of individuals. Tens of millions of working people have faced unemployment and illness. Over 724,000 people in the US have died from COVID-19, placing devastating impacts on families. The chasm between the ruling elite and the working masses could not be more stark.

Allowing COVID-19 to become endemic would mean devastating impacts on the global population for generations to come, including loss of life and increased disease burden, a decline in life expectancy, long-term health issues, and socioeconomic impacts on individuals and families.

We are fighting for the elimination of COVID-19 across the globe. With the Delta variant, vaccines alone

are not enough to eliminate the virus. Public health measures alone are not enough. Only the combination of mass vaccinations and aggressive public health measures coordinated on a global scale can put an end to the pandemic. This requires the shutdown of nonessential production and schools with social supports for affected workers, mass testing, contact tracing, the isolation of infected individuals, masking and more, which would only need to last for a period of six to nine weeks.

It is essential that the international working class fight to unite and build a movement to end the pandemic once and for all. This is why we are attending Sunday’s webinar and will continue to educate ourselves on the science behind COVID-19 and the means by which we can eliminate this horrific virus worldwide. We urge all educators, parents, students and workers across the West Coast to attend this important meeting, invite your coworkers, family and friends, and join and build our committee to coordinate the struggle to end the pandemic in our region in alliance with similar committees worldwide.



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