

The five truths to guide the fight to end the pandemic

Southern Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committees
24 November 2021

The Southern Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committees, with representatives present from Tennessee and Texas, held a joint meeting on November 14 to discuss the five truths for building a movement to end the pandemic, outlined by David North in his opening report to the October 24 global webinar “How to end the pandemic,” which was hosted by the *World Socialist Web Site* and the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC).

Reviewing the five points stimulated discussion on the objective crisis of capitalism, the growth of the class struggle in the US and internationally, the role of the media in promoting the “herd immunity” policies of the ruling class, the working conditions in classrooms across the South, and the WSWs’ defense of scientific truth throughout the pandemic. The meeting concluded with a vote to publish a statement of support of the five points, enumerated below, which was approved unanimously.

The October 24 webinar brought together workers and scientists to discuss the state of the pandemic and how to end it. David North, the chairperson of the International Editorial Board of the WSWs and the national chairperson of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) in the United States, stated that in order to end the pandemic these five points must be clearly understood:

- The target of SARS-CoV-2—the virus that causes COVID-19—is not individuals, but entire societies. The virus’ mode of transmission is directed toward achieving mass infection. SARS-CoV-2 has evolved biologically to strike billions, and, in so doing, kill millions.

- Therefore, the only effective strategy is one based on a globally coordinated campaign aimed at the elimination of the virus on every continent, in every region, and in every country. There is no effective national solution to this pandemic. Humanity—people of all races, ethnicities, and nationalities—must confront and overcome this challenge through a vast collective and truly selfless global effort.

- The policies pursued by virtually all governments since the outbreak of the pandemic must be repudiated. The subordination of that which should be the unquestioned priority of social policy—the protection of human life—to the interests of corporate profit and private wealth accumulation cannot be allowed to continue.

- The initiative to bring about a decisive turn to a strategy directed toward global elimination must come from a socially conscious movement of millions of people.

- This global movement must draw upon scientific research. The persecution of scientists—many of whom labor under threats to their livelihoods and even their lives—must be ended. The global elimination of the virus requires the closest working alliance between the working class—the great mass of society—and the scientific community.

Our committees previously endorsed the call for a mass movement of the working class to end the pandemic.

We believe that when the international working class becomes equipped with both a scientific and a political understanding of the pandemic—that is, the nature of the virus and how it spreads, coupled with an understanding of why governments around the world have pursued homicidal and anti-scientific policies—our fight for a policy of global elimination will be successful and will end the pandemic.

At our meeting, we heard reports from educators and workers across the South, including in Florida, Texas, and South Carolina.

Patrick, a worker from Florida, reported on the haphazard COVID-19 mitigation policies in the state, such as optional mask mandates. Allowing districts, counties, and businesses to choose to require masks has done little to prevent the spread of the virus and is a thinly veiled version of the murderous herd immunity strategy embraced by the ruling elite, including Florida’s Republican Governor Ron DeSantis.

Patrick voiced his agreement with Point 2 and called for global coordination to eliminate the virus worldwide, recognizing that until such a policy is adopted, workers will continue to die en masse.

Tony, an educator from Texas, reported on conditions in his school. He noted that multiple colleagues of his had contracted the virus, despite being vaccinated. Like districts across the country which are facing severe staffing shortages, his district is so desperate that it is encouraging teachers and coaches, many of whom already work second jobs, to get a CDL license so they can drive the school buses!

He criticized the role of the American Federation of Teachers and its local affiliates for failing teachers and promoting the reckless reopening of schools. He concluded by noting the role of the Biden administration and Democratic Party, which have squandered the life-saving capabilities of vaccines, promoting the lie that they alone can stop the pandemic and allowing the virus to spread while billions of people worldwide remain unvaccinated. He strongly agreed with Point 3 that the policies of virtually all

governments must be repudiated and that the subordination of life to profit must cease.

A worker from South Carolina, herself enduring symptoms of Long COVID, shared that her husband lost his life to COVID-19. She expressed the sense of isolation she experiences caused by the disconnect between her firsthand struggles with the disease and the indifference of the ruling elites to the unabated spread of the virus throughout the world.

Our committees recognize that we are not alone in our opposition to the homicidal policies of the ruling elites. Rather, every action taken by the governments, media and corporations impose a false sense of isolation upon us.

These forces all trumpet the reopening of schools, businesses and the ending of elimination strategies in countries like New Zealand. While they tell us that we just have to “learn to live with the virus,” as if it is akin to the flu or common cold, we tend to our sick and mourn our dead, wondering why no one in power is doing anything to prevent more needless illness and death.

Ed, an SEP member, centered his remarks around Point 4 and the need to build a mass movement. He explained that only the working class can end the pandemic, which is fundamentally a product of capitalism. The capitalist class has made the decision, as Boris Johnson in the UK put it, to “let the bodies pile high in their thousands,” rather than pursue an elimination strategy, which would interfere with the accumulation of profits. Ed discussed the profound economic crisis of capitalism and the breakdown of the global financial system. Amidst the crisis, workers are becoming more militant, as evidenced by the rising strikewave.

He shared an excerpt of a letter from a Caterpillar worker in support of Deere workers who were then on strike to convey the power of the working class when united:

Strength, Deere brothers and sisters! And to Volvo, Dana, and my own Caterpillar family, it is not too late nor too early to take a stand together. I can't remember who said this, but roughly it went ‘...if workers were to simply drop their hands and refuse to lift a finger until they got what they wanted, the entire corporate edifice would collapse overnight.’ We are that strong.

Nancy, an SEP member, highlighted the media's role in isolating the working class. She contrasted the initiative by the WSWs and the SEP to help workers organize in rank-and-file committees to the corporate media's promotion of the lies and cover-ups of the politicians and corporations.

Nancy stressed that billionaires like Jeff Bezos, who owns the *Washington Post*, are responsible for herding workers onto the front lines of an unprecedented global pandemic. The *Post* has hysterically promoted the “Wuhan lab leak” conspiracy theory, in order to build up support for Washington's aggression against China and to deflect responsibility for the catastrophic loss of life away from the American ruling class.

Chase, a student in Texas, echoed this by noting how the media is covering up COVID-19 pediatric deaths. He referenced the

deaths of 17 children reported by the American Academy of Pediatrics on November 4 and the fact that there was not a single local or national news report on any of them.

Multiple people spoke on the fact that the ruling class has also sought to silence, intimidate and black out the work of principled scientists, in order to promote endless lies, such as vaccines alone can stop the pandemic, the virus isn't harmful to children, etc. They reiterated the necessity of Point 5—in order to build a mass movement, scientists must be allowed to tell the truth and educate the working class about the pandemic!

Emma, an SEP member, discussed Long COVID and the still unknown implications of the infection. She referenced the “Global Summit to End Pandemics,” a recent meeting of doctors and scientists organized by the World Health Network (WHN). A report at the summit discussed a recent study on rhesus monkeys, which found that all of the infected animals developed Lewy Bodies in the brain, clumps of protein associated with Parkinson's disease and dementia. She noted that only the WSWs reported on the summit. Millions should have attended, but the corporate media blacked it out, fearing what this knowledge would do if it found a mass audience.

Despite all of the efforts to force us to accept the pandemic, which is entering its third year, and to make us feel like we are alone, workers are saying, “Enough!” The struggle against the pandemic is only going to spread. The initiative to build rank-and-file committees is growing internationally, in the US, Germany, Australia, Sri Lanka, Brazil and throughout the world.

We affirmed at our meeting that the truth is more powerful than lies and that the working class is more powerful than a small handful of elites. We voice our support for the five points listed above, which will serve as guiding principles in our work going forward.

Click here more information on how to join or start a committee in your community and follow our work on Facebook here.



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