

Build action committees for safe education and fight to eliminate the virus!

Petition in Germany gathers more than 125,000 signatures opposing deliberate mass infections in schools

International Youth and Students for Social Equality (Germany)
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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality welcomes the growing opposition to the policy of deliberate mass infection in schools. Under the Twitter hashtag #WirWerdenLaut (#We'reGettingLoud), about 100 student representatives and parent representatives, as well as dozens of academics, have posted a petition that has received more than 125,000 signatures in just a few days.

The petition is an expression of growing resistance against the murderous herd immunity policy, which has already cost tens of millions of lives worldwide. Since the beginning of the year, there have already been protests and strikes by teachers and students against unsafe face-to-face teaching in France, Greece, Italy, Austria and the United States. Now opposition is developing here too.

The petition opposes the government's herd immunity policy in clear language. "We can no longer support your current policy that is failing us all, psychologically burdening us and physically endangering us," the text reads. "Mental and physical strain, high risk of infection and the danger of contracting Long COVID are on a par with fear of losing loved ones and friends."

During the rampant Omicron wave, "the situation in our schools" has finally become "unbearable," the petition states, giving an insight into the disastrous conditions in schools. Contrary to the official propaganda of supposedly "safe schools," thousands are being infected there every week and pass on the virus to friends and relatives.

"We are forced into overcrowded classrooms with inadequate infection control measures. This means that avoidable infections are accepted, whether these prove 'mild' or fatal for children, young people and their families. This must be prevented! In addition, the long-term symptoms of infections and psychological stress cannot be

fully disregarded."

The petition calls for "fighting the pandemic by all means" and lists several important demands. These include "air filters for classrooms, subject rooms and washrooms in all schools," "free FFP2 masks," "reduction in the size of learning groups," "more emergency care services," "adequate quarantine measures to prevent further infections," "PCR pool testing as well as high quality rapid tests in all schools" and "compulsory education instead of compulsory attendance."

The petition ends with the statement: "The current herd immunity plan is irresponsible and lacks solidarity. It can't go on like this, #WirWerdenLaut!"

But how can the policy of deliberate mass infection be effectively stopped? The petition does not answer this crucial question. Instead, it appeals to representatives of the federal and state governments, above all Federal Education Minister Bettina Stark-Watzinger (Liberal Democratic Party, FDP), Federal Health Minister Karl Lauterbach (Social Democratic Party, SPD) and the president of the Standing Conference of State Ministers of Education (KMK), Karin Prien (Christian Democratic Union, CDU), saying that they should "finally live up to their responsibility and respond to our demands."

This appeal to those in power, like similar appeals in the past, will fall on deaf ears. The ruling parties have proven in the past two years that they put the profit interests of big business higher than the health and lives of the population. In Germany alone, more than 119,000 people have died from coronavirus and almost 11 million have been infected. The government's response to the spread of the highly contagious Omicron variant is not to strengthen protective measures, but to further dismantle them.

In doing so, the government is openly stating which interests it follows and the key role the herd immunity policy in schools plays in this. For example, a paper from the KMK (Conference of Ministers of Education) states that “maintaining the operation of schools” is “systemically relevant and, moreover, a basis for ensuring the ability to work.” In other words, students are sent into unsafe schools so that their parents can go to work and generate profits for the big corporations and super-rich.

The government’s same indifference towards human life is also evident on the issue of war. Although the confrontational course of the USA and NATO against the nuclear power Russia threatens to trigger a destructive third world war, Germany is a leading participant in it. The German government is supporting the right-wing, anti-Russian regime in Ukraine, sending additional combat troops to Eastern Europe and threatening Russia with retaliation.

If some of the supporters and initiators of the petition from the Volt Party, the Pirates and the SPD’s Young Socialists are now fuelling illusions in the government, this is a deliberate attempt to channel and ultimately suppress the enormous opposition.

Instead of appealing to the establishment parties, who make it clear day after day that our lives are worth nothing to them, students and teachers must organise independently in rank-and-file committees for safe education, taking the fight into their own hands and immediately implementing the safety measures mentioned in the petition.

School strikes and student protests must be the prelude to a full-scale rebellion of the entire working class against the policy of deliberate mass infection.

The only way to stop the herd immunity policy is the international struggle for Zero COVID. The pandemic is a problem for society as a whole and a global problem, which cannot be solved with a few local and national measures, but only through an internationally coordinated campaign to eliminate the virus. This has been proven by the development of the partially vaccine-resistant and highly contagious Omicron variant. Without elimination, there will always be new variants and the pandemic will become permanent—with all its deadly consequences.

According to scientific findings, the elimination of the virus could be achieved by a global lockdown lasting two to three months. Experience in China shows that such an approach is possible. The world’s most populous country, with 1.4 billion inhabitants, has been able to limit the number of deaths to less than 5,000 and the number of cases to just over 100,000 through a combination of lockdowns, mass testing, contact tracing and quarantine. Vaccination is also a powerful weapon against the virus, but only in

conjunction with all other protective measures.

But all governments refuse to take these necessary measures because it goes against the economic interests that have dominated throughout the pandemic. Within the framework of the so-called coronavirus rescue packages, trillions have been transferred worldwide into the accounts of the big corporations, banks and the super-rich, who are literally fattening themselves on mass death. Now, the gigantic sums are being squeezed out of the working population again.

The only social force that can impose an international strategy of elimination is the international working class. To do this, it needs a socialist programme that puts the lives and health of the population before the financial interests of the corporations.

Instead of transferring billions to the corporations and super-rich, the number of teachers must be doubled and schools must become safe places of learning. To finance the necessary lockdowns—first and foremost for schools and nonessential businesses—including wage compensation, support for poor families, compensation for small businesses, etc., 100 percent of the pandemic profits must be taxed.

A social system that walks over corpses for profits and destroys the health and future of entire generations must be abolished and replaced by a system that gives priority to life over profits. The struggle against the pandemic, like the struggle against social inequality and war, is at its core a struggle against capitalism and for socialism.

We call on all those who have signed the petition and opponents of the herd immunity policy to contact us to discuss and independently organise the struggle against the pandemic. Build IYSSE groups at your school, training centre or university and fight for a socialist alternative!



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact