

Milwaukee teacher suspended for sharing immigrant rights resources

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In a blatant act of retaliation against a teacher for supporting her immigrant students, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) suspended Alondra Garcia, a second-grade bilingual teacher at Allen-Field Elementary, for one day without pay on January 29.

This incident is not isolated; rather, it is a clear example of the broader attacks on democratic rights, particularly those of educators and students, brought about by the deepening crisis of capitalism and the Trump administration's fascist agenda. Garcia's suspension is an attack on democratic rights and immigrant communities.

An activist and an advocate for immigrant rights, Garcia immigrated to the United States from Mexico with her parents at the age of three. She has lived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, nearly her entire life.

The suspension came after Garcia informed parents in November following President Donald Trump's electoral victory that she would be sending their children home with immigrant rights resources that were part of a Safe Haven resolution passed by the district in 2017. The resolution states that all MPS sites are "a Safe Haven for undocumented students and families" and outlines steps that the district will take to oppose Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) actions on school grounds. Garcia shared copies of this resolution with her students.

In a translated text message, Garcia expressed to parents, "As an undocumented immigrant, I understand the fear that many of you have...My duty as a teacher is to provide emotional support to the students but also to their families. I was able to get vital resources in the event that the worst happens in MKE related to possible ICE raids."

After a parent complaint, school principal Fritz Blandon, an avid supporter of Donald Trump, deemed

Garcia's message "political" and claimed that she violated district policies.

The school district argues that the suspension was due to Garcia violating school policy by communicating directly with parents without authorization. A district spokesperson said that "all formal communications from the school level are to be professional in nature and have the authorization of the school leader before sharing with parents and the community."

Garcia's supporters see this as a politically motivated attack by the school administration designed to silence and target her for her activism. Soon after her discipline hearing about the text message, Garcia was accused of unauthorized fund raising.

She told local news that she had asked parents for voluntary donations of items for a classroom project that would benefit the homeless community. It was this request that resulted in another disciplinary letter in her file and one day's suspension without pay.

Garcia's suspension must be understood within the context of the broader assault on democratic rights of educators. The Trump administration has demonstrated a clear agenda to escalate the suppression of dissent among educators and students since Trump assumed office on January 20.

On January 29, the Trump signed an executive order titled, "Additional measures to Combat Anti-Semitism," essentially transforming American universities into a surveillance and immigration enforcement apparatus. This order targets speech critical of Israel, falsely equating it with antisemitism, and threatens to deport students from abroad who participate in protests. It also pressures universities to monitor and report students and staff to the Department of Homeland Security for deportation.

Educators like Garcia are being targeted by

reactionary school administrators and right-wing groups. Last October, a teacher in Philadelphia was removed from her job for her outspoken views on the Israeli government's genocide of the Palestinians. Also in Pennsylvania, Maura Finkelstein, a tenured professor at Muhlenberg College was fired for speaking publicly in opposition to the genocide in Gaza.

States are falling into line with Trump's anti-immigrant policies. In Oklahoma, the state board of education endorsed a rule demanding proof of citizenship from families in public schools, a measure that is in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment and the Supreme Court's decision in *Plyler v. Doe*, a 1982 ruling that requires states to permit children of undocumented immigrants to attend public schools on the same basis as the children of citizens.

These actions are intended to intimidate and silence those who are critical of the administration's policies. As an MIT student threatened with deportation told the World Socialist Web Site, "[I]f you don't fit Trump's right-wing vision of 'America' you will be deported, attacked, or threatened regardless of citizenship. It's rule by force and not by justice and dignity."

There is mounting resistance against the new administration's policies. A rally in support of Garcia last week drew families and community members, including from the immigrant rights group Voces de la Frontera.

Across the country, students, educators, and workers have rallied to support immigrants and protest Trump's fascist dictates. In cities like Laredo and Dallas in Texas and San Jose, California, students have organized protests and walkouts to challenge the administration's actions, demonstrating the immense unpopularity of the xenophobic ideology of the right.

In the face of escalating attacks on immigrants and democratic rights, teachers, students, parents, workers and concerned neighbors of all backgrounds must form committees in their neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces to share information and mobilize against the oppressive policies of the Trump administration.



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