

Another public school student in New York City detained by ICE, as immigration raids escalate

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On June 6, New York City's schools chancellor confirmed that another NYC high school student had been detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, allegedly for being in the country illegally. This is the second confirmed ICE detention of a public school student in New York in the last several weeks.

The teenager, whose name has not been released, is an 11th grader at Grover Cleveland High School in Queens. According to New York state officials, he was detained by ICE two weeks ago while attending an immigration court appointment with his family. The student's parents have not been able to get in contact with him since he was abducted.

Confirmation of the arrest came a little over two weeks after ICE ambushed 20-year-old Dylan Josue Lopez Contreras. Dylan was attending high school at Ellis Prep Academy in the Bronx and was in the process of seeking asylum.

The young man, along with his mother and two younger siblings, immigrated to the US from Venezuela legally, using the CBP (Customs and Border Protection) One app under the Biden administration. Despite following the legal process, Dylan was arrested when he showed up for a mandatory immigration hearing on May 21. He is being held in an immigration detention center in Pennsylvania.

In a statement relayed by his attorney and published in various media outlets on Thursday, Dylan said:

It's frustrating to be here knowing that I didn't do anything wrong. All I want is to go home so I can continue studying, to see the people who I love, and to be free. ... To people who are speaking out and taking action to support me: Thank you so much, I really didn't expect all of the support and it fills me with hope.

The arrest of these two high schoolers is part of an intensification of the attacks on immigrants in New York City and across the country, as the Trump administration escalates its drive to establish a presidential dictatorship. In recent weeks, ICE Gestapo have been on a rampage across New York City and other major US metropolitan centers.

In New York, agents have been stationed inside the city's three immigration courthouses located in Lower Manhattan since the end of May. The masked agents have arrested numerous undocumented immigrants, who have appeared in court for routine hearings for their immigration cases. Stationed in the building lobbies or directly outside of courtrooms, ICE agents have ambushed one person after another, dragging them off as they cried, screamed and pleaded for help.

Numerous ICE raids have been reported in neighborhoods in Queens. According to social media reports, normally bustling streets in Queens and other city boroughs—areas heavily populated by immigrant workers and their families—are almost completely empty, as immigrants hide for fear of being grabbed off the street.

This is part of the strategy of the Trump administration to deport immigrants more rapidly and without the encumbrance of due process. According to multiple reports, the government has asked immigration judges to dismiss existing immigration and asylum cases to allow for immediate arrest outside of courtrooms, after which the individuals are put in "expedited removal." This allows immigration authorities to whisk immigrants out of the country without a judge's approval.

This repressive strategy has been worked out by Trump's fascist advisers, such as White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller. ICE is working around the clock, seven days a week to meet the 3,000 per day arrest quota set by the administration.

According to the advocacy group Immigration Coalition, immigrants detained by ICE in New York City are being held in abysmal conditions in the New York Federal Plaza Immigration Court building. The group wrote on social media, basing itself on reports from arrested migrants:

Conditions are bad. There are about 100 people crammed in small spaces, some in bathrooms. No one is sleeping. There are people being kidnapped and held who were either tricked or forced into having their cases dismissed, others who had all their paperwork filed for asylum, people going for regular ISAP and ICE check-in's, moms, dads, high school and college students, entire families.

Mass popular opposition has erupted in the face of the growing repression. Thousands of people have flooded the streets of New York to protest the immigration policies of the Trump administration.

On May 27, hundreds of students from around two dozen high schools across the city walked out of class in protest against the arrest of high schoolers by ICE and in opposition to the immigration raids.

Lower Manhattan's Foley Square, the location of many of New York's major courts, has been the site of daily protests. Hundreds have gathered day after day over the last week to express their solidarity with the protests in Los Angeles and to oppose the immigration raids in New York. Each time they have been confronted by heavily armed city and federal police.

On Tuesday, thousands of people gathered at Foley Square and eventually marched to a nearby immigration court. The demonstrators were met by armed riot police who shoved some to the ground, indiscriminately swung batons and deployed pepper spray. Nearly 100 people were arrested, and numerous protesters were injured.

Twenty-four protesters were arrested on Monday after a smaller group staged a demonstration in the lobby of Manhattan's Trump Tower.

Two weeks ago, an aide to Representative Jerry Nadler was handcuffed and detained by federal agents after the congressman's staff observed ICE detaining migrants in the building and invited angry immigration advocates to Nadler's office.

The New York Police Department has mobilized hundreds of police officers to break up the protests and facilitate ICE's operations in the city. On Wednesday, New York Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch stated that the NYPD was prepared to quash the opposition to the attacks on immigrants. The NYPD's highest-ranking uniformed officer, Chief of Department John Chell, and Deputy Mayor of Public Safety Kaz Daughtry recently played golf with Trump at his New Jersey golf club.

Democratic New York Mayor Eric Adams is overseeing the crackdown on opposition to the immigration raids. On Monday, Adams, flanked by Tisch and other NYPD officials, stated at a press conference:

NYC will always be a place to peacefully protest, but we will not allow violence and lawlessness. The escalation of protests in Los Angeles over the last couple of days is unacceptable, and will not be tolerated if attempted in our city.

As he did during the encampment protests against Israel's genocide in Gaza at Columbia University and other university campuses in 2024, Adams has insisted that the protests are the work of "professional agitators." In a recent interview with Newsmax, Adams said:

We know that there are those who travel our country,

embed themselves into issues, like Antifa and others, and they have one goal in mind and that is to provoke and to create disruption and disorder, particularly with our law enforcement community. We identify them immediately, remove them from the crowds, and take proper police practice when they cross the line.

The trade union apparatus in New York has taken no action to defend the rights of immigrant workers or the protesters. On the contrary, the bureaucrats are doing everything they can to keep mounting militant opposition among rank-and-file workers confined to "safe" channels.

In response to growing opposition among federal workers to the presence of ICE and the arrest and harassment of immigrants in federal buildings, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) issued a pathetic letter telling federal workers opposed to ICE arrests to "explore" mental healthcare options, consider "peaceful bystander/observer" actions and call "elected representatives and any contacts in relevant fields and alert them to what is going on." The letter concludes, "We know that a number of our local politicians, especially our Congresspeople, are aware of the situation, but we also know that the volume of calls from constituents can influence political action."

The nationalist and pro-capitalist trade union bureaucracy, playing its role of labor police for the ruling class, either promotes illusions in the Democratic Party as an effective political opposition to Trump or embraces Trump's "America First" policies.

What is required is a full break by workers from the Democrats and the official trade union apparatus and the intervention of the working class through a general strike. As the Socialist Equality Party wrote in a statement on Wednesday:

The working class must use its immense industrial and economic power. The protests must be directed toward preparing a general strike of the entire working class to bring Trump's coup to a halt.

This can be accomplished only through the building of rank-and-file factory, workplace and neighborhood committees, entirely independent of the political parties of the ruling oligarchs and their flunkies in the trade unions. These committees, democratically controlled by the workers, will prepare the way for a mass movement against the capitalist profit system that lies at the heart of war, fascism, repression and exploitation.



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