

Victimization of teachers across the US for criticizing Charlie Kirk

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School districts across the United States are firing and threatening educators for making critical comments about the late extreme-right provocateur Charlie Kirk. Since his assassination on September 10, at least 33 educators in K-12 schools and college campuses nationwide have been fired, suspended or placed on administrative leave for social media comments or classroom remarks about his death. Hundreds more are currently facing investigation or pending disciplinary action.

The glorification of Kirk, orchestrated by the Trump administration and its allies, is being used to escalate repression, censor critical voices and legitimize far-right ideology. This escalation aims to purge schools of opposition, enforce ideological conformity and prepare the way for dictatorship and imperialist war.

The *World Socialist Web Site* denounces this witch-hunt, which is aimed not only at silencing teachers but the working class. It is part of Trump's plan for dictatorship, which also includes deploying the National Guard to major American cities, at the behest of corporate executives. It is also part of the nationwide attack on public education itself, with almost every major school district facing huge deficits and Trump threatening to close the Department of Education.

We call for a nationwide defense campaign, centered in the working class, to answer the attempt to ban all criticism of the extreme right.

The crackdown spans more than one-third of US states, including California, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington. These numbers will continue to rise as far-right online campaigns and state officials have intensified the witch-hunt, doxxing thousands of educators and subjecting them to further harassment.

State superintendents and other political officials supportive of Trump's agenda for mass repression have issued statements attacking the First Amendment rights of teachers.

- **Florida:** Education Commissioner Anastasios Kamoutsas

issued a memo warning all teachers that "despicable" comments about Kirk could lead to immediate investigation and potential loss of teaching licenses. At least eight teachers are under review, and more are already suspended or reassigned across multiple counties. Governor Ron DeSantis amplified the drive, insisting teacher discipline is necessary for any refusal to mourn Kirk and congratulating Kamoutsas for "bringing accountability."

- **Oklahoma:** Fascist state superintendent Ryan Walters declared any educator who "glorifies" Kirk's death will be banned from the classroom for life, with at least four teachers subjected to active investigation. The state is using the Department of Education's "Awareity Reporting System," actively encouraging the public to report and dox educators for posts or comments critical of Kirk or the far-right agenda.

This escalation is intensifying conditions already shaped by ongoing McCarthyite policies, including the recent rollout of the "America First" ideological loyalty test for licensing teachers moving to Oklahoma from California and New York. Walters publicly justified the measure as protecting schools from "radical leftist ideology" and is pushing Oklahoma as a national template for ideological vetting, Bible mandates and forced curriculum changes.

- **Texas:** The Texas Education Agency (TEA) directed all superintendents to report educators for "reprehensible" or "inappropriate" remarks about Kirk's assassination, launching a statewide investigation through a special online portal. As of this writing, there are at least 180 complaints under review against Texas teachers and staff for such posts, with multiple terminations already confirmed in various districts. State Representatives Briscoe Cain and Hillary Hickland have demanded firings of Texas public school educators who criticized Kirk online, amplifying the witch-hunt atmosphere.

- **Virginia:** Superintendent Emily Anne Gullickson has ordered districts to probe and discipline educators for any "unacceptable" comments on Kirk's death, leading to the removal or suspension of at least four public school teachers so far, with campus investigations spreading rapidly. Higher education faculty in Virginia also face formal disciplinary action, at the urging of right-wing groups on the campuses.

Within hours of Kirk's assassination, far-right online

networks launched a coordinated doxxing campaign targeting any educator, worker or student who failed to publicly mourn Kirk or who posted critical remarks. Trump loyalist and conspiracy theorist Laura Loomer threatened to destroy the careers of those “sick enough to celebrate his death,” while Republican activist Scott Presler mobilized his followers to hunt down and publicly shame teachers.

The anonymous website “Expose Charlie’s Murderers” contains reports on over 50,000 individuals making critical comments about Kirk. It includes their names, locations and their employers, to encourage their firing or worse. The “Labs of TikTok” social media account is broadcasting personal information about educators, professors and healthcare workers, demanding mass firings and calling to “demolish” public education, with a message urging parents to homeschool in protest.

“They’re targeting college faculty as well—bombarding people with threats and demands for termination just for making a comment about Charlie Kirk,” a California university employee, who was doxxed last week, told the *World Socialist Web Site*. “After my post was circulated, I started receiving a flood of hostile messages, links to right-wing posts and eventually had to block them. Then I received a voicemail from someone claiming to be state police demanding a call back. I didn’t think cops do that. It all felt like a scare tactic. They sent an email to dozens of faculty attaching screenshots of alleged posts. Innocent people are being harassed and targeted simply for what they say online.”

A Virginia high school teacher said, “Silencing educators for challenging harmful narratives is an attack on free speech, academic integrity and democracy itself. No teacher should face retaliation for standing against the glorification of oppressive figures. We demand their immediate reinstatement and a firm commitment to protecting educators’ voices and values.”

The response of the teacher union bureaucracy has amounted to open collaboration. President of the Florida Education Association (FEA) Andrew Spar issued vague statements about coming together for “safer, stronger communities” without naming Kirk, Kamoutsas or denouncing the ongoing witch-hunt. Instead he insisted that unions must unite, “not divide,” in the face of attacks on individual educators. In Texas, the state American Federation of Teachers President Zeph Capo condemned the “political witch-hunt” yet failed to offer any concrete protection or mobilization, simply urging districts to “review independent institutions” as the purge of teachers intensifies.

At the national level, AFT President Randi Weingarten and NEA (National Education Association) President Becky Pringle have made no public defense of teachers and staff. Themselves high-ranking figures in the Democratic Party’s hierarchy, they are parroting its hypocritical denunciations of “political violence” and lending legitimacy to the crackdown.

Over the weekend, Weingarten deleted a quoted post from Jeannie Rider on X that sought to distinguish the protests of students against Kirk’s appearance at Utah Valley University from the actions of the shooter. “I have deleted because some on the right thought it was a false flag,” she said. “I hear you; I want to be responsive so I deleted. Political violence must be condemned, and we all must de-escalate.”

Kirk’s career must be understood for what it was. As head of Turning Point USA (TPUSA), he played a central role in organizing extremist campus networks, promoting Christian nationalism, embracing the antisemitic, neo-Nazi “Great Replacement” theory and waging campaigns of bigotry and hatred against immigrants, educators, academics and left-wing youth. He was a core propagandist of Trump’s fascistic movement, championing direct repression of all perceived enemies—including support for police-state measures and the genocide in Gaza.

Today, the Trump administration and TPUSA are pressing forward with their campaign to transform schools and colleges into strongholds for far-right ideology and recruitment.

The campaign of intimidation must be answered with the development of a movement in the working class in defense of democratic rights. Independent of both parties, the organizational form of such a campaign must be a nationwide and international network of rank-and-file committees. This is the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC).

Only through the self-organization of educators, students and workers in every school, university and workplace—free from union bureaucracies and corporate party control—can the working class mount a unified resistance capable of defending free speech and defeating fascism and dictatorship.



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