

Hundreds of high school students in Oregon and Minnesota walk out to protest ICE kidnapping operations

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Students in Oregon and Minnesota walked out of class this week to protest ongoing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) kidnapping operations in their communities and across the country. Following the mass walkouts in North Carolina last month, the actions this week reveal widespread revulsion and opposition to attacks on immigrants among large sections of youth.

On Tuesday morning, hundreds of students at Burnsville High School, located about 15 miles south of downtown Minneapolis, Minnesota, walked out of class to protest ICE raids in their community. Video shows students carrying signs and chanting, “No more ICE! No more ICE!”

The walkout was triggered in part by a raid on a multi-family home in Burnsville this past weekend. On December 6, more than a dozen heavily armed immigration agents raided the home, shattering doors and breaking locks in the process. In the course of the raid, immigration agents disappeared four people, three of whom left behind children.

Speaking to local media, a family living upstairs was able to prove their citizenship to prevent being kidnapped, but a young couple living downstairs were taken by immigration thugs when they returned home from the grocery store, leaving their 7-year-old child behind. According to an attorney representing the parents, the father of the 7-year-old has a valid work permit yet was still taken by ICE.

During the same raid, ICE agents also arrested two other men, one of whom leaves behind a pregnant wife. Speaking to NBC KARE 11 in Spanish, the pregnant mother said, “They opened the door for me, when I went out, they were pointing their guns at me. My daughter was with me, and I had the little boy asleep on my shoulder.”

Hundreds of students also walked out of class on Monday morning across high schools in Washington County, Oregon, to protest ongoing immigration raids in their community and across the country. Of the over 611,000 people that call Washington County home, some 105,000 were born outside the United States. Major cities in the county, located to the

west of Portland, include Hillsboro (110,000), Beaverton (98,000), Tigard (55,000) and Forest Grove (27,000).

Walkouts occurred Monday at high schools located in Beaverton, Hillsboro and Forest Grove. Students carried signs that read: “Education not deportation” and “Stop separating families.”

Independent journalist Alissa Azar reported on the ground at Beaverton High in Oregon and estimated that 100 students participated in the walkout. She stated that students were demanding their schools coordinate actions with other districts to warn of ICE presence and help coordinate community responses, including through already existing volunteer rapid response teams.

Through the cold rain, students marched from the high school to the local public library chanting, “We will not put up with ICE!” One sign carried by a student read, “[Republican National Committee]/[Democratic National Committee] Both fund ICE. Both Will Pay.”

Azar reported a student told her, “We would be able to do a lot more if more schools would just contact the response teams. We have been urging [Beaverton School District, BSD] to act on this through protests, countless emails, voicing our concerns at board meetings—They straight up ignored a letter with over 500 community signatures.”

The student continued, “The current [Beaverton School District] ‘communication plan’ for ICE activity is a joke. It mocks the BSD families who are too afraid to walk their kids home from the bus, that community members are escorting kids home for them. [Beaverton School District] sent out an email today about the walkout but can’t alert families of ICE activity?!”

Mia Flores Martinez, a sophomore at Southridge High School, told Oregon Public Radio (OPR) that ICE agents had arrested someone in her neighborhood before school started Monday morning. “It really made our neighborhood shake with fear,” she recalled. “People can’t go out. People

can't go to work."

Emily, another student who participated in the walkouts, told OPR she knows "tons of kids who have been impacted by this having to go get groceries for their parents, having to take care of the household, them being the head of the household now because their parents are too afraid to go outside."

Emily said she knew several students who had to return to Mexico in order to reunite with their family after they were deported. "It was a really upsetting moment because their family had to leave behind everything at their home in order to come here and give their children a better life, but now they have to go back."

In addition to terrorizing longtime community members and separating families, ICE thugs continue to illegally detain and assault US citizens. Early Tuesday morning, a 55-year-old American citizen was taken by ICE while she was filming them in north Minneapolis. Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) News reported that Susan Tincher was taken by ICE after she responded to an alert from a local group she is a part of that ICE was conducting operations in the Willard Hay neighborhood.

Tincher, armed with a cell phone and standing 5 foot 4 inches tall, said she approached what appeared to be an ICE agent standing on the sidewalk across the street from a house that was being raided. Tincher said she asked the person if they were with ICE. The person did not identify himself but simply yelled, "Get back."

Tincher did not move, at which point multiple agents descended on her. She told MPR News, "Pretty soon they were throwing me on the ground and handcuffing me and then putting me in their unmarked truck." She guessed the whole interaction happened in a matter of seconds. "There were other watchers, who were asking me what my name was and everything," she said, "so I identified myself to them, then I started yelling, 'Help!' because I was being kidnapped."

Video reviewed by MPR News shows three agents taking Tincher as other ICE watchers yell, "Where are you taking her?" In the video reviewed by the outlet, none of the agents appear to respond.

While Tincher was handcuffed in the vehicle, ICE thugs menaced and threatened her saying that if she did not "watch herself," they were going to pull over and pepper spray her. Jim Tincher, Susan's husband, told the outlet he did not know where his wife was for hours. He said it is "incredible" to see that the "government can do this, arrest somebody for doing nothing illegal, and throw her down, handcuff her."

He added that seeing video of his wife being thrown down to the ground and handcuffed "was chilling."

After several hours, Jim Tincher was able to locate his wife at the Whipple Federal Building and picked her up. Susan said that while she was detained, agents cut off her wedding ring and held her in leg shackles with seven other people. She has marks on her wrists and neck due to agents' actions.

Even after being illegally detained, Susan Tincher told MPR News she will not stop supporting immigrants. "I'm just so concerned about our neighbors, our peaceable neighbors being abducted and the worries their families are going through," she said. "I just don't want this to be happening in our country."

The raids in Minnesota are part of a fascist and racist campaign launched by the Trump administration aimed at stoking fear and dividing the working class. Since the shooting of two National Guard soldiers in D.C. last month, Trump has embarked on a concerted campaign to paint all people from Somali as uniquely criminal and subhuman. Minneapolis-St. Paul is home to the largest Somali diaspora outside of Africa and is also represented in Congress by Democratic lawmaker Ilhan Omar, the first Somali American elected to Congress.

At a tiny fascist rally in Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania, President Donald Trump again attacked Somalis and Omar. Speaking on the former, Trump grunted, "They oughta get 'em the hell out of here. They hate our country."

Referring to Omar, he said, "And she hates our country and [Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez] hates our country. They all do." Trump later mocked Omar's "little turban" and accused her of doing "nothing but bitch." He again accused her of being in the country "illegally," prompting the small crowd of human dust to chant, "Send her back!"



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