

Pennsylvania high school students violently attacked by police during anti-ICE walkout

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20 February 2026

On Friday, multiple high school students were arrested and physically assaulted by police in Quakertown, Pennsylvania, while conducting a walkout in opposition to the immigration Gestapo and ongoing raids throughout the country. Fewer than 10,000 people live in the small Bucks County borough, situated between Allentown and Philadelphia.

Roughly 35 to 50 students from Quakertown High School, aged 14 to 18, participated in the peaceful protest, walking out of class Friday morning around 11:00. Video shared online shows students marching on the sidewalk in the cold February rain, at times denouncing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and President Donald Trump.

Despite the peaceful character of the demonstration, police rapidly escalated the situation. Video shows an older man with gray hair wearing tan clothing entering the crowd and physically grabbing a student. Later he is seen placing another student in a chokehold.

The man has since been identified by local sources as Quakertown Police Chief Scott McElree.

In video footage circulated online, the confrontation appears to begin when McElree steps into the crowd and extends his hand toward a student, visibly gripping a student's sweatshirt. As students react and attempt to intervene, McElree is seen entangled in a struggle.

Near the end of the footage, a uniformed officer forcefully grabs another student who appears to move toward the chief. The officer throws the student forward into a large planter. As the student falls, the officer can be heard stating that he saw the student "punch the chief of police."

Local news outlets report that at least five or six students were arrested following the confrontation.

Multiple eyewitnesses told ABC 6 that police initiated the escalation.

"I am shaken by it, they were children," one witness said. "They were children being ganged up on by adults with no self-control."

She added, "The situation was completely escalated by the police, and it was extremely jarring to watch."

The same witness described the aftermath: "At the end of it you could see [the students] picking up their school binders, their laptops, their backpacks after getting into these altercations with the police."

Another witness told the outlet, "The man started to attack the students, and that's when the other students intervened and tried to get him to stop."

Police, for their part, claim officers were responding to students who were "throwing snowballs" and allegedly "blocking traffic." As of this writing, no publicly circulating video shows snowballs being thrown at officers prior to the physical confrontation. Police have not released body camera or dash camera footage to substantiate their version of events.

Following the police rampage, a small group of students continued to protest the police brutality. One young person was seen holding a sign, now covered in the blood of students, that read, "No one is illegal on stolen land."

The violence against students is part of a growing pattern of nationwide repression targeting ongoing student walkouts. School districts across the country, in both Democratic- and Republican-led states, have begun suspending students who participate in anti-ICE walkouts.

In Virginia, 303 students at Woodbridge High School were informed they would be suspended for three days for participating in a walkout last week. The students, representing over 10 percent of the school's population, were told they would not be permitted to return to school until February 23.

School Board Chairman Dr. Babur Lateef said students were suspended not for protesting ICE, but because they left school property.

In spite of the suspensions, walkouts occurred at nine different high schools in Virginia's Prince William County Public Schools on Friday. Prior to the walkouts, the district provided principals at each of the nine high schools with a threatening letter to send to students and staff. In the letter, the district warned students that "walking out is considered an unexcused absence, for which schools may issue standard penalties under the PWCS Code of Behavior."

To teachers and school workers, the letter stated: "PWCS employees do not participate in walkouts. ... Staff are expected to be viewpoint neutral and consistent in their application of discipline with all students."

In San Antonio's East Central Independent School District, roughly 30 students were suspended for participating in a February 13 walkout. In an interview with the *San Antonio Express-News*, Claire Lewis, executive director of San Antonio Students for Peace, said her group had tracked more than 50 student-led walkouts in the city over the past month. None of the previous walkouts resulted in mass suspensions.

Lewis reported that an East Central student informed her that seniors who participated in the walkout were told they "could not go to prom or walk the stage for graduation."

Earlier in the month, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton announced the state would investigate school staff in districts where walkouts occurred, beginning with Austin Independent School District. Paxton declared that the purpose of schools was not to encourage students "to attend a protest ... designed to villainize brave law enforcement officials protecting our country."

The claim that the police exists to "protect" workers and students is a lie. The police are instruments of class rule, charged with defending the wealth and privileges of the financial oligarchy above all else.

In the latest example to come to light of immigration Gestapo killing a US citizen with impunity, last year, federal agents shot and killed 23-year-old US citizen Ruben Ray Martinez in South Padre Island, Texas.

As with the murders of Renee Good and Alex Pretti, key details concerning Martinez's killing details were

withheld from the public.

Martinez was killed on March 15, 2025 by an ICE Homeland Security Investigations officer during what authorities described as a traffic incident connected to immigration enforcement operations. While his death was reported in local media at the time, initial reports did not disclose that a federal HSI agent fired the fatal shots through the driver-side window.

The federal involvement only came to light later through internal Department of Homeland Security records.

The escalating attacks on students — suspensions, arrests, threats against parents, and physical violence — reflect the fears of a ruling class that recognizes the potential power of a united movement of youth and workers against the police.

The fight against deportations and police repression is inseparable from the fight against the capitalist system: the source of inequality, fascism and imperialist war. The defense of immigrants is a class question that will only be resolved in a progressive direction with the intervention of the working class organized independently on a socialist program.



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