

Oppose the persecution of high school students protesting ICE! Mobilize the working class against dictatorship!

International Youth and Students for Social Equality (US)
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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) denounces the growing persecution of high school students who are walking out to oppose Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids and the Trump administration's nationwide immigration crackdown.

Across the United States, students are being threatened, suspended, arrested and violently attacked for exercising basic democratic rights. In Prince William County, Virginia, school officials suspended 323 students at Woodbridge Senior High School for leaving campus during a protest.

In Quakertown, Pennsylvania, police violently assaulted students during a peaceful anti-ICE walkout last week, with video showing the police chief grabbing students and placing one in a chokehold, and multiple students arrested.

These reprisals are part of a broader campaign to intimidate youth, criminalize political opposition and normalize police-state methods. The same repression is being extended nationwide: students have walked out in more than three dozen states in recent weeks, and officials—from school administrators to state governments—have responded with threats and punishment aimed at shutting the movement down.

A powerful movement of students and youth is erupting across the United States in response to the brutalization and murder of immigrants by ICE, and the broader drive by the Trump administration to impose a presidential dictatorship.

Since the start of the year, students at dozens of schools across the country—from Tucson to Detroit to Los Angeles—have walked out in protest against ICE terror and dictatorship, part of a growing national movement of high school and middle school students, including thousands across California, Arizona, Texas, Wisconsin, Colorado, Florida and Illinois. Actions have taken place at more than 50 schools in recent weeks, often under the slogans “ICE Out” or “No One Is Illegal.”

In Michigan alone, students have walked out in Ann Arbor, Dexter, Ypsilanti, Detroit and Royal Oak. Coordinated demonstrations have also occurred in Los Angeles, the Bay Area, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Kansas City and Austin.

The courage of student protesters expresses the awakening of

an entire generation and marks a new stage in the political radicalization of youth.

These walkouts take place in the context of a nationwide ICE rampage, including the murder of Minneapolis mother Renée Nicole Good and CBP murder of Alex Pretti. These murders are part of a strategy by the Trump administration to normalize state violence, divide the working class and lay the foundations for dictatorship. The Trump government is directly waging war on the Constitution, democracy and the working class on behalf of the oligarchy.

The Trump regime's escalation of ICE terror and its mobilization as a domestic paramilitary force is an integral pillar of the plots to rig and steal the 2026 midterm elections. ICE is being readied to intimidate voters and even physically seize ballots and voter records in urban centers.

Students walking out of schools and entering political life are faced with concrete questions of perspective and orientation. One critical question is the attitude which the student walkout movement must take toward the Democratic Party.

The Democratic Party is not opposed to the agenda of the Trump regime. The differences are merely tactical. Beyond complicity and silence on attacks, the Democratic Party has actively enabled, protected and collaborated with the Trump government.

The Democrats agree with large portions of Trump's economic policies and have systematically enabled Trump's attack on the working class because they represent only a different faction of the ruling class. In response to the ICE terror raids in Minneapolis, the Democratic Party supported *increasing* their funding, in exchange for toothless “de-escalation training,” and have promoted the fiction of a “drawdown” or “withdrawal” of ICE from Minnesota as a supposed victory.

The role of the Democratic Party's so-called “left,” represented by figures such as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Bernie Sanders, and most recently Zohran Mamdani, is no less hostile to an independent movement of the working class. Ocasio-Cortez and Sanders, as members of the House and Senate, have voted for strikebreaking measures and for massive

military funding, including government budgets that finance ICE. They promote the mildest reforms to attract support from workers and youth, only to channel opposition back into the Democratic Party and keep it within safe limits. Such gestures cannot stop an administration waging war on democratic rights.

Since taking office, New York City Mayor Mamdani has rapidly shed his election rhetoric and become a pliant manager of the affairs of the capitalist state. Mamdani's declared "partnership" with Trump exposes him as posing no challenge to the interests and operations of the ruling oligarchy.

Students and youth must turn to the working class!

The mass demonstrations of the recent period against police violence, against gun violence, against the genocide of Gaza, against ICE repression and against imperialist war, reflect the broad and deep opposition to these policies. The experiences of recent years are leading youth to far-reaching conclusions, including a break from the bankrupt political perspective of seeking to pressure the ruling class.

Student walkouts, campus occupations, and protests have moral force and the potential to spark a broader mass movement. Their action must be oriented to the social force that has the power to concretely change the course of objective developments.

A sustained, coordinated work stoppage threatens the ruling class's ability to wage war abroad and at home. Workers in manufacturing can interrupt weapons production directly to halt military escalation. Transport workers can paralyze the physical movement of troops, fuel and weapons. Disruptions in the energy sector increase operational costs.

Workers can strike to prevent conversion of peacetime factories into war industries. Workers in social services and education can strike against cuts used to finance the military and ICE, and teachers can organize mass education campaigns and school strikes that link questions of war, austerity, ICE raids and other attacks on the population, to their fundamental source: the capitalist system.

The international working class is the most powerful force in world history. Youth and students must direct their opposition and energy to winning the working class to the perspective and program of socialism. The open break from any pretenses of legality by the Trump administration in its attack on the working class is producing a deep and growing radicalization of mass consciousness. The time for bandages and half-measures has long passed.

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) proposes the following steps to expand the student walkout movement and turn it to the working class:

- **Build rank-and-file committees on every campus,** and

hold mass, democratic meetings to elect student delegates to coordinate with local workers. Demand that faculty and campus staff refuse to cooperate with ICE or university administrations aiding repression.

- **Politically link the walkout to working class struggles.** Students must reach out to teachers, graduate student workers, healthcare and other workers who are already in struggle and propose coordinated joint student-worker protest and strike preparations. Students walking out should send delegations to factories, logistics hubs and other major workplaces, and pickets to reach workers.

- **Utilize the student walkouts as the starting point of a broader struggle.** A single day will not defeat a regime prepared to use the military and police violence against the population. The walkout should adopt resolutions calling for open-ended strike action, the defense of immigrant communities, the withdrawal of paramilitary agencies, to demands for jobs, wages and social services.

The struggles of students and workers must be linked and coordinated internationally. The international perspective and concrete links between workers of all countries are able to counter the propaganda that normalizes division, repression and imperialist war. Above all such internationalism contributes to the necessary political clarity that the epoch demands: only socialist revolution can abolish the capitalist system that drives imperialism and dictatorship.

Only the working class, organized independently and internationally, can stop Trump and the oligarchy, remove them from power, and reorganize society. The Democrats will not lead such a struggle. If you are serious about changing the world, join the struggle to construct a revolutionary leadership. We urge students who have participated in the walkouts, and those beginning to enter political life, to share this statement widely and join the IYSSE today.



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