

# No Bundeswehr in schools! Against the cooperation agreement between the state of Berlin and the Armed Forces!

Action Committee Nurseries & Education  
23 June 2026

We, the Action Committee, Nurseries & Education, condemn the presence of Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) members in schools in the strongest terms!

On 8 June, Berlin's Education Senator (state minister) Günther-Wünsch (Christian Democratic Union, CDU) signed an agreement with the Bundeswehr granting youth officers exclusive access to our classrooms. Anyone who reads the official formulations – “partner of schools within the framework of political education,” “discussions at least every six months,” “annual reporting to the Education Senate” – immediately understands what is at stake. School administrations and teaching staff at lower and upper secondary level, as well as at vocational schools, are to be systematically pressured into inviting military personnel to attend classes more regularly and more frequently.

This does not just effect Berlin. Nine other federal states have similar cooperation agreements; Brandenburg signed up on June 15. The Merz government is demanding that the Bundeswehr become “fit for war” against Russia by 2029 and the “strongest conventional army in Europe” by 2039. For this it needs tens of thousands of recruits – and they are to be recruited in our schools.

We know the reality: unfilled teaching posts, inadequate qualified staff, unpaid overtime, working hours regularly exceeding 48 hours per week, classes with over 30 pupils. Cuts to funding for excursions and teaching materials. Schools that are literally falling apart. The same senator who is bringing the Bundeswehr into schools declared last summer that the “free-for-all mentality” was no longer affordable – free school meals and the *Schülerticket*, a discounted or free public transportation pass for school pupils, trainees, and students – were “under review.”

For education, health and social services, the debt brake limiting borrowing to fund spending applies. For the Bundeswehr, for rearmament and the militarisation of infrastructure, it does not. By 2029, the defence budget, the “special fund for the Bundeswehr” and already approved major projects will run into many hundreds of billions.

This is the context that matters: there is no money for our schools. But there is for rearmament.

The message to our pupils is unmistakable: the state has no interest in your education. But it needs you as cannon fodder.

The defensive claim that youth officers do not engage in “recruitment” is laughable. Some 3,400 lectures to almost 90,000

school pupils and students in 2023; over 2,000 appearances in schools in the first quarter of 2026 already! Multi-million-euro influencer campaigns. The Bundeswehr role-playing game “POL&IS” in lessons for pupils attending *Gymnasia* for high academic achievers. Holiday camps for primary school children. “Adventure camps” for young people aged 16 and over.

Between 2019 and 2025, the Bundeswehr recruited 13,200 minors nationwide. In 2025, the Bundeswehr recruited 3,131 17-year-olds according to calculations by the children’s rights organisation Terre des Hommes. In 2025, one in every eight recruits was taken directly from school.

The case of Freiburg *Gymnasium* pupil Bentik in 2025 shows how the Bundeswehr deals with criticism: anyone who objects to a youth officer’s appearance in the classroom gets not discussion, but repression and a court case. Some school administrations, as the example at a Leipzig *Gymnasium* in 2024 shows, are attempting to prevent any protest against Bundeswehr appearances.

While the GEW and the Left Party protest against the cooperation agreement, they do not call on us to take joint, mass action.

The GEW leadership refers colleagues who want to fight back to official channels. The union leadership advises them to submit a motion to the *Schulkonferenz* (school conference), the highest decision-making and advisory body at a German school. Acting essentially as the school’s parliament, it brings together teachers, parents, and students to vote on major school policies, rules, and budgets.

This is the advice of an apparatus that does not want struggle, but the containment of the conflict.

The so-called “lack of balance” is also a trap. The GEW demands that for every Bundeswehr visit “peace policy actors” must also be invited. That might sound reasonable – but it accepts the Bundeswehr as a legitimate “education partner.”

That is precisely what we dispute. The Bundeswehr has no business in schools. Full stop.

The Left Party has submitted a parliamentary motion against the cooperation agreements with the Bundeswehr. It simultaneously supports rearmament wherever it shares power. In the Bundesrat (upper house of parliament), the Left Party, as a coalition partner in the state governments of Bremen and Mecklenburg-Western

Pomerania, voted in favour of the massive rearmament package. As state premier of Thuringia, Bodo Ramelow openly called for the reintroduction of conscription. In Berlin, the Left Party sat in government from 2002 to 2011 and from 2016 to 2023, carrying out social cuts whose consequences we feel daily in our schools today. For 10 years in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Simone Oldenburg (Left Party) denounced the cooperation agreement there. Since 2021, she has been state education minister herself – and has not terminated the cooperation agreement!

This party is not waging a struggle against the militarisation of education. It is administering it.

We must spell out what is at stake here.

The Bundeswehr deliberately exploits young people's fears about the future in order to win them for military service – while the same policy denies them education or prospects, and denies all of us affordable housing and a secure social existence.

When youth officers are sent into classrooms, when children sit on tanks and do shooting exercises with soldiers, when the Bundeswehr organises holiday camps and is present at shooting festivals and in public squares – that is a conscious connection to the military traditions and war propaganda of the 20th century.

Not because the uniforms are similar. But because the same social force – German capitalism, which chases after profits, raw materials and spheres of influence – is once again at war.

Twice in the 20th century, German imperialism attempted to secure dominance in Europe through military force. The First World War cost 17 million their lives. The Second – unleashed by the German Nazi regime, which emerged from the deepest crisis of capitalism – brought the industrialised mass murder of six million Jews and 27 million dead in the Soviet Union alone. In both wars, military propaganda in schools played a central role: entire generations were raised as cannon fodder.

The resistance among young people is immense. On May 8, 2026, 10,000 school pupils demonstrated against conscription in Berlin alone, 45,000 nationwide in over 105 cities. Fifty-nine percent of 18- to 29-year-olds are against conscription; 28 percent of the young men contacted ignored the conscription registration questionnaire.

But the organisations that have so far organised these protests – SDAJ, Grüne Jugend, Jusos, Linksjugend (the youth organisations, respectively, of the Stalinist German Communist Party, Greens, Social Democrats and Left Party) – are leading the movement into a dead end. They talk of “peace” without naming the cause of war: an economic system in which the pursuit of profits inevitably drives the ruling class into military confrontation. Whoever wants to fight war without impinging on capitalism will fail.

We must say this to young people and also to parents. They are our strongest allies. No school administration ignores an outraged parents' meeting. No district authority withstands the pressure of organised parents when teachers and parents act together. We call on all parents: your children should learn, not die. Join the resistance.

If school administrators have invited a youth officer or the Bundeswehr is active in the vicinity of the school or day care centre, speak with colleagues. Draft a short statement. Inform the

parents' representative body. Build independent rank-and-file action committees with us at every school and every day care centre. Take the conflict to the public with us, into the residential districts and workplaces where the families of our children live and work.

- **Immediate termination of the cooperation agreement between the state of Berlin and the Bundeswehr.** No youth officers, no career advisers, no Bundeswehr advertising at schools, vocational schools or higher education institutions or in holiday camps.

- **Stop all conscription assessment and registration procedures.**

- **No cuts in the education sector.** Massive investment in schools, immediate filling of all unfilled teaching posts, renovation of school buildings. The money for education is there, but it is stuck in the armaments budget and with the super-rich.

- **Build independent action committees at every school and vocational school, at every higher education institution and day care centre,** outside and against the establishment parties and the trade union bureaucracy, which are supporting rearmament.

We insist on the principle that education is more important than profit!

**For a socialist perspective,** because war and militarism are products of the capitalist system, which places profits above human lives. Only the overcoming of this system can permanently eliminate war, militarism and conscription.

**International solidarity of the working class,** because in every country working people are confronted with the same attacks: wage cuts, social cuts, militarisation. These workers are our allies – not the functionaries of the establishment parties. We are therefore building links with the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees, as set out in our founding resolution.

*Get in touch with us: for questions, criticism, to get involved – send a message via WhatsApp (+491748402566) or register using the form below!*



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