

“Children need protection, not COVID infections!”

Broad support in Germany for October 1st school strike to protect children from COVID-19

Our reporters
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Last Friday’s global school strike, initially called for by British parent Lisa Diaz, met with widespread support around the world, indicating the enormous opposition within the international working class to the ruling elites’ murderous “herd immunity” policies. Throughout the week leading up to and including the strike, hundreds of thousands of people viewed tweets with the primary hashtag for the event, #SchoolStrike2021. There were over 26,000 tweets with this hashtag, including more than 11,000 on October 1 alone when it was trending for hours.

On the day of the school strike, dozens of video statements were posted on Twitter expressing solidarity from parents, students and teachers in the UK, France, the US, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and from workers in many other countries. The strike also met with a great response in Germany. Many of those affected posted video statements and shared pictures on social media.

Joshua, a student from Nuremberg, organized a protest action together with fellow students and friends, and expressed solidarity with the strike in a video statement:

Joshua stated, “I stand completely behind this strike call. Like millions of other children and young people around the world, I am in danger of being infected when in school. Today, with the ending of mask-wearing, the last bastion of protection against the virus has gone.”

He added, “None of the establishment parties fight for the protection and health of we pupils, children and young people. We must take the fight to defend our

health and safety into our own hands. If we don’t do something, then nobody else will do it. That’s why I stand in solidarity with today’s school strike in Britain and call on everyone to support it.”

Other students expressed similar sentiments. **Laura**, who attends 13th grade at a high school in Saxony-Anhalt, wrote on Instagram, “Against politics that puts the interests of business above the protection of people. #SchoolStrike2021.” Her self-made poster reads, “Life not profits! Stop the politics of herd immunity! Your future, your fight. #ParentStrike2021.”

Tamino, a 12th grade student from Baden-Württemberg, Germany, produced the following video statement:

Tamino stated, “I am a student from Baden-Württemberg, and I stand in solidarity with today’s school strike in the UK and the protests worldwide. Just like there, here in Germany, school openings are accompanied by a massive increase in infections among students. Especially with the Delta variant, the situation among children and young people has worsened enormously. Nevertheless, all protective measures in schools continue to be dismantled. With this dangerous profits-before-lives policy, governments worldwide are placing the lives of students, teachers and parents at risk. That’s why we ourselves must take the initiative to force through safe education and school closures with a European-wide school strike, as part of a strategy to eradicate the virus.”

Teachers and other workers also actively participated in the strike, sending solidarity greetings.

Elementary school teacher Anna posted a picture of

her children's satchels along with the text, "These satchels stay home! Until something is done for the children! My children, my decision!"

Moritz Strohm sent his message of solidarity directly to WSWS, which posted live updates during the strike.

Moritz stated, "I am an IT worker (software developer) and want to express my support for today's school strike. Children deserve safe and good educational facilities instead of schools where they are at high risk of being infected with a deadly virus. Children are not responsible for the coronavirus pandemic. Why are they being punished anyway?"

"My solidarity goes out to all workers, parents and their children who will no longer allow them to be on the front lines of the battlefield against the virus. Children need protection, not COVID infections! #SafeEdForAll #ZeroCovid."

Andy Niklaus, a bus driver in Berlin and a member of the Transportation Workers Action Committee for Safe Workplaces, expressed his "full support" for the call for the school strike in a video.

Andy stated, "I think this is the right way for a long-term strategy to achieve ZeroCovid, namely to organize a global school strike. Especially here in Berlin, where up to one thousand children have been infected in the last five weeks, that is, since the end of the summer vacations.

"Here, the 'red-red-green' government, i.e., consisting of social democrats, greens and the pseudo-left Left Party, covered for by the GEW education union and the other trade unions, wants to lift compulsory mask wearing for pupils from the 1st to the 6th grade. This is criminal, this has to be stopped and this can be stopped, by our own independent actions that we take as workers, parents and students. Namely, to bring forward this global resistance that is now emerging. That's why I'm especially supportive of the school strike today. Thanks again Lisa in the UK."

Martin, an educator from Saxony, explained in another video statement, "I'm standing in front of a Berlin primary school, the incidence level per 100,000 in this age group is around 200. Nevertheless, the state government decided to halt the requirement to wear masks and is sabotaging the quarantine rule. That's why I warmly support the October 1 international strike call to protect children and against their infection."

Martin added, "I come from Saxony, where the

incidence level in the same age group is over 200, and even 300 in kindergartens where I work. It shows that whether it's here in Berlin, with a supposedly left-wing government, or in Saxony where it's a right-wing government, all the establishment parties are implementing a policy of the mass infection of children. They are sabotaging the simplest measures such as quarantining, sacrificing the health of millions of children, in the economic interests of the banks and corporations. After millions of people have died in the pandemic around the world, now it's children that are being sacrificed to the money-grubbing of the financial markets and corporations.

"From the start, scientific advice was not listened to, but instead a contradictory irrational pandemic policy was pursued. This was limited to doing only the bare minimum and never what could be really effective in eliminating the virus and to protect all lives. At the same time, the social consequences and burden were put on the shoulders of ordinary people, while the finance markets and corporations received billions in rescue packages. This meant they made gigantic profits.

"The balance sheet after nearly two years of the pandemic shows the bankruptcy of the entire political establishment worldwide. It shows the absolute necessity that we, not just educators but parents and workers, must join together all over the world to end the pandemic in a social and democratic way."



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