

OPINION

Kids Across the Country Are Protesting COVID Conditions In Schools. Are You Listening To Them?

The topic of in-person learning is often framed around the adults when we should also be listening to the kids.
By **Murjani Rawls** 2/22 10:45AM | Comments (47) | Alerts



Students gather outside of CPS headquarters to stage one of several mass "Walkout for COVID Safety" at high schools due to the Omicron spread in Chicago, Illinois, U.S. January 14, 2022. Photo: REUTERS/Jim Wondruska

When it comes to COVID and schools, the loudest voices are always adults. Lawmakers, governors, and congressional representatives agree that kids need to learn in person—even in the storm of another surge of COVID cases due to the omicron variant. But the prominent voices that get drowned out are the young people. Along with teachers, they are the ones who have to sit in school, five days a week, without high-quality masks and proper ventilation.

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NYC Student Walkout for COVID Safety

When: **Tuesday, January 11th, at 12:15 P.M.**

Join your fellow students in a **walkout** to urge NYC to offer the necessary remote learning options and safety precautions as COVID cases rise!

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A New York student spoke to [the Daily News](#) about the conditions in Brooklyn Tech. It was there that 600 students left:

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"It doesn't feel safe to be in school to be honest," said Danny Mui, a sophomore at the 6,000-student Brooklyn Tech. "In my classes, half the classes aren't there. Some have COVID, some are afraid of COVID, and the school just isn't doing anything about it."

A Harlan High School student spoke to [Courthouse News](#):

"We need to be remote," one Harlan High School student said, reporting sick absences and a lack of social distancing in classrooms. "I need online school because I don't want to die."

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In Chicago, a collection of students formed [Chi-RADS](#), a student anti-capitalist activism group. They recently gathered outside Chicago Public School District's central offices to demand better conditions.

"End your use of performative language when attempting to fulfill the mayor's political agenda. In order to genuinely take into account the best interest of students, ask us directly or include us in conversations,"

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1,200 students in Oakland signed a petition noting they would stay home unless school administrators provide additional Covid protections, including more N95 masks, weekly testing, and better social distancing.

A student from Washington Preparatory High School spoke to [The Guardian](#):

"I think the number one emotion I feel is just frustrated." Favour Akingbemi, 17, a senior at Washington Preparatory high school in South LA, told the Guardian earlier this month. Nearly three of Akingbemi's four high school years have been defined by Covid-19. "It's upsetting that we're still stuck in this pandemic," she said.

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That is just a small sample size. Students are taking to social media and organizing to draw attention to this all over the country. COVID cases and hospitalizations are still abnormally high. There's a consensus that kids do better with in-person learning—I'm sure even the kids agree with that. Many schools in America provide needed meals like breakfast which aren't received at home.

It's also important to do it safely—considering that most of the students affected will be Black and people of color. Some public schools don't have the resources to buy bulk necessities of high-quality masks. Hell, they don't even pay the teachers and faculty well. So, the next time you see a press conference where a politician screams the need for schools to be open, be sure to note those who participate in school will need their needs met as well.

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This isn't all to say that this pandemic and the back-and-forth hasn't been hard on parents—it absolutely has been. But there also needs to be a real push to keep kids safe from a virus that could impact them for years to come. Our students and teachers shouldn't be sacrificial pawns for a false sense of normalcy.

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OPINION > OPINION

DISCUSSION

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Murry Chang (@kinja.com/murrychang) | Murjani Rawls
12/22 10:53am

Even in normal times school is framed around what's best for adults rather than kids: If schools cared that much they wouldn't have kids waiting for the bus at 6:30am so they could get to school for the start of classes at 8am. Classes would start more like 10am and go until 5ish. Show all 27 replies

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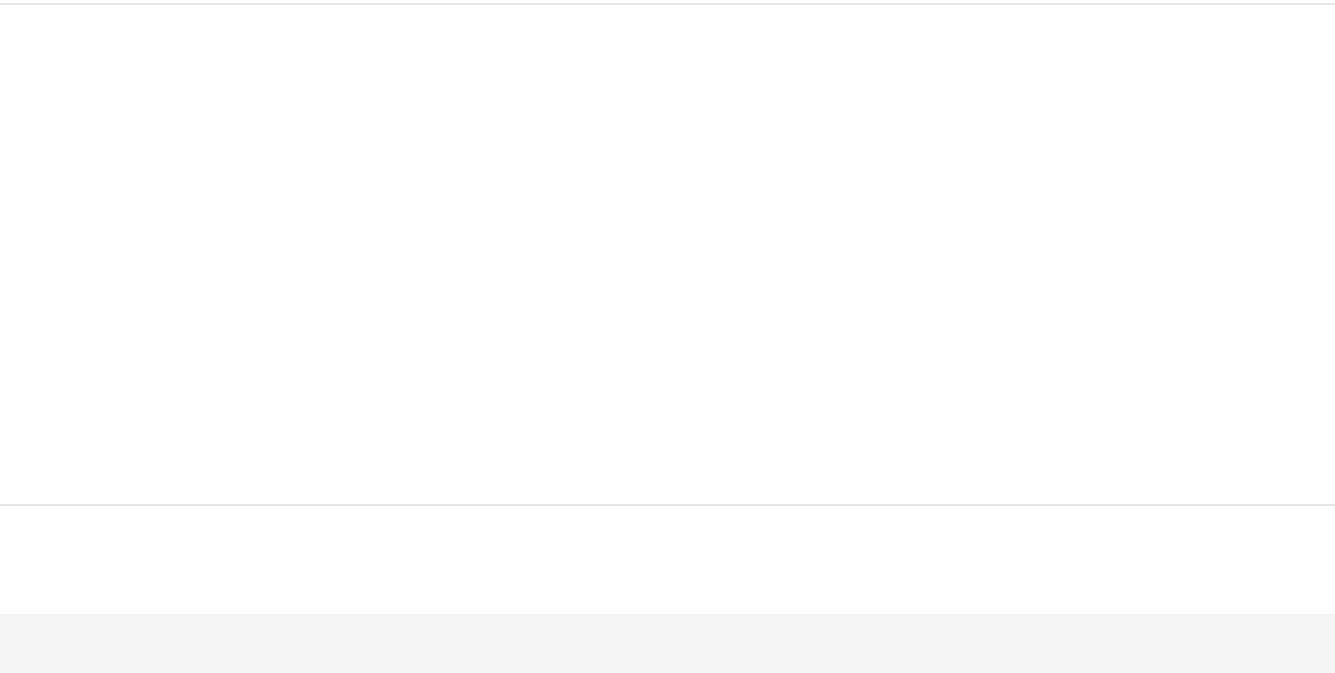
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'DONDA2 COMING 2 22 22 EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY FUTURE.' Ye wrote online.

By **Shanelle Genal** in hour ago | Comments (4) | Alerts



Ye attends the Kenzo Fall/Winter 2022/2023 show as part of Paris Fashion Week on January 23, 2022 in Paris, France. Photo: Pascal Le Sagrestain (Getty Images)

Even if you are not ready for *Donda 2*, [it cannot always be](#) nonexistent.

Yep, you read that right folks. The time has officially come for the follow up to the artist formerly known as Kanye West's 2021 *Donda*. Per a photo posted to Ye's [Instagram](#) on Thursday, [the new *Donda 2* is set to hit the streets on Feb. 22, 2022](#).

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By **Jay Connor** | Today 12:45PM | Comments (7)

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The Quinta Brunson created primetime series continues to get an 'A+' both from the network and its viewers

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