



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on April 9, 2018

## Oklahoma Teacher Strike Part of National Leftist Movement

On April 2, public-school teachers in Oklahoma began a strike (euphemistically called a “walkout,” as a labor strike by public school teachers is illegal under state law), demanding higher salaries, along with other associated demands. The strike will enter its second week Monday.

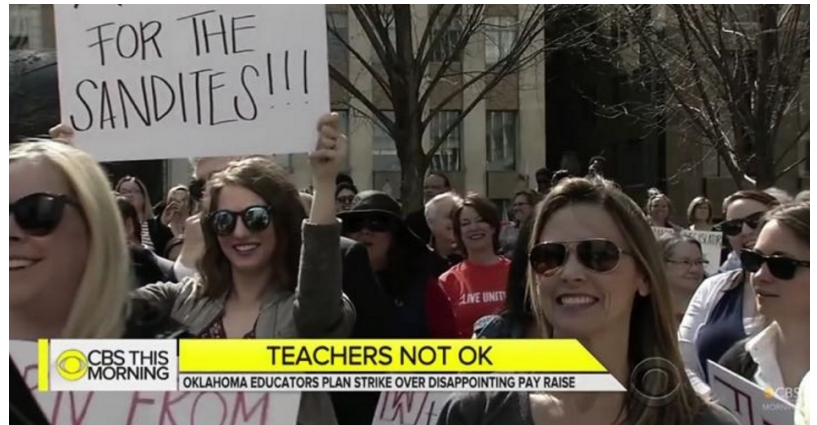
While supposedly an isolated event in the Sooner State, the fact is the Oklahoma teacher strike is just part of a national movement by the left-wing National Education Association (NEA) to energize the national Democratic Party and progressive causes generally. It is not surprising, and even understandable, that teachers in Oklahoma are frustrated at a decade of a stagnant economy with no raises (except for annual “step” raises for years of service), but the hard reality is the positions of the NEA and its Oklahoma affiliate are virtually indistinguishable from those held by the Democratic Party and other “progressives.”

The Oklahoma Legislature is overwhelmingly Republican, but in the week before the strike voted to enact a series of tax increases on gasoline, tobacco, and oil production designed to boost teacher pay by an average of \$6,100. *This is an astounding 16 percent increase in pay.* Governor Mary Fallin, also a Republican, signed an appropriation bill for education of nearly three billion dollars, an increase of nearly 20 percent. In addition to teacher pay hikes, the money would fund more money for support personnel, textbooks, and healthcare benefits. State employees also received a pay increase.

Now, Oklahoma will rank 29th of the NEA’s teacher-salary rankings, topped in the region only by Texas. Despite this, the strike began on Monday, April 2. Now, the teachers are demanding additional concessions.

What is going on? First of all, it must be understood that the NEA and the OEA are using the teacher’s desire for fair compensation to advance the progressive agenda of the liberal teacher’s union. A look at the websites of the NEA and the OEA reveals advocacy for issues that have nothing to do with education, but much to do with the various causes held dear for the liberals who run both organizations.

For example, we find the OEA even has a link to DACA resources on its home page. Other links call for educators to support the “Dreamers,” and even an “immigration toolkit for educators.” Astoundingly, teachers are offered access to a “Deportation Defense Card,” so a person would know how to best respond during an immigration raid. “Our resources can help you teach accurately about immigration





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and offer undocumented [illegal aliens] and ELL [English language learners] resources and support," teachers are told, which will help them "bust immigration myths."

In a link to "Teaching Tolerance," teachers are urged to "teach the facts about sex assigned at birth, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, and learn how to advocate for LGBT youth." Additionally, teachers are informed, "Binary notions of gender, biology and sexual orientation exclude large swaths of human diversity. This diversity can be better understood by using spectrum-based models. Spectra make room for anyone whose experiences do not narrowly fit into binary choices such as man/woman, feminine/masculine or straight/gay."

The OEA site also includes a link to the NEA and its support for "common-sense gun violence laws."

"In the wake of the school shooting in Florida and the ongoing epidemic of gun violence plaguing our nation, we must continue to advocate for common-sense steps to help make our communities safer," the NEA says. "We partnered with a number of groups to help lift up March for our Lives rally on March 24<sup>th</sup>."

And that is not all they have done, or that they intend to do to curtail Americans' Second Amendment rights. "Our Democratic leaders have held sit-ins, tried to close the 'terror gap,' ban bump stocks, as well as bipartisan groups looking at compromises on 'no-fly, no buy' measures." They also oppose firearms training for educators in the schools.

ObamaCare? The teachers' union opposes its repeal.

Governor Fallin has noted that the radical organization Antifa has been active in the demonstrations, filling the Oklahoma Capitol building and grounds.

*Washington Post* columnist E.J. Dionne, Jr., is ecstatic at what is happening. "The new teacher activism — born in West Virginia and spreading to Oklahoma, Kentucky and Arizona — is not a flash in the pan." He rightly calls it "a revolt."

It should be noted that the states targeted for teacher strikes are solidly "red," or Republican states that voted for Trump in 2016. For Democrats to regain control of the Congress in 2018, and the White House in 2020, it is imperative that some more states be moved into the Democratic Party column. Dionne notes that it is an "interaction of broad opposition to Trump, [a] growing engagement on the Democratic side of politics, and specific revolts against conservative ideas."

This is not to say that the teachers in Oklahoma and the other three states are all a bunch of Bolsheviks, or even Democrats. But it is an effort to channel their energy for higher salaries and ancillary benefits into advancing progressive causes such as transgenderism, gun control, and open borders.

Several years ago, I asked the vice-president of the OEA why they were opposing Reagan administration aid to the Contras in Nicaragua (then ruled by Marxist revolutionaries). After all, I said, what does that have to do with education in Oklahoma? Her answer was amazing — she said there were school children in Nicaragua! Of course, like many of the left-wing positions taken by the teachers' unions, there is no bona fide connection to teaching children *in America* such things as math, English, science, and history. But the leadership of the unions are liberal activists, and they see the teachers in their unions as pawns in their schemes to advance their progressive causes.

Image of teachers' strike: Screenshot of a YouTube video by [CBS This Morning](#)



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