

Charlotte students lead mass action against Trump's immigration raids

written by Gary Wilson
November 21, 2025



Protesters outside a closed Latine-owned bakery in Charlotte on Nov. 18

denounce the Trump administration's Operation "Charlotte's Web," which has forced businesses to shut down in fear of federal raids.

As federal agents swept through Charlotte, North Carolina, the first and most powerful pushback came from the students — the young people who showed what solidarity looks like in action.

On Nov. 17, more than 30,000 Charlotte-Mecklenburg students stayed home in a coordinated "sickout" to protest a federal operation targeting immigrant neighborhoods. By the end of the week, more than 56,000 students had refused to attend school, making it one of the largest student-led actions against immigration raids anywhere in the country.

Their walkout was sparked by "Charlotte's Web," a large, militarized operation launched by the Trump administration in mid-November. Led by Customs and Border Protection Commander Gregory Bovino, federal agents in masks and unmarked vehicles carried out warrantless traffic stops, stormed homes, and pulled drivers over at gunpoint. Nearly 400 people were arrested across Charlotte and surrounding towns in the first week alone.

The violence of the raids was unmistakable — and so was the response. Students at East Mecklenburg High School, Philip O. Berry Academy, Ballantyne Ridge High School, Northwest School of the Arts, and many others walked out with handmade signs defending their classmates and families.

Across the city, parents, workers, and neighbors built rapid-response networks to track federal agents in real time. When CBP tried to seize day laborers outside a Home Depot, more than 100 residents showed up, surrounding the agents and forcing them to retreat. Hundreds later marched through the streets carrying signs reading "Human rights have no borders" and "No human being is illegal."

