

Hundreds of Carmel students walk out of school to protest Trump, ICE

By Farrah Anderson

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Farrah Anderson / WFYI

Carmel High School students cheer and hold signs outside the Carmel City Hall building on the afternoon of Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026. The students were part of a nationwide protest against the Trump administration.

Hundreds of students at Carmel High School walked out Tuesday afternoon as classes ended to take part in a nationwide protest against the Trump administration.

The students walked more than a mile in freezing temperatures to the city hall. They said they were angry at the actions of the Trump administration, citing raids on immigrant communities, the separation of families and the deployment of National Guard troops and federal immigration agencies in cities throughout the country.

Many students held signs protesting Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE.

██████████ a Carmel High School student who organized the action, said this type of public protest is a way to amplify young people's voices on issues that matter to them.

"If an older generation cannot recognize those truths, then let it be the younger generation that takes a stand, makes the right decisions and shows them," ██████████ said at the protest outside Carmel City Hall.

The students' protest was part of the "Free America" Walkout planned across the country on Jan. 20 to mark one year since President Donald Trump was inaugurated to serve his second term.

It also comes as students across the country protest the Jan. 7 killing of [Genee Nicole Good by a federal immigration officer](#) in Minneapolis. The Trump administration has called the shooting self-defense, though state and local officials strongly contest that account.



██████████ another student at Carmel High School, is a descendant of formerly undocumented people.

"We will not go backward," ██████████ said during a speech. "We will not accept or allow fear, corruption and secrecy to go on any longer. We will not be silent."

Once considered a reliable Republican stronghold, Hamilton County drew national attention on the 2024 election night as [a potential suburban bellwether](#) Trump carried Hamilton County with 52% of the vote to defeat Democratic candidate Kamala Harris. But in Carmel and Fishers, Harris won.

██████████ the student organizer, said it's time to set aside political labels and stand up, because doing nothing is the greatest danger.

"History has shown us time and time again what we can accomplish when we come together. That is our power, the power to stand up, speak up and sometimes walk out," ██████████ said.

"Now is not the time to sit idly by and watch the world burn."

Organizers said parents could make a request for students to be dismissed right before the end of the school day. Carmel police officers escorted the student protesters along the route.



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BREAKING: hundreds of students in @carmelclayschools staged a walkout during school to protest ICE

Why is @carmelclayschools indoctrinating children to become activists for left-wing causes??

1/20/26

Video: Farrah Anderson

Hundreds of students at Carmel High School walked out Tuesday afternoon, part of the nationwide "Free America" protest against the Trump Administration.



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Tim Phares
To CHS Staff

Jan 15

All,

Good afternoon!

A potential student walkout could occur on Tuesday at 2:25. The city of Carmel has also been made aware of this possible event. Students are planning to walk from CHS to city hall.


We met with the student planning this event to better understand the magnitude and possible disruption this could

cause. The student was cooperative and after explaining our attendance policy and processes, they have agreed that any student participating will have their parent/guardian create a prearranged absence. The scheduled time is during a passing period and attendance should be taken as normal at the beginning of block four. If a student does not have a prearranged dismissal in the system and is saying they are leaving your classroom, please just tell them they must sign out at door 21. We do not want to place you in a difficult situation.

We will have our administrative team throughout the building during this time to help monitor the situation.

We are still gathering information and will continue to monitor with our SROs and the city of Carmel.

Thanks,
Tim

Dr. Tim Phares
Principal, Carmel High School
 520 East Main St. Carmel,
IN 46032

This isn't about your political beliefs. This is about standing up for each other's safety and the right for people to live freely.

The Free America Walkout is a nationwide protest, and Carmel High School WILL be participating.

If you're concerned about the office punishing students who participate Dr phares has assured me that if you have your parents put a request on the school dismissal app that you are leaving at 2:25 on Tuesday you are free to just leave.

For safety reasons only Carmel High School students are allowed to participate in the walkout and the March on City Hall.

Because of dismissal we are moving to door 21 and will be exiting and meeting there. From there we will begin a march to city hall where our protest will continue.
Dress warm and stand with us.

 **214**
Attendees

 Hosted by  

 **STARTS ON**
Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 2:25 PM EST

 Carmel High School
520 East Main Street
Carmel, IN, 46032
United States
[Get Directions via Google Maps](#)