



IDEA NETWORK Campaign - 2021

## DECLARATION

### AGAINST EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY, AN EMANCIPATORY EDUCATION

The world has shifted with the grave consequences of the global Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, affecting all nations and especially those with great structural inequalities within their respective populations.

This health crisis has combined with economic recession, rising unemployment, increased poverty levels and a deepening of preexisting inequalities; products of neoliberal policies that have spread throughout the planet in these times.

This situation is reflected in the education sector by growing inequalities between families regarding standards of living, levels of education, access to internet and the availability of technical resources and digital devices, among other issues. These circumstances also affect the precariousness of teachers' working conditions and overwork, due to new demands stemming from the sudden shift to education systems based on new communications in information technologies without ensuring necessary conditions for successful pedagogical processes.

As the pandemic unfolded last year, governments resorted to various mechanisms in education to adapt to the situation. But with a lack of public infrastructure for online education, most opened the door to large multinational tech businesses, such as Google, Microsoft, Apple, Amazon y Facebook, generating an environment for greater privatization and commodification of education.



In the face of these developments, the labour and social organizations of our IDEA Network call for a global mobilization to resist this assault on public education. We do so in the year of the centenary of the birth of Paulo Freire, a tireless fighter for emancipating education, who warned, “It would truly be naïve to hope that the dominant classes would develop an education that encourages the dominated classes to perceive social injustices in a critical fashion.”

Given the factors above, the IDEA Network declares that today more than ever, we must:

- Place pedagogy at the center of public debate and fight to connect and expand experiences of alternative education developed throughout the Americas. We consolidate education policies that place the right to education above those that would make education a commodity.
- Strengthen the bonds between teachers, their organizations and the community in a common struggle for universal, critical, humanist, scientific and creative education that promotes the protection of living things, nature, art and culture, and is at the service of our peoples.
- Demand that nation states generate legal norms and regulations that prevent transnational corporations from commodifying the education process.
- Respect labour rights won by education workers and guarantee children and youth their right to universal public education, from early childhood to the post-secondary level.
- Guarantee better working/teaching conditions for teachers, considering holistic health, and adequate equipment and infrastructure; together with the improvement of standards for vulnerable students and their families.



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- Recognize the importance of the Internet as a public utility. Internet access must be provided as a social right, but without opening the way for corporations to, behind the screen of “free services,” use the private information of users throughout the world as raw material to impose the values of the market and neocolonial hegemonic principles.

In this centennial of the birth of Paulo Freire, a visionary advocate for emancipatory education, and in the face of growing social and educational inequality, we declare our defense of free, secular and emancipating Public Education as a social right.

### **Initiative for Democratic Education in the Americas – IDEA/Red SEPA**

IDEA Network- Red SEPA #260-2747 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC, V5K 1Z8

Tel: 604-708-1495 ext. 4 - Fax: 604-708-1497 Email: [idea@resist.ca](mailto:idea@resist.ca) Website: [www.idea-network.ca](http://www.idea-network.ca)