



It's Time To Undo Tier 2

Old Labor vs. New Labor



Advocacy doesn't involve ordinary people in any real way; lawyers, pollsters, researchers, and communications firms are engaged to wage the battle. But advocacy fails to use the only concrete advantage ordinary people have over elites: large numbers. In workplace strikes, at the ballot box, or in nonviolent civil disobedience, strategically deployed masses have long been the unique weapon of ordinary people. The 1 percent have a vast armory of material resources and political special forces, but the 99 percent have an army*. Corporations and political leaders are afraid of the power of collective action and have worked tirelessly to make the word "strike" an ugly one; paying to frame the action as selfish, illegal, and unwise. The reality is that the strike IS the primary tool of a union, and we have largely agreed to not use that tool under any circumstance, even one as dire as working for an additional 12 years of our lives.

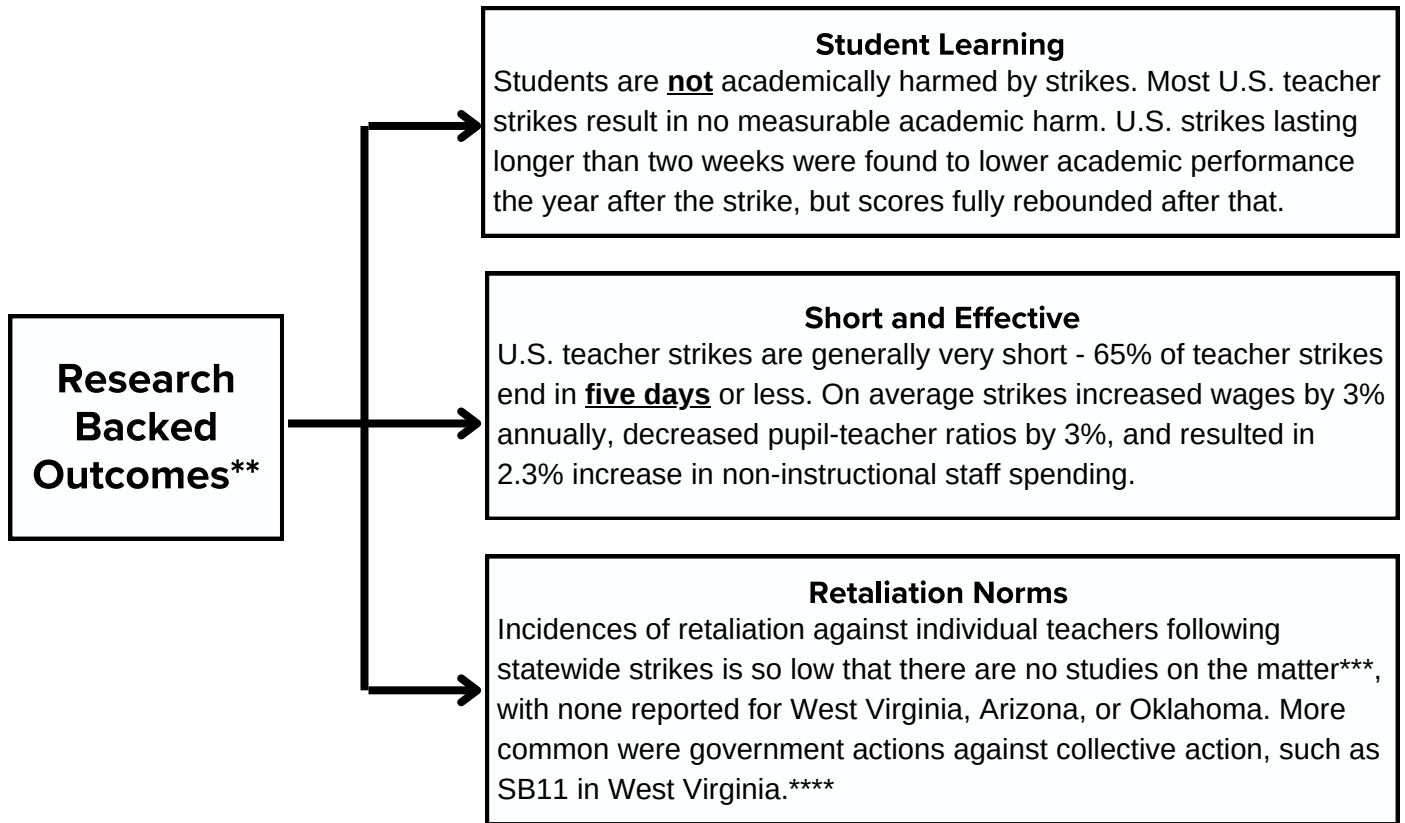
	Old Labor "Organizing"	New Labor "Mobilizing"
Focus:	Recruitment of large numbers of people whose power is derived from their ability to withdraw labor or other cooperation	High visibility publicity offenses (social media ads, rallies, witness slip drives, etc.) geared towards brand damage whose power relies on the leaders who craft the message
Action:	• Supermajority strikes • Sustained nonviolent direct action • Action occurs at the workplace	• Back-room negotiations with lawmakers • Fight policy in the courts • Action moves away from the workplace
Who's Involved:	• Rank and file membership • Organic leaders, person to person recruitment	• Professional and primarily "elite" staff • Grassroots activists
Scorecard:	• Creation of workplace benefits such as health insurance, sick leave, workman's comp, safety regulations • 80-100 hour work weeks became 40 hour work weeks • The "weekend" as non-labor days • Civil Rights Movement towards enfranchisement	• Ceded control of the workplace and instead focus narrowly on wages and material benefits (increased salary) • Unions in decline (from 14.9% → 11.3%) • Rewarded corporations by helping them increase their government subsidies and decrease their taxes

*No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age. Jane F. McAlevey

Strike Outcomes



A strike is the most powerful tool at a union's disposal. It is also widely feared. In recent years, strikes have begun to encompass sweeping social issues. The good news? New research* finds that labor stoppages lead to more benefits, without harming student learning.



*US Teacher Strikes Were Good, Actually. Vox. Rachel Cohen Booth.

**The Causes and Consequences of U.S. Teacher Strikes. National Bureau of Economic Research. Melissa Lyon, Matthew Kraft, & Matthew Steinberg

***West Virginia Teachers' Triumph Offer Fresh Hope for US Workers' Rights. The Guardian. Mike Elk.

***West Virginia Senate Passes Anti-Strike Bill, Teacher Unions Call It Retaliation. WVPB. Dave Mistich.



Take Action!

Sign the Commitment to Undo Tier 2 Petition to indicate your willingness to stand up for our system (it's confidential!)

Talk to other local members about the petition!

Contact your GPA to access talking points that will help prepare you for conversations with your colleagues!

Join the Fight! Scan this QR Code to be the first to know new developments and be on the front lines for collective action:



Successful Illegal Strikes



Teacher strikes have historically been about higher wages and better working conditions. In 2018, unions began fighting for more school funding from their state legislatures. Strikes have increasingly become “illegal” and administrations have pushed no-strike clauses into contracts with the express purpose of taking away the most effective tool unions have in negotiations. The reality is that if a supermajority of teachers strike, enforcing repercussions would be virtually impossible.

West Virginia (2018)

- A 9 day, 20,000 member strong wildcat strike achieved:

	5% statewide pay raise
	Five year health insurance premium freeze
	Strengthened and inspired labor movements across the country

Arizona (2018)

- A 6 day, 81,000 member strong illegal strike achieved:

	20% statewide pay raise
	\$138 Million in additional educational funding
	Increased membership engagement afterwards continued to drive a successful voter initiative for Prop. 208

Oklahoma (2018)

- An 11 day, 45,000 member strike, approved by union leadership, achieved:

	Statewide \$10,000 salary raise for teachers, and \$1,250 salary raise for support staff
	Increased public funding for schools
	Of the 10 representatives who voted against strike demands, eight lost their seats

Hawaii (2001)

- A 20 day, 13,000 member strike, achieved:

	All but one public school in the entire state closed due to the work stoppage = 99% teacher participation
	10% statewide pay raise over two years, plus one time \$1,100 compensation for each teacher
	Four instructional days converted to professional development days

Commercial Actors Strike (2000)

- A six month, 135,000 member (legal) strike, achieved:

	41% gain in performers commercial earnings over the following 4 years
	Stopped rollbacks from employers
	Became the highest grossing contract of any performers union

United Mine Workers of America Strike (1946)

- An eight month, 400,000 member federally illegal strike, achieved:

	Executive agreement with President Truman for a Federal Mine Safety Code
	Robust retirement and health insurance plans funded by Congress and implemented
	Standardized 5 day work-week for mine workers