

NYC School Rep Climate Strike Organizing Guide

NYC Climate Strike website: strikewithus.org/nyc/

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On September 20th, students around the world will be striking school to march through the streets and demand climate action from people in power. In NYC, we will be gathering at 12pm in Foley Square and marching through the financial district to Battery Park where we will rally and see speeches and musical performances.

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How to use this toolkit:

- If words are in **purple** they are the title of a section
- If words are in **blue** they are an important thing to do to organize your strike

Joining the Climate Strike

1. Gather Your Team

Organizing is not always easy and, in most cases, shouldn't be done alone. If you don't have a team through an already existing group or environmental club at your school, start doing outreach to other young people and adults* at your school that you think may be interested in helping you in order to reach the maximum number of people possible.

If you're not sure how to find people who may want to help, [try making a poll on your instagram story asking if they are interested in helping organize](#), or asking people to swipe up on instagram or snapchat if they want to get involved. You can also try asking a teacher* if they know any students they could connect you with.

Once you have your team (it could range in size from like 1-10 people, or whatever feels right), [create a group chat and schedule a time/place to meet with them asap to begin planning](#).

Pro tip: While teachers can be a great resource to help out with organizing your school, it is important to remember that public schools operate under Department of Education rules and thus cannot publicize events outside of school, especially those regarding skipping school. However, [some teachers might let you announce to your class that a climate strike is happening on September 20th, and that they should attend/get involved in organizing](#).

2. Make Your Plan

When you start organizing your strike, you should start by making a **timeline** of everything that will need to get done to make sure you are staying on track and keeping all the tasks organized.

[Example timeline:](#)

(Note that the first day of NYC public school is September 5th, 2019)

The timeline will be your holy book. Take it seriously.

Week:	To be accomplished:
Week 1: Sunday, September 1st to Saturday, September 7th	- Gather your team - Build a tentative timeline (can be adjusted later upon meeting with your team) - Optional: Find an artist at your school to make a cool school-specific drawing that can be used for

	your social media posts/flyers
Week 1: Sunday, September 1st to Saturday, September 7th NOTE: September 5th is the first day of school	- Get your social media visuals in order. They won't be posted until later, BUT they should be prepared and ready to go when it's time. (see: Social Media Visuals & Toolkit) - Design flyers. Again, they will be distributed later but should be all ready to print. (see: Outreach and Crowdbuilding) - On Sunday, September 8th: Determine when students will be walking out of school and your schools policy on this. (see: Determining time & place of the walkout) - Figure out the exact route you will be taking to get to the rally from your school (see: Figuring out your route) - On September 6th (the second day of school): contact your school's administration (see: Speaking with administration) - On Saturday, September 7th, Begin posting on social media! (see: Posting on Social Media)
Week 3: Sunday, September 8th to Saturday, September 14th	- Post every day for the next 12 days on your social media (story). Make sure that you get as many people as possible to do the same. - Tell everyone you see this week about the climate strike and refer them to your social media posts for more information. -
Week 4: Sunday, September 15th to Thursday, September 19th	- Post several times a day on your social media about the strike and get everyone you know to do the same. - Confirm the route of travel for your school to the strike. -

[Things you may want to include in your timeline:](#) Talking with school administration It is useful to have **flyers*** that can be easily shared with people who want to learn more about your strike. Flyers have a description of what September 20th is all about, they're short and to the point, and they have visuals and colors that catch peoples' attention.

*See: [Outreach and Crowdbuilding](#) for more information on flyers.

3. Sorting Out Logistics

This has 3 components (in this order): Figuring out your route to get to the rally, determining what time and where students are gathering to walk out, and speaking with administration about your plan.

Figuring out your route

The rally will be held at Foley Square. You need to plan out exactly how you're going to get there from your school. If it's walking, know exactly which blocks you'll be walking on. If it's by subway, know what trains you're taking and at what stops. When you speak with your administration, they will want to know these details.

Determining time & place of the walkout

Once you have your march route, you have to decide what time students should gather to walkout and where you should all meet. It makes the most sense to have students gather at a central place such as the school's lobby, auditorium, or gym after a certain period/band.

DO: "Everyone please meet in the lobby after 6th period to walk out"

DON'T: "Everyone please meet at 11am in the second floor hallway"

Speaking with administration

Now is the moment you've all been nervously anticipating. It certainly seems daunting to approach your school administration with a request to walk out of school. But it's not bad at all if you follow a certain procedure and are well-prepared. Here's a list of **tips and tricks** to help this part go as smoothly as possible:

1. Email your administration on a Friday (see: [Example timeline](#)), and request to meet with them the following Monday or Tuesday. It's best to email multiple administrators at once such as your principal, assistant/vice principal, and dean(s). Here's an [example email](#). Don't be afraid to copy and paste this and just fill in the blanks!

Subject: NYC Youth Climate Strike

Dear **[insert name(s) of administrators]**,

I hope you had a good start to the school year. I'm writing you about a huge protest that's going to take place in NYC this month which I would like **[insert school name]** to be a part of. On Friday, September 20th, schools and youth across the district, the city, the country, and the world are walking out to call attention to the irresponsible lack of attention and legislation regarding climate change. The climate crisis is the biggest issue we are facing, and if the people in power don't start acknowledging that, we are literally doomed. The main idea of the protest is to show

that we, the generation that is to vote in elections in the coming years, are passionate about climate change and doing everything in our power to slow its impact. One of the many strikes happening on September 20th will be located at **[location TBD]**, where groups of students from over 100 NYC schools are expected to congregate. My peers are I are incredibly passionate about our environment, and there is already talk of there being a walkout at **[insert school name]**. If this happens, which I truly hope it will, I want it to be in the safest way possible, as I am positive you do, too. I am working with several other students to organize this walkout, and we already have a detailed proposal to present to you about how it would play out. It would be great if I, along with the students I'm working with, can schedule a meeting with **[one or both/all of]** you this Monday or Tuesday (ASAP) to organize this and ensure its safety. Thank you so much for your time, and please let me know what I can do to provide you with more information, etc.

Warm regards,

[insert name]

[insert grade]

[insert homeroom # if applicable]

2. Try to meet with them during your lunch period or free period.
3. Bring all the members of your team to the meeting if possible. If not, don't worry!
4. Come into the meeting with all the details of the march route and the time and location of the walkout written out on paper.
5. Also be prepared to talk about the importance of climate change and the exact purpose/goal of striking (see: link to "Introduction to Climate Change and Striking").
6. Speak respectfully and verbally acknowledge that the administrators are sacrificing their time and energy to help you. Be thankful to them!
7. Subtly imply that the walkout is happening no matter what, but that you want the administration to be fully aware and help make it as safe as possible.
8. If, after your initial email or your initial meeting they're not following up or giving you answers, don't be afraid to send them another email, requesting that they follow up.

4. Social Media Visuals & Toolkit

We will be providing you with Instagram story and Instagram feed post templates that will already have the graphics and formatting; all you have to do is fill out the information specific to your school. You also can design your own art and graphics!!

The folder for all of the social media content is here: **[insert social media content folder]**

Posting is a key part of outreach within your school. Make sure you stick to a timeline for posting (see: [Example timeline](#)), and just keep posting all the time!

Hashtags

#ClimateStrike
#StrikeWithUs

Emoji



Sample posts

- On September 20th, the youth strike back! I am proud to join youth across the world in demanding lawmakers take action to combat climate change. strikewithus.org
#ClimateStrike #StrikeWithUs
- We, the students of [insert school here], are attending the NYC #ClimateStrike because decades of inaction have left us with 10 years to change the trajectory of the worst effects of climate change. #ClimateStrike #StrikeWithUs
- My school, [insert school here] will be joining youth across the world in striking to demand lawmakers take legislative action against climate change. #ClimateStrike #StrikeWithUs
- We are at a crossroads on climate. Will you choose money and power, or will you choose us: the youth? #StrikeWithUs on September 20 #ClimateStrike
- On September 20th, [insert school here] is attending the NYC #ClimateStrike to demand climate action. #StrikeWithUs
- Climate change is the biggest threat to the future of our lives, country, and world. We at [insert school here] are attending the NYC #ClimateStrike on September 20 to demand legislative action to combat climate change #StrikeWithUs
- September 20th begins a new phase of the fight for environmental justice and action. My school, [insert school name here] is attending the NYC #ClimateStrike to demand a more secure future. #StrikeWithUs

5. Outreach and Crowd Building

Now...drum roll please...THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP! You've done all the annoying logistical stuff. Now you want people to actually show up. Here's a list of things you can do to maximize outreach

1. Post, post, POST! (see: [4. Social Media Visuals & Toolkit](#))
2. Make flyers to pass around school. Below, we will be attaching flyers with the formatting and graphics done; you just have to fill in the blanks. You're also encouraged to make original flyers with your own art! We still suggest modeling the flyer information off the flyers attached. **NOTE: Some teachers and administrators may not be okay with you distributing flyers in school due to the fact that they technically encourage people to skip school. Public schools especially could get in trouble with the DOE for that. [If you can't hand them out in school, do it outside before and after school as students are coming and leaving!](#)
3. [Word of mouth is the most important outreach tool you have.](#) Everyday from the start of school to the 20th, you should be spreading the word every chance you get. Go up to students, including ones you don't know, in the hallways, cafeteria, gym, and your classes and tell them about the strike. If they seem interested, tell them to tell everyone THEY know about it. Ask your teachers if you may make an announcement about the strike in front of your classes. Never stop talking about it!

6. Getting Ready for the Big Day

We will be posting a schedule of the day on our website and social media platforms, so if people ask how the day is going to go, make sure to send them our way.

As the day approaches, make sure you are sending constant reminders for people to attend through posts, texts, and social media DMs. Individual outreach always helps with crowd building so if you have the time, remind people one-on-one.

You may want to hold sign-making activities after school or during lunch and bring materials for students to make signs for the walk out. This is also a great way to reach more people.

7. #ClimateStrike Day!

WOOOO! The day of the #ClimateStrike Day is finally here! There are still things you will need to do on the day-of, and it's very important to stay as organized as possible. However, don't be so busy that you miss the results of all your hard work.

Livestream: Livestreaming your event on Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter is an easy way to reach even more people. Make sure to caption the video with a brief explanation of your strike and capture the most exciting parts (speeches, singing, etc). Also, make sure your friends and family share it!

Take Pictures: If there are no pics, did it even happen? Make sure to take a BUNCH of pictures of your event (and post them!). Capture any speakers, any exciting artwork, and at least one great photo of your own walkout.

Share Your Story! Post on social media! People are excited by what you're doing and want to hear from you! Post your pictures from the day and take pride in your hard organizing work.

Celebrate! You just did an AMAZING thing! Congratulations! Make sure to celebrate all of your hard work after your strike.