

Puerto Rican Teachers On Second Day of Strike over Pension Cuts



San Juan, January 16 (RHC)-- Teachers in Puerto Rico are on their second day of a two-day strike across the U.S.-territorial island in protest against cuts to their pensions. The two-day walkout was launched on the first day of classes after winter break on Tuesday against government cuts that educators said will force many workers into poverty.

Principals, teachers and even parents participated in the strike, forcing dozens of schools to close down for the day on Tuesday. This morning, only an estimated 12 percent of teachers at public schools arrived to work, with less than 200 students out of 425,000 attending the school.

The President of Puerto Rico's Teachers' Association, Aida Diaz, called for changes to the teacher retirement system, adding that teachers in the U.S.-administered territory do not receive Social Security benefits and many would see a decrease in their pension.

The U.S.-territorial government justified the cuts by saying that it was needed to avert a financial disaster. The pension system has a 10-billion dollar deficit and will run out of money by the year 2020.

Governor Alejandro Garcia Padilla expressed frustration at the strike, saying: “For decades, it was known that your retirement system would collapse. Despite knowing this, no one did anything until now.”

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