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Students plan walkouts, anti-war rally

Anti-Iraqi war protests planned by university, high school students

BY JOSH RUBIN
STAFF REPORTER THESTAR.COM

Organizers of a student anti-war protest say hundreds of young people across the Greater Toronto Area will be marching out of classes today to protest the threat of a U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

James Clark, of Toronto-based Students Against Sanctions and War in Iraq, said students at universities, high schools and colleges will take part in classroom strikes, teach-ins and rallies.

"We've had interest from people at campuses all around the city, I'd say at least a couple of dozen schools. The biggest response has been from high schools," said Clark.

The students are sending a message that war is not an option, Clark said.

"With or without a U.N. resolution, we're opposed to war. Students and the majority of Canadians are against the war," said Clark.

Today's demonstration may be small in comparison to the size of other recent anti-war rallies, but Clark said it's part of a broad international trend.

"Even if there are only a few hundred people taking part in Toronto, we're part of a much larger movement. Look at the millions of people who have demonstrated against the war already, before it's even begun," said Clark.

At Ryerson, York University and University of Toronto there will be debates, information pickets and teach-ins in addition to the classroom strikes. At 4 p.m., a mass rally complete with guest speakers is expected at Yonge and Dundas Sts.

York University isn't expecting a mass walkout or disruption, said university spokesperson Cim Nunn.

"We're approaching it as business as usual," said Nunn. Unless laws are broken, Nunn said the university supports students' right to protest.

"What better place than a university is there for an exchange of ideas on something so serious," Nunn asked.



STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR
Tens of thousands of peace marchers fill Metro Square behind Roy Thomson Hall Feb. 15 during a worldwide day of protest against the U.S. threat of war on Iraq.

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David Cooper / toronto star
York University political science student Mostafa Henaway is helping organize an anti-war demonstration on campus this Wednesday.

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