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Students Complain to Prosecutors About Forced Rally Attendance

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Students from Dubna University in the Moscow region have filed a complaint with prosecutors alleging that the school's rector forced them to attend a rally in support of president-elect Vladimir Putin.

The students said the forced trip organized by rector Dmitry Fursayev and other university officials to attend a March 5 rally on Manezh Square was a violation of an article in the legal code forbidding those in official positions from coercing people to attend rallies, the BBC Russian Service reported Monday.

The university has denied the allegations. Fursayev told the BBC: "From my side, there was no coercion."

In a video posted online, Fursayev is shown addressing students with a megaphone explaining that students were taken from class to participate in an event the university was "responsible for attending," the BBC Russian Service reported.

He also said the university would verify reasons any students gave for not attending the event.

Opposition activists have frequently alleged that administrative pressure has been used to coerce students and public workers into attending pro-Kremlin rallies.

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