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Russian Students Rally in Support of Teacher Who Beat Classmate

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Students gather to sign a petition in support of Baulin. **Vl.ru**

School students in Russia's Far East have come out in support of their gym teacher after he was suspended for beating one of their classmates, media reported Thursday.

Valery Baulin was suspended from his position at a school in Vladivostok after a video posted on social media showed him punching and choking a 12-year-old student during class. A teacher who had reportedly asked Baulin to deal with the sixth-grader's misbehavior also faces suspension.

Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, launched a criminal investigation into Baulin's "failure to fulfill caretaking duties for a minor," a crime punishable by up to three years imprisonment.

Local media said students gathered in front of their school to sign a petition in support of Baulin.

Embed:

Video of the petition-singing showed crowds of children standing beside a sign that read "Valery Vasilyevich [Baulin]! Sambo. Sport. Hurray."

"Valery Vasilyevich [Baulin] is a calm man. You need to try hard to drive him out of his wits," said a student identified only as Vlad.

Local media was unable to find out who organized the petition, which was signed by "several dozen" people.

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