

# Why teachers should have guns in school

Scotty Anderson/Moscow-Pullman Daily News

We should put guns in schools. Who didn't have some sort of reaction when reading those words?

In Sandpoint, Idaho, school district residents have had the "opportunity" to debate about guns in schools. They are debating whether or not to allow teachers to have possession of firearms.

I read an article that included a photo of a teacher who was going into a classroom with an active shooting. The photo showed a young boy lying in the hallway. I couldn't even imagine such training exercises happening while I was in school.

It feels weird to say that I am in favor of allowing firearms in schools for protection. I am pro-gun. I believe the Second Amendment secures the right for the people to keep and bear arms.

I was in ROTC when I was in high school. I was part of the rifle team. I remember the day we were going over gun safety and there was a .22 rifle in my classroom. It didn't seem out of place at the time.

One proposal to arm teachers includes fingerprint recognition built into the gun. This will make it impossible for anyone else to shoot the gun. While it's a good idea on the surface, I think it could defeat the whole point of having the gun. Placing the fingerprint reader on the gun introduces a possible failure during a life and death situation.

The Daily News ran an editorial where the board said they are against teachers possessing guns in school. They posed a series of questions that had that been part of a Simpson's episode someone would have yelled out "would someone please just think of the children!"

If looking rationally at the Daily News' series of questions (as rationally as one can bearing in mind we are discussing arming teachers) they must be addressed but they should not be reasons to shoot down the proposal.

Teachers can be vetted before acceptance into the program. There must be clear policies covering when the gun can and can't be used. The caliber of the firearm can be chosen such that the likelihood of over penetration is reduced.

In an Arkansas school district, approximately 20 teachers were trained to have firearms in the school. They trained for more than 50 hours. They are armed with 9 mm pistols. I believe that round is a bad choice because it has a propensity to have over penetration and doesn't have the same stopping power as slightly larger calibers. Its poor stopping power is also an important consideration. The fewer rounds that are needed to stop the threat, the smaller the chance an innocent bystander is killed or injured by the bad guy. The fewer rounds thrown downrange, the smaller the chance that one of them is off target, which could hurt an innocent person.

Clarksville School District Superintendent Dr. David Hopkins said, "The plan we've been given in the past is 'Well, lock your doors, turn off your lights, and hope for the best.' "

But as deadly incidents continue to happen, the school district decided that is not a plan.

Applause to the school district. Rather than hiding in a corner and hoping not to be shot, this can be used as a lesson of self-reliance.

Just as Sept. 11, 2001, changed the way Americans will deal with a hijacked airplane, Columbine changed the way law enforcement responds to active shooters. An immediate response to neutralize the life threat is warranted. Having a sufficient number of trained and equipped individuals, whether teachers or support staff, within the walls of the school can make the difference in the number of innocent lives that are lost.

A great deterrent to thwart a potential shooter is the knowledge that his victims have the means to fight back.

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