

design by **sophie lindberg**
art by **nora lynn**



TEACHERS WITH TACTICALS?

East teachers should not carry weapons to increase school security because of the policies and resources the school already has

FOR: 16 AGAINST: 0

The members of the editorial board who agree with the viewpoint of the editorial are represented by for, and those who disagree with the viewpoint are represented by against.

34 SECONDS — how long it would take for 11 armed and trained Prairie Village police officers to run to East in the event of an armed intruder. Not to mention the three armed SROs already in the building. 34 seconds that teachers should spend barricading their classroom doors and corralling students into a safe corner of the room — not fumbling with a padlocked cabinet to retrieve a handgun that they only trained with for eight hours.

If an intruder with a gun came into East, on-site SROs Seth Meyer, Tony Woolen and Larry Fries would either be running to or already at the location of the threat in less than 34 seconds. Their 230 hours of training would have kicked in — they’ve run through scenarios of shooting while moving, around barricades, in low light, bright light, inside and outside.

A teacher wielding a gun at school with permission from SMSD and a concealed carry license (that can be earned with a mere eight hours of training) wouldn’t compare. Still, talk of arming teachers comes up in classrooms, faculty meetings and political campaigns after yet another year of nationwide gun violence.

Currently, no East teachers have permission to carry from SMSD. However, school employees in Kansas are legally allowed to carry guns with a concealed carry permit and specific permission from school authority, as outlined in Chapter 75 of the Kansas Statutes.

Arming teachers could be a possible solution to prevent school shootings at schools in rural areas where the nearest police station is a dirt road and 30 minutes

away, but East’s police station is only 800 feet away from our main office.

Instead of the focus being on arming teachers, we need to divert attention and funding towards more necessary changes like gun control and providing emotional and social support at school to ensure threats don’t come from within the building.

Plus, armed teachers wouldn’t have adequate training to bear the emotional toll of brandishing a deadly weapon. Eight hours of gun training won’t prepare a teacher to shoot a kid, especially a potential student of theirs. Even Meyer, who was a responder at the Highlands shooting, grimaces when recounting the experience of drawing his weapon on site of an elementary school.

Teachers shouldn’t be expected to carry that responsibility.

Not to mention, SMSD already purchased eight semi-automatic rifles for our SROs in 2015 — the necessary weapons to fight intruders are already in the hands of the people who are trained to operate them. We don’t need teachers with less training and a greater potential to mishandle a weapon carrying them too.

However, some continue to argue that we do. A common argument in favor of arming teachers is that it has historically been 100% effective in preventing attacks, citing the zero cases of injuries and deaths from shootings at schools that let teachers carry guns between 2000 and 2018, from a study by Crime Prevention Center analyst John Lott.

This initially shocking and pro-gun-convincing fact is debunked with a closer look at probabilities. Shootings have occurred at 0.1% of schools in the US,

according to the Washington Post. Since 6.2% of teachers are willing to be armed, there is a less than 0.0062% chance that a shooting would occur at a school where teachers are armed, according to studies by the California Research Center — such a low chance that it would be surprising if an attack had occurred at a school where teachers are armed.

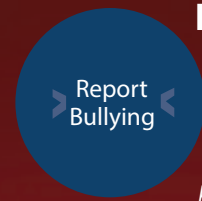
Instead of pointing to misleading evidence to justify giving East teachers glocks, let’s focus on upholding the new restricted access procedural changes enacted this year involving keeping exterior doors locked and speaking up when we hear warning signs of potential threats.

If you hear anything about someone’s potential plans to cause harm at our school, report it on the anonymous hotline on the school MacBooks or to an SRO in-person. Walk those extra two minutes around to the main office when you’re late to school, instead of getting a friend to open a door locked under restricted access. That way, potential attackers can’t slip in through a casually propped-open entrance.

We already have the setup, equipment and professionals to handle attacks, and the last step is to follow procedural changes that are designed to prevent shootings — it’s not to arm teachers.

Let’s stick to securing who comes in and out of the building instead of giving algebra teachers handguns.

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY



How to report potential/active gun violence

- 1) Click on the “report bullying” icon in your dock
- 2) Fill out the forum on the Sprigeo website in detail
- 3) Submit the report. An administrator will be contacted immediately

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