



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 6, 2019

John Lott's Latest Study Refutes Claims That Schools With Armed Teachers Are Dangerous

John Lott couldn't find a single instance of a shooting on a school campus where teachers and staff were permitted to carry concealed, going all the way back to 2000.



John Lott's latest study refutes claims by anti-gunners that the presence of firearms on school campuses increases the chances of gun violence. President of his Crime Prevention Research Center, Lott's study [answered two questions](#) raised by former Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the Giffords Law Center and others: 1) Does letting teachers carry a firearm on campus and in the classroom increase the chances of gun violence?; and 2) Does the presence of those teachers carrying legally deter mass shooters?

The [study](#), released last month, found: "We don't need to guess how the policy would work. There has yet to be a single case of someone being wounded or killed from a shooting, let alone a mass public shooting, between 6 AM and midnight at a school that lets teachers carry guns" since at least January 2000. Fears that a student might grab a firearm from a teacher and use it to commit gun violence are groundless as well, said Lott's study: "Students obtaining teachers guns have not occurred at all." Appropriately, Lott entitled his study: "Schools that Allow Teachers to Carry Guns are Extremely Safe."

On the other hand, shootings on campuses where teachers and staff are prohibited from carrying concealed have "increased significantly — doubling [in number] between 2001 and 2008 versus 2009 and 2018."

The study concluded:

Often gun control debates involve things that might go wrong if people are allowed to have guns.... Schools that have allowed teachers to carry guns have been remarkably safe.... While there have not been any problems at schools with armed teachers, the number of people killed at other schools has increased significantly — doubling from 2001-2008 to 2009-2018.

In his study Lott collected the data on all K-12 shootings that took place on school campuses between the hours of 6 a.m. and midnight on school days. He found 306 cases. But 48 of them were suicides so that left 188 shootings. In those instances, 193 people died and 267 were either wounded or injured. But none of them occurred on any of the more than 1,000 school properties where teachers and staff were permitted to carry a sidearm. In fact, the only shooting that took place on a campus where



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teachers were allowed to carry occurred after hours, and no one was injured.

Of course, anti-gun groups claim otherwise — in defiance of the evidence and common sense. For instance, Moms Demand Action, the anti-gun group funded by former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, warned that legislation pending in Texas and Florida to allow a significant increase in the number of teachers permitted to carry on campus “would make school a much more dangerous place for our children.”

The Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine published the results of its own study last September, concluding that “the presence of a school resource officer was unassociated with any reduction in school shootings.” That study was picked up by the Giffords Law Center (GLC), which included it in an updated version of its study that *The New American* reviewed last month. [We concluded that that study greatly overreached in its conclusions:](#)

The GLC relied on statistics obtained from the left-of-center Gun Violence Archive (GVA) for its “proof,” published last week, claiming that over the last five years (GVA began operations in 2014) there were more than 60 “incidents” where firearms were “mishandled” by their owners on school campuses.

That is more than enough evidence to convict, according to GLC’s chief counsel: “What this shows is, yes, there’s always the concern of somebody intentionally misusing a gun, but the point I think that these incidents make is that children will be at greater risk in our schools if there are more guns in the schools.”

And, Skaggs added, these incidents of mishandling of firearms were done by “professionals” — security guards employed by the districts. Imagine the horror, bloodshed, and mayhem that would follow if teachers were armed as well: “If these risks of mishandled, accidentally discharged guns exist when we’re dealing with professionals and well-trained law enforcement, the risks will increase by multiples when guns are in the hands of teachers and other poorly trained school personnel.”

We pointed out just how flimsy the evidence was to justify its conclusion:

To see just how weak the study really is, and how faulty the foundation that allegedly supports the GLC’s agenda is, one need only to get some perspective on the matter. Of the more than 100,000 schools in the United States, nearly half of them have the power to determine whether or not to employ armed guards — school resource officers — or allow teachers, if they care to, to carry a firearm on campus, or both. In its vast undertaking, the GLC, with the help of the GVA, found 60 — 60! — “incidents” that make up its study.

Three of them were in Pennsylvania. Philly.com reported that at the Russell Byers Charter School in Center City, a middle-school student bumped into a staffer’s bag during class last year and realized that it contained a firearm! That “incident” was included in the study. At a Washington County high school, a student found a loaded gun that a security guard had left behind in the men’s restroom. That outrageous “incident” made its way into the study. And in Chambersburg in Franklin County, a group of elementary-school students found a teacher’s loaded gun on top of a toilet! One more “incident” included in the study to prove the point.

Lott’s latest study should surprise no one. He more than proved the point with his groundbreaking study that formed the basis for his best-selling book, *More Guns, Less Crime*. Originally published in 1998, it represented a major stumbling block for anti-gunners like Giffords and Bloomberg. It was



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highly condemned by critics who called into question some of his analysis. So in 2010 Lott updated his study but his conclusions remained the same: The mere presence of a firearm, or even the threat that a potential victim might be armed, has deterred gun violence.

Today, more than 17 million Americans are enjoying the right to keep and bear arms, or about 8.5 percent of the nation's adult population. More than 20 states currently allow teachers and staff to exercise that same right on school campuses, with similar results.

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An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelmann@thenewamerican.com.

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