



Pilots Are Armed, Why Not Teachers?

Chad Robichaux, a former special agent with  the U.S. Federal Air Marshall Service, [has been here before](#). Objections to arming pilots following the Islamic terror attacks on September 11, 2001 were the same as those being raised against arming teachers. Said Robichaux on Breitbart News Tonight last Thursday: “Well, you trust them [pilots] flying your airplane. So now people are saying, ‘We can’t trust teachers with firearms.’ We trust them with our children!”

Robichaux worked with the Federal Air Marshall Service in developing and implementing the pilot training program launched following the 9/11 attacks and said that the present hostility toward arming teachers is the same that was voiced against the arming of pilots.

Prior to 9/11, airplanes were in essence “gun free” zones, an inviting target for terrorists:

It just seems to make perfect sense. If you make some place a “gun-free zone,” that is automatically a target for people [who] want to do evil and start killing people.

You’re basically announcing that we are not armed and taking away any element of surprise that a place might have if a shooter goes in.

There’s also the advantage of immediate response to such an attack if some among the shooter’s targets are armed: “These shootings go down at these schools in an average of three minutes, and it takes up to eight minutes for law enforcement to respond, and that’s eight minutes too late.”

But the objections to arming pilots are the same as those raised against arming teachers:

- The mere presence of firearms in the classroom [airplane] automatically makes schools [airplanes] less safe;
- Teachers would rather teach than defend their students;
- Firearms could be stolen, or misused, or go off by accident;
- Teachers might kill or maim an innocent student during a firefight with an attacker;
- Students might get upset in the presence of firearms;
- Even trained police officers have trouble aiming their weapons during such a firefight; teachers would likely suffer the same trouble;
- The plan would be so costly that many districts couldn’t afford it;
- The plan would require teachers to become police officers;
- When law enforcement finally does arrive, it could mistake teachers for the terrorist; and
- Teachers are so busy teaching that they wouldn’t be able to handle the additional responsibility.

Laura Carno, the executive director of FASTERColorado.com (Faculty/Administrator Safety Training



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and Emergency Response), thinks most of these objections are false or distort reality. First, teachers wouldn't be required to carry if they don't want to. Under present programs the district asks for volunteers and finds that the response far exceeds their needs. Second, the teachers and staff would be carrying concealed, virtually eliminating any concern that a student's tender sensibilities might be offended over the presence of a firearm.

The mere presence of a firearm doesn't translate into higher risk to innocents but lower. Just ask John Lott, the author of *More Guns, Less Crime*, in which he has tracked the growth in the private ownership of firearms with the parallel reduction in gun violence over the past two decades.

Many teachers already carry concealed while away from school, while eight states allow them to carry on campus as well. Another six states are considering such legislation.

Teachers, whether they carry concealed or not, are insulted by the idea that they couldn't become competent in the safe carrying and handling of firearms. As a graduate of FASTERColorado's training program, Carno saw, "No one is suggesting they be made into police officers. Authorized school staffers are extremely well trained in stopping an active killer, and [further] in stopping the bleeding for those who have been injured. Both of these skill sets save lives."

Carno agrees that, during a shooting, time is of the essence, and that the vast majority of these mass shootings are over before law-enforcement officers arrive on the scene. In addition she said, "[Teachers and] staffers are trained on how to account for potential confusion in the 911 call, and how to advise law enforcement who the armed defender is. Schools that have armed staff already talk to their local law enforcement to advise them just who on campus is armed."

In light of the reluctance of an armed sheriff's deputy on duty at the high school in Parkland, Florida, to enter the building and confront the shooter, Carno said that having teachers and staff armed in addition to such outside protection "is better than no one being armed."

As far as not being able to hit the target during the chaos of an attack, Carno reminded readers that "most of these killers commit suicide when confronted with an armed defender, without a shot being fired," adding that "any chance to stop him is better than no chance."

What about complaints that such a program will cost millions to implement? Carno pointed out that private groups have been raising money and funding part of those costs already. These groups include her own, FASTERColorado, FASTERsavesLives in Ohio, and the Buckeye Firearms Foundation. Also, schools regularly pay more money to teachers for taking on extracurricular duties, such as coaching or directing plays, and this would simply be one more extracurricular duty.

How much more federal involvement would there be in the implementation of such a program? President Trump, under attack from pro-Second Amendment groups for pushing a ban on "bump stocks," supporting raising the purchase age for rifles, and expanding and making more robust the unconstitutional background check system, got this part right. He tweeted:

Armed Educators (and trusted people who work within a school) love our students and will protect them. Very smart people. Must be firearms adept & have annual training. Should get yearly bonus. Shootings will not happen again — a big & very inexpensive deterrent. Up to States.

Up to the states, indeed. Let each school board decide on its own whether or how to implement such a program. The very last thing needed in efforts to thwart future attacks is more federal mandates, rules, and regulations.



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

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