However, no evidence indicates that having more guns reduces violence. In fact, it stands to reason that more guns will create more potential for school shootings, even if only accidentally.

This idea is not new, and GOP legislators (backed by the National Rifle Association) have often pushed for loosening gun laws and allowing easier gun access, [even on school](https://iowacapitaldispatch.com/2023/04/12/iowa-house-passes-gop-bill-allowing-guns-in-vehicles-on-school-grounds/) [property](https://iowacapitaldispatch.com/2023/04/12/iowa-house-passes-gop-bill-allowing-guns-in-vehicles-on-school-grounds/).

In this context, it is sad but not surprising that Iowa House Public Safety Committee chair Phil Thompson introduced [House Study Bill 675](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hsb675).

The bill would allow school employees to be issued professional permits to carry weapons and if current on their training, they are “entitled to qualified immunity from criminal or civil liability for all damages incurred pursuant to the application of reasonable force at the place of employment.”

How ironic: Republican lawmakers push for Iowa’s public school staff members to be armed, when school staff are hardly trusted to pick out books, or teach curriculum without government oversight. The danger goes beyond the irony.

Old western tv shows have long depicted vigilante justice with people wanting to take law into their own hands. Arming school staff is a step above vigilante justice.

Wayne LaPierre, the former CEO of the NRA, [famously said](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/feb/22/nra-wayne-lapierre-gun-control-cpac-speech-2018), “to stop a bad guy with a gun, it takes a good guy with a gun.” That assumes the two are on equal footing, like the cowboys in old westerns: start with their backs to each other, count steps, and turn at the same time to shoot.

This will not be the case for a teacher who suddenly is expected to risk his/her life and go after a person set on a shooting spree. Even trained policemen fear these situations. According to the Texas Tribune [report on the Uvalde school shooting](https://www.texastribune.org/2023/03/20/uvalde-shooting-police-ar-15/), “…police who responded to the Robb Elementary shooting told investigators they were cowed by the shooter’s military-style rife. This drove their decision to wait for a Border Patrol SWAT team to engage him, which took more than an hour.”

In a best case scenario, the trained staff person is not around students at the moment a person with a gun enters the building. Alternatively, the staff person would quickly barricade or move the students to a safe location, then retrieve the locked gun from wherever it is stored, bravely go towards the gunfire, and fire at the intruder without any student or nearby staff being killed in the crossfire or ricochet.

More likely, the trained person will first humanly freeze or panic. They may get an adrenaline rush and shoot prematurely, killing an innocent person. Adults supervising students must first make sure their students are safe.

Armed school personnel sounds intriguing, but too many potential risks and unintended consequences could come with more access to guns on a school campus. What if the gun is accidentally unlocked or taken by someone else? What if the armed staff person has a string of bad weeks and breaks mentally and emotionally? I do not expect teachers or bus drivers or lunch personnel to have to do anything but what they are hired to do. They do not receive combat pay.

Why is the focus not on increasing police presence on campus, more professional development of identifying at risk students, or providing more mental health resources?

Why is the focus for school staff rather than education? This bill does **nothing** to enhance education in our schools, which is probably why it was not assigned to the House Education Committee.

May I suggest instead that we increase funding for career education? I cannot believe I need to say this to legislators: Let police and school resource officers be law enforcers, and let teachers teach.

( taken from my article in Bleeding Heartland)