

# Comment Report

HSB 675

A bill for an act relating to school security, including by requiring certain school districts to employ or retain school security personnel, establishing the school security personnel grant program within the department of education, and authorizing school employees to be issued professional permits to carry weapons.(See HF 2586.)

Subcommittee Members: Thompson, P.-CH, Wessel-Kroeschell, Wheeler

Date: 02/12/2024

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: RM 19

**Name:** Sandy Wilson

**Comment:** Citizen Engagement declares IN FAVOR of HSB 675. Please advance the bill.

**Name:** Kevin Hendress

**Comment:** I support the intent of this bill, with some adjustments. We need to make it so that in ANY school staff is allowed to carry after they go through a training program. We all know good guys stop threats.

**Name:** Eric Jennings

**Comment:** I am opposed to this bill. Schools do not need more firearms they need parents who care for and are actively involved in the lives of children and teachers who can focus on teaching those children. Please vote no on moving this forward.

**Name:** Dillon Daughenbaugh

**Comment:** School staff are more than capable of being trained and armed efficiently enough to effectively stop a threat. Staff care about students and often sacrifice themselves to protect student. The Perry Principal is an example. He would still be alive if the insurance companies wouldn't hold children hostage, and he were carrying. We don't need and can't afford SROs in every school. We can arm 5+ staff in every school without hardly increasing budget. The law already allows staff to be armed. Put a cap on the insurance companies.

**Name:** Aaron Heal

**Comment:** Arm the willing staff

**Name:** James Vanveldhuizen

**Comment:** I support this bill, however there needs to be a change to address training. Anyone carrying in school needs to attend a yearly training course including a qualification. Staff should then be required to take more advanced training on a yearly basis including a qualification to continue growing their skill and adopt any new methods that have been developed. Proficient staff carrying will be successful if training is applied and everyone is held to a high standard.

**Name:** Andrew Ter Haar

**Comment:** As a parent with multiple children in school, I support this bill and the further discussion of arming willing and able school employees. As a parent, we already entrust the school district with our most valuable asset, our children. Why we would not take every measure to ensure their safety?

**Name:** Miles Murphy

**Comment:** Pressuring insurance companies to stop prohibiting lawful behavior in our schools by allowing staff to go armed is paramount. We in Iowa have made it clear, going armed as an individual is a key component to the personal safety of ourselves and those we defend. Schools struggle today to balance budgets, prioritize spending, and provide all the necessary services to the community; adding an additional expense of SROs to the school staff isn't the right option here. SROs are great, but can't be everywhere all at once. By allowing willing and trained members of the school staff to go armed is the only way to stop a lethal threat as quickly as possible. We should take this further and pass legislation to prohibit insurance companies from providing policies in the State of Iowa if they do not allow schools to leverage the capabilities allowed to them by law for securing their campus.

**Name:** Jacob Clark

**Comment:** I am opposed to this bill as it currently stands. Elementary, middle schools, and high schools have all been targets of an evil individual wishing to cause harm to as many people as possible. Only having an SRO in the buildings where 9th12th grade students attend leaves the other schools unprotected. It is of common knowledge that all through the country, departments are having a hard time with hiring qualified officers. I don't see how it will be possible to fill all of the new SRO positions that will be created. I would like to see the problems with insurance companies dropping public schools who want/have trained and armed staff addressed as it has been proven in the studies posted above, that only having an SRO is a recipe for failure.

**Name:** Matt Zurmuehlen

**Comment:** As a parent of public education students and spouse of an educator this bill is one that is long overdue in Iowa. I have approached, in the past, the school boards of my children's school and the districts my wife has taught at to discuss what the school, parents, and others can do to improve school security. In my research, while there are many tools and practices that can be implemented to increase the security of our educational facilities and decrease the efforts of an active shooter the one tool that is most affordable and effective is arming "willing" school staff. As the research performed by Ed Monk shows, and that common sense would tell us, the sooner an active threat can be stopped the better the outcome. As the old adage goes "when seconds count the police are minutes away". What better way to cut down on the time a killer is allowed to commit their crime than by having someone already on scene, who knows the building, has a vested relationship with those in the building, and can act in seconds. While not having active shooters in schools would be ideal we must face the truth that evil can and will find a way and we must be prepared to face that evil when, not if, the time comes. I would like to see this legislation apply to anyone in a school building with any sort of educator license issued by the state not just that districts staff. I know Iowa Firearms Coalition is already taking a proactive approach to staff training and making Iowa schools safer by working with lawmakers. I hope Iowa legislators will lean on their advice and expertise and work together to make safer schools in Iowa a reality as well as an example to other states looking to do the same.

**Name:** Gabe Lanz

**Comment:** We fully support arming ANY staff in a school willing to protect others. Having multiple armed, trained, and capable people on scene is the best way to deter a shooter, the fastest way to end one and preserve as much life as possible.

**Name:** Dan Tinklenberg

**Comment:** As a teacher and parent I strongly support this bill. We must provide the best security for our students. In the unfortunate event of a school shooter we send dozens of officers in response. Yet we leave the school unprotected at all other times. It only makes sense to train and arm multiple individuals within the building to eliminate the response time.

**Name:** Jessica Bucklin

**Comment:** I support this bill as both an educator and a parent. If our politicians, celebrities, and even arrested offenders can be protected by trained individuals who carry a firearm, why cant our most precious asset, our kids, be protected like that too. Just knowing theres someone to stop a threat like a gun can be enough deterrent it wont happen. I use to work in law enforcement, I would gladly go through the training again to carry and ensure the safety of my students and kids. Not every teacher has to carry, but allow those that want to the chance. Obviously would need trained and safety steps taken for this. Or even allow a budget for schools to have more than 1 SRO on. Lets be real, having one officer is great, but all kids, including the threat, know who this is and there they are in the school.

**Name:** Sandi Winton

**Comment:** I support this bill. If you want to keep injury and death to adults and children to as few as possible, the response MUST be 30 seconds or less. If you wait for the police to respond, the count will be so much higher. That's not a republican vs democrat talking point, it's just a fact. If your child or grandchild happens to be in the school that is the next target, do you want the bad guy stopped sooner or later? You want common sense gun laws? Well this is it. Please vote to pass this bill. Our children lives are depending on some common sense.

**Name:** David C

**Comment:** As a school staff member I'd be willing if allowed to carry a firearm on school grounds and take a training program as outlined to allow me to do so. As much as I'd like to see Resource Officers in schools, that's pretty costly and wouldn't really have the best coverage as having willing staff armed in the building.

**Name:** Aneitah Garmann

**Comment:** I think this is a no brainer. If a shooter knows that schools are no longer gunfree zones, they will think twice about walking into a potential gun fight. Arm the willing staff that want to get trained!!

**Name:** Mark Enderson

**Comment:** This bill is long overdue. Our most precious resource is our children, they are our future. We protect our money with layers of security why not the children? They can't learn if they have to always be looking over their shoulder. Mental health, counseling, bullying, and warning signs are all part of the network of security. Shooters never shoot up police stations. Please lock down the schools with armed personnel.

**Name:** Sam Schieuer

**Comment:** In favor of this bill. Sick and tired of seeing our politicians and banks protected by firearms, but we insist on protecting our children with words. Trained and equipped teachers and administrators, who actually care about our children, are the best option to stop evil people from committing violence on our most vulnerable citizens.

**Name:** Michael Ware

**Comment:** Evil takes no time off. The ONLY way you stop evil is by being present, willing, and capable. Schools are "gun free zones" and insurance companies restrict the basic human right to selfdefense. When you remove the right to selfdefense, evil acts are unrestricted. So, the innocent become victims. The question becomes how long it'll take for a good guy to eventually show up. Iowa's plan, today, is to make phone calls and wait for people whose rights HAVEN'T been restricted to show up and stop a killer. Good citizens carry responsibly everywhere else in the state with the intended results. They curtail crime and save lives. Why are the lives of our children worth less in Iowa schools? There is an obvious response to this. Let's do it.

**Name:** teri patrick

**Comment:**

I support HSB675. School safety is a top priority and our children should be protected and have people on site to protect school security and/or individuals who have been trained. I would also recommend all who want to understand more about school safety in schools and policies in schools read the book "Why Meadow Died" by Andrew Pollack and Max Eden.

**Name:** John McLaughlin

**Comment:**

## Time and Math: Our Enemy in Defeating Active Killers

Dear Representative,

The statistics are sobering. Former Army officer and active killer researcher Ed Monk has spent the past 16 years lecturing on stopping killers in our schools. His results are so clear, yet so little has changed in how we respond.



- ✓ First minute, new victim is shot every three to five seconds.
- ✓ Second minute, a new victim is shot every six to eight seconds.
- ✓ Third minute, a new victim is shot every 10-12 seconds.
- ✓ The rate will continue to decrease with time unless the attacker finds a new group of potential victims or reshoots previously wounded.

As you can see, proven by more than three decades of failure, little has changed with the standard response of “Call 911” and hope the SRO (somewhere on campus) shows up soon or that the police and sheriff’s office arrive in time. The dead and wounded reflect the harsh reality.

- ✓ 1989 Stockton, CA. 35 shot.
- ✓ 1999 Littleton, CO 34 shot despite an SRO on campus
- ✓ 2012 Newtown, CT 28 shot
- ✓ 2018 Parkland, FL 34 shot despite an SRO on campus.
- ✓ 2018 Sante Fe, TX 23 shot despite two SROs on campus
- ✓ 2022 Uvalde, TX 38 shot

Time and Math do not lie. To keep the victim count in the single digits if an attacker is shooting inside a school, they absolutely must be stopped within thirty seconds of the first shots being fired.

To accomplish this goal, we must have immediate action from staff members who are close enough to hear the shots, willing to immediately respond, and trained in armed response to the active shooter. Each school, no doubt, has staff members who would raise their hands and say, “send me to training.”

Where civilians have responded quickly to active shooters, their success rate is nearly 90%. Most recently, Eli Dickens, a 22-year-old from Greenwood, Indiana took down an active shooter in the local mall just 15 seconds after the gunman emerged from a bathroom with an AR-15 and started shooting mall patrons. Dickens hit the killer with 8 of 10 rounds from his Glock pistol starting at 42 yards away, closing distance as he fired.

To test the concept of training and arming educators, the Iowa Firearms Coalition sponsored an Educator Academy in August of 2023. 16 scholarships were offered. Participants were chosen from applicants employed by public and private schools as administration staff and teachers. Due to insurance coverage concerns with Des Moines based EMC, three participants were forced to drop out just hours before the training began.

During three long days, the trainees received four hours of classroom instruction from Ed Monk of Last Resort Firearms on the active shooter threat in our schools, followed by 32 hours of live

fire and “force on force” simulations. Tactical instruction was conducted by law enforcement and military trainer Adam Winch of Defenders-USA, while marksmanship fundamentals and trauma medicine were taught by IFC chair and certified firearms instructor John McLaughlin.

### Results:

Each educator/administrator was tested in timed range qualification using modified FBI scoring adapted by IFC. Unlike FBI standards, shots outside the shaded target outline resulted in disqualification. 50 rounds were fired for a total possible score of 250 points.

- ✓ Applicants were required to shoot 90% or higher (225 points)
- ✓ Average score of the 13 applicants: 93% (233 points)
- ✓ Number of applicants achieving IFC qualification standards (90% or greater and no shots outside shaded target) 10
- ✓ (If FBI 80% standard had been applied 12/13 applicants would have qualified).

The IFC pilot program shows that willing educators and administrators can be trained to competency in approximately 40 hours with around a 75 percent pass rate. Those that did not “qualify” were encouraged to seek additional training and instruction toward their goal of being safe and accurate concealed weapon permit holders.

The Iowa Firearms Coalition fully supports School Resource Officers, but Time and Math demonstrate that multiple armed and trained willing school staff, with one or more always in a position to hear or even see the first gunshot, would dramatically cut down on loss of life and prevent the double digit death tolls we have seen since the 1980s. Let’s get behind our schools with a data-driven solution and insurance coverage.

A detailed video of the IFC Educator Academy can be found here. <http://tinyurl.com/bdf2zjvk>

Yours in protection of life,

*John B McLaughlin*

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**Name:** Bernie Scolaro

**Comment:** see attached

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 property](#).

In this context, it is sad but not surprising that Iowa House Public Safety Committee chair Phil Thompson introduced [House Study Bill 675](#).

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](#), “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](#), "...police who responded to the Robb Elementary shooting told investigators they were cowed by the shooter's military-style rifle. 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)

**Name:** john mclaughlin

**Comment:** Active Shooter researcher Ed Monk has spent 16 years studying this issue. I have included four slides from his presentation to schools. Please make sure every concerned party is aware of actual facts in this information based on nearly forty years of failure in our schools. Time and Math do not lie. Beliefs and emotions can lead us to arrive at conclusions that cost lives.

# Expected Rate of New Victims Being Shot

First minute            new victim every 3-5 seconds

Second minute        new victim every 6-8 seconds

Third minute           new victim every 10-12 seconds

Rate will continue to decline unless attacker finds a new  
group of un-shot victims

# Cost of NOT fighting back, waiting on 911

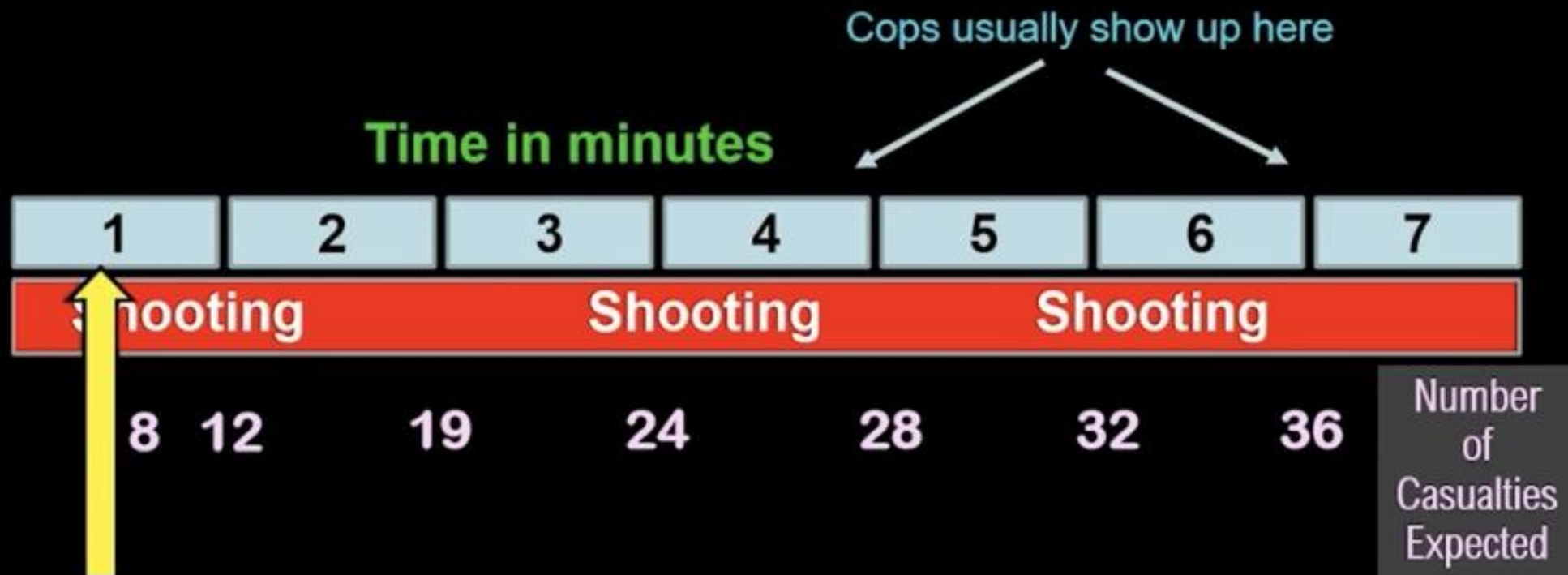
- America schools have been horribly failing at Active Shooter response for four decades

1989	Stockton, CA	35	call 911
1999	Littleton, CO	34	SRO & call 911
2012	Newtown, CT	28	call 911
2018	Parkland, FL	34	SRO & call 911
2018	Santa Fe, TX	23	2 SROs & call 911
2022	Uvalde, TX,	38	call 911

*"There is nothing to be gained by the second kick of a mule."*  
Mark Twain"

- Schools fail because their plan relies on our country's *default response* plan, which normally results in high (10+) victim count

# What TIME & MATH clearly show us



The ONLY way to cause single-digit victims is to **STOP** the attack **early**

Only people "*present*" can stop an attack this quickly

It's not important **WHO** stops the attack, but how **QUICKLY** it is stopped



# Our Goal Should Be

- **Single-digit victim count in future attacks**

How can we accomplish that?



- **Counterattacking and stopping the Active Shooter in the first 30 seconds**

How can we do that successfully?

- **Armed or Unarmed**

Doing so armed is easier, quicker, and has a higher success rate

