



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 30, 2013

Teachers Flocking to Firearms Training Classes

Two days after Christmas 200 school teachers in Salt Lake City, Utah, took a vacation day to [take advantage of free training](#) in the safe handling of firearms. Sponsored by the Utah Shooting Sports Council, the event usually attracts about 15 teachers. But more than 200 showed up this time, with many being turned away due to space limitations.



Clark Aposhian, head of the council, waived his usual \$50 fee to honor the victims at [Sandy Hook](#) and to encourage participation by teachers who might face a similar threat in the future. Aposhian told NBC, “I genuinely felt depressed at how helpless those teachers were and those children were in Newton. It doesn’t have to be that way.”

His training gives teachers [one more option](#) in the event of a threat: “We’re not suggesting that teachers roam the halls” in search of armed intruders. “They should lock down the classroom. But a gun is one more option if [a] shooter breaks into the classroom.... This is where having a firearm would be a better choice than diving in front of the bullets to protect the kids.”

Upon completing the training, Kasey Hansen, a special ed teacher, told Reuters, “I feel like I would take a bullet for any student in the school.” But, “if we should ever face a shooter like the one in Connecticut, I’m fully prepared to respond with my firearm.”

In Ohio the [Buckeye Firearms Foundation](#) received more than 400 applications from teachers and staff for its intensive three-day tactical defense course. As in Utah, the foundation is waiving its fee for the training, usually \$1,000. Instead, the fee will be paid for by the foundation. Said Jim Irvine, the foundation’s president, told *USA Today* “What better use for an educational foundation than to help educators protect our children?”

In Broomfield, Colorado, a similar class sponsored by the [Rocky Mountain Gun Owners](#) (RMGO) [was oversubscribed as well](#). [Dudley Brown](#), RMGO’s executive director, [wrote that](#) 300 teachers “braved snow ... to attend the four hour course [which focused] on firearms safety and handling, and Colorado gun laws.” Brown said,

Colorado teachers have been breaking down our doors to receive firearms training...

They don’t want their students to be a victim of the next Adam Lanza [the Newtown, Connecticut shooter]...

Teachers in Florida, Ohio, Tennessee, and Texas have been flocking to similar classes, each based on the idea that an armed shooter might be neutralized more quickly before claiming victims who would otherwise be unarmed.

Proof that an armed citizenry, exercising its rights under the Second Amendment, actually reduces



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crime has been successfully and persuasively provided by John Lott in his massive study, [More Guns, Less Crime](#). After collecting and analyzing data from across the country and over decades, Lott concluded that “all the results indicate that concealed-handgun laws reduce crime, and all the findings are statistically significant.”

Such proofs are lost on those opposed to allowing teachers to carry concealed in their classrooms. In Colorado the law prohibits teachers, even those who may already have a concealed weapons permit, from bringing a firearm onto school grounds. Senate Bill 9, offered by two Republican state senators to allow local school boards to make their own decision on the matter, never made it out of committee. Despite support from the bill’s co-sponsor State Senator Ted Harvey, whose wife is a teacher and whose children attend public schools, and State Senator Scott Renfroe, a former school board member, the Democrat-dominated Judiciary Committee voted it down 3-2.

Democrats opposed to the bill were concerned that teachers would end up shooting themselves, or that unruly kids in the classroom might take a teacher’s firearm away and use it on his classmates. Others, such as Eileen McCarron, a retired teacher and president of the anti-gun group Colorado Ceasefire, told the *Denver Post* allowing teachers to carry concealed would “turn our school[s] into prisons [and] our teachers into prison guards.”

And so the fight over sensible responses to threats in the classrooms and elsewhere continues. In the meantime, teachers are learning, in ever-increasing numbers, how to protect themselves and their charges from violence.

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