

## Don't Bring Pepper Spray to a Gun Fight

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"My students are my kids . . . and I want to be able to protect them just like I would protect my own son," says the Oho teacher, who participates in a program called FASTER Saves Lives. ("FASTER" stands for Faculty/Administrator Safety Training & Emergency Response.)

Since 2013, FASTER Saves Lives has trained teachers and other school employees to carry and shoot firearms. Although many lawmakers and school officials around

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the country oppose letting teachers bear arms in the classroom, a growing number sanction the practice.

It makes sense. Is there any better way to prepare for the possibility of having to defend your life and your students' lives against an armed assailant bent on mass



murder? (We can set aside the notion that aspiring murderers will scrupulously respect gun-control laws.)

People do have counterproposals. Congressional candidate Levi Tillman urges arming teachers with pepper spray. Well . . . there are problems, as blogger Tom Knighton elaborates. How do you get close enough to use the pepper spray before the killer squeezes the trigger again? What if he sees you coming?

And suppose you do spray the attacker? He won't be immediately incapacitated. He may even be unaffected.

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On the other hand, suppose you're neither strong nor nimble but *can* shoot, carry a gun, and shoot back — when the assailant is on the floor, bleeding: *no more threat*.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.