

The Detroit News

December 14 of this year will be the 12th anniversary of the Sandy Hook school Shooting in which 20 school children and six adults were murdered. Since that Shooting, there have been, according to the K-12 School Shooting Database (Riedman, David (2023) K-12 School Shooting Database,) 189 school shootings (and 417 since Columbine, in 1999.)

On December 14, 2012 I was teaching in a 4th grade classroom. It wasn't until I got to my car that afternoon that I learned of the shootings. That evening I channeled my horror into a letter to the editor about the frustration of all the gun work-arounds - metal detectors, lockdown trainings, bully-prevention programs and various initiatives like ALICE (alert, lockdown, inform, counter, evacuate) but no meaningful work toward effective, reasonable gun laws. How sad that so little has changed in the intervening years. We still offer little more than thoughts and prayers.

In Grand Rapids on Thursday night, Tim Walz offered us hope that something can change, "Kamala Harris is a gun owner, by the way, which you found out. "I'm not going to take any crap (from Republicans) about the Second Amendment. We support the Second Amendment. But our first responsibility...is keeping our children safe. And you can have both." Yes, we can have both. Harris and Walz will work to see that we do.

And we must. I'll end my letter with the same line I wrote 12 long years ago. With a Harris/Walz administration we will be more likely to enact sane gun regulation, and we must, "...unless we believe that the 20 dead little children and the six dead educators might be alive today if they had only completed the ALICE training."

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