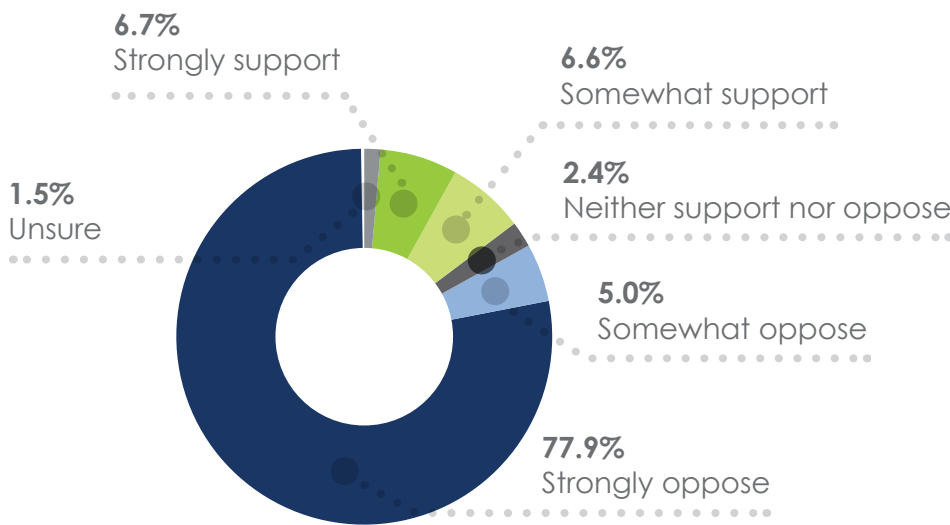


Teach Plus polled its network of teachers on their ideas to improve school safety. The poll was administered from February 27 to March 8, 2018 and 1,233 teachers from 38 states and the District of Columbia responded.¹ Highlights of their responses are below.

FINDING #1:

Teachers overwhelmingly oppose the idea of arming teachers in schools.

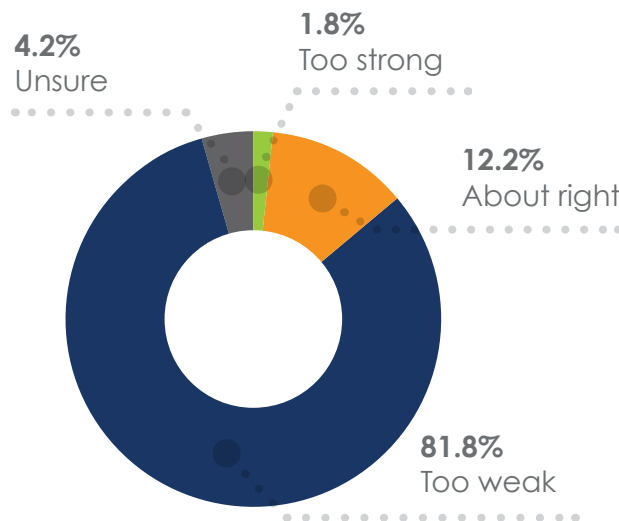
Question: “In response to the recent school shootings, some policymakers have proposed the idea of arming teachers with concealed weapons in schools. To what degree do you support or oppose this proposal?” (n = 1,231)



FINDING #2:

Teachers overwhelmingly believe current gun control measures are too weak.

Question: “Do you believe that current gun control measures are too strong, too weak, or about right?” (n = 1,228)



FINDING #3:

A vast majority of teachers believe that gun control policies should be changed to ban assault rifles and strengthen background checks for purchasing weapons. They also believe Congress and State Legislators should enact new policies or provide additional funding to ensure school safety.

Question: “Do you believe that current gun control policies should be changed to: Strengthen background checks for purchasing weapons?” (n = 1,228)

| Yes | No | Unsure |
|-------|------|--------|
| 94.3% | 4.3% | 1.4% |

Question: “Do you believe that current gun control policies should be changed to: Ban assault rifles?” (n = 1,226)

| Yes | No | Unsure |
|-------|-------|--------|
| 80.4% | 13.4% | 6.2% |

Question: “Do you believe that Congress and State Legislators should enact new policies or provide additional funding to ensure school safety?” (n = 1,224)

| Yes | No | Unsure |
|-------|------|--------|
| 81.7% | 5.4% | 12.9% |

What advice do teachers have for policymakers?²

Institute gun control measures that will ensure school zones remain safe spaces for students and educators:

“...As a Marine and a teacher the amount of training necessary to appropriately arm a teacher/educator would be immense, such that, to do it properly would detract significantly from their job. In fact, you cannot do both at the same time...”

“Make buying a gun as difficult as getting a diploma. If my students and I need to take so many tests, why can't gun owners? As for advice- our future will lose a lot of really great teachers if you allow guns in schools in this sort of capacity. Don't have teachers make the decision to shoot a student during a crisis. It's just wrong!”

“The way to go about solving this issue is not by arming teachers. We are not trained officers, we are not military members. We are teachers, mentors, and caregivers. Most school shootings are carried out by students. Please do not ask a teacher to shoot and kill a student. Instead, focus on making it more challenging to purchase a gun. Do away with gun shows and their lackadaisical background checks. Institute a wait period of at least a month to purchase a weapon. Add firearm training requirements before buying a gun. Increase funding to mental health initiatives.”

Provide social and emotional learning, mental health, and increased wraparound services and funding:

Having more guns in schools is not the answer. Providing ample resources for people with mental health problems, both in and outside of school, is a starting point. Limiting access to guns for people under 25 and with mental health problems is another starting point. Teachers already take on so many roles in their classrooms- counselor, mentor, parent, shoulder to cry on, motivator, etc.- a police officer/armed commando is not one of them. It should be this country's responsibility to protect our children and students, not on already overworked and stressed teachers.

Schools need to be places where students feel safe and cared for. ...Meaning kids who need mental health services should have counselors and psychologists to meet with, and children who do not receive regular care for a doctor, should have medical professionals that can provide vaccines and health screenings. Schools should not be fortresses with armed guards. They need to be places where children feel safe to walk around and explore. Five year olds should not be scared to hug their teacher in fear that a gun could accidentally go off.

Things needed:

*Increased budgets for mental health providers in every school
Decreased class sizes for more intimate relationships with students and families
More support for emotional/behavioral curriculum
Increased age for purchasing weapon
Ban assault weapons and bump stocks
A more direct pathway between teachers and law enforcement for more effective reporting of red flags*

The mission of Teach Plus is to empower excellent, experienced teachers to take leadership over key policy and practice issues that affect their students' success.

Since 2009, Teach Plus has trained thousands of teacher leaders across the country who are driving policy changes and improving the instructional practices of teachers to create an education system driven by equity, access, and excellence for all students.

www.teachplus.org

1. Teachers who responded to the flash poll had the following years of teaching experience: (n = 1,233) Responses: Less than 4 years (3.5 percent), Four to nine years (27.3 percent), Ten to 14 years (23.4 percent), 15 or more years (44.3 percent), None reported (1.5 percent). 85.6 percent of respondents reported teaching in district public schools, 12.3 percent reported teaching in charter public schools, and 2.0 percent reported teaching in private or independent schools. Results may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

2. Open response question: "In response to the recent school shootings, what advice or ideas would you like to share with policymakers and leaders?" Quotes are from teachers.