

## *EDUCATORS FOR GUN SAFETY REFORM NOW!*



**For Immediate Release**  
April 20, 2018

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### **ON 19<sup>TH</sup> COLUMBINE ANNIVERSARY, TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS GATHER FOR GUN SAFETY DAY OF ACTION**

*No excuse for inaction by policy makers*

Madison, WI-Today, on the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Columbine tragedy, Madison and surrounding area teachers, staff, parents and students are participating in a day of action at the state Capitol for gun safety reforms. *Educators for Gun Safety Reform Now!* organized the day starting with an early morning march to the Capitol from East High School, advocacy efforts both in and around the Capitol, a press conference, a commemoration in the Capitol rotunda of all the students, teachers and staff murdered in school shootings at and since Columbine, and an end of day rally at 4:30 on the Capitol steps.

“We gather on the nineteenth anniversary of the Columbine Massacre where 13 innocent people lost their lives in a mass shooting,” stated East High teacher Steve Somerson. “We stand together in solidarity to continue the message of our children and students: we need gun safety reform. Now. For our students’ safety. For our children’s safety. For our own safety. If not now, when?!” Somerson concluded.

According to a recent report by the Washington Post, over 187,000 students at 193 schools have experienced a school shooting since the Columbine massacre. The report also found that since 1999, there have been 10 school shootings each year on average in the United States, causing 375 deaths or injuries.

*Educators for Gun Safety Reform Now!* are supporting recent student activism in Wisconsin and throughout the nation where young people have mobilized and demanded gun safety reforms to curtail gun violence, and to protect their schools and lives. They join with parents, students and advocates in calling for common-sense gun safety reforms, including universal background checks and waiting periods for all gun purchases, a ban on bump stocks, limits on high capacity magazines, and raising the age of purchase of semi-automatic weapons to 21 with required training and education.

The platform of *Educators for Gun Safety Reform Now!* states that “We are educators, teachers and staff who are deeply concerned about the safety of our students and our children within the confines of our schools, particularly with the pervasive access to firearms across our country. We have seen an entire generation of students come of age under the direct threat of these weapons. We also recognize the many people who have worked on gun violence issues before us who have been marginalized and not heard. We will not stand for what has become normalized behavior in our society. We demand action.”

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