

Up in Arms

Students Take Action



Multiple shots have been heard around the world since the beginning of 2018. So far this year, there have been 12 school shootings in the U.S. Throughout the country, people are mourning the loss of their loved ones and are praying that these series of tragedies will cease and that no more lives will be taken. After the 17 that were lost in Parkland, Florida on February 14, teenagers everywhere have had enough.

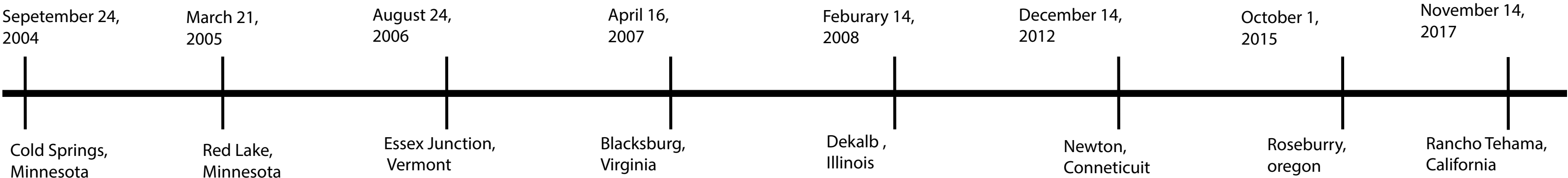
In the past 30 years there have been more school shootings than ever before. In order to try and fix this issue, the “Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Use Protection Act” of 1994 was put into place. This act put a prohibition on the manufacture for civilian use of certain semi-automatic firearms it defined as assault weapons, as well as certain ammunition. Unfortunately, this ban on assault weapons expired in 2004. Since 2004, there have been 189 school shootings in the U.S. That’s an average of about 13 shootings per year; however, in the first 2 months of 2018 there have already been 12. In just 8 weeks, the number of cases has closed in on previous national records.

All around the country, students, faculty, parents, and civilians alike are devastated by recent events.

Nina Brooks is a journalism teacher at Richland Northeast High School in Columbia, South Carolina.

“The recent shootings have really affected schools. I think that students and their parents are genuinely afraid. The numbers of people who are upset and the levels of their concern has really raised,” said Brooks.

High schoolers are outraged by recent events and the



lack of action made by government. They have chosen to speak up for themselves.

Jeff Watkins is a father of two, and married to a high school teacher in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

“I am really encouraged by what high schoolers are doing. I’m really hoping this could be a turning point,” said Watkins.

Since the shooting on Valentines day, there have been

nationwide plans for protests. Students are all working together to make a difference. The three nationwide protests that have been planned as of now are on March 14, March 24, and April 20th.

On March 14, students will all walk out of school at 10 am. They can gather anywhere outside of the school building, where they will peacefully protest. The walk-out will last 17 minutes for the 17 lives lost at Parkland, Florida.

10 days later, on March 24 the nationwide “March for our lives” will take place. This march is originally based in Washington, DC but rallies in communities across the nation will be taking a stand.

April 20th will be the 19th anniversary of the Columbine Shooting that took place in Jefferson County, Colorado. Students all across the United States will be walking out of class at 10 am. Once again, they will gather outside of their school building and take a stand for gun violence.

The importance of students in every community taking part in these protests is immeasurable.

Connor McCage is a student at Clarke Central High school, in Athens, Georgia.

“It starts at the community level, because if the government isn’t going to do anything, at least we can have a strong community,” McCage says in regards to the importance of his high schools participation in the upcoming protests.

“The gun fires the bullet, but the person pulls the trigger,” says Robbie McCurdy, a student at Oxford High School in Oxford, Mississippi.

Students have caught wind of these national protest from various sources on social media.

“There was one last week in our town in Oxford. There were a lot of people that marched at the town hall,” Said Charlie Zediker

Saturday, March 3rd, a local rally was held at the capitol building in Columbia, South Carolina. The “Protect our School Children” rally against gun violence was held in hopes to spread awareness for the harm guns have brought into schools.

“I’m just a concerned citizen. Concerned about gun violence in our schools. We want to protect our children,” said James Gansrow.

Gansrow is a father and an organizer of the “Protect our School Children” rally.

“We all have a right to speak, that’s how we have a pure understanding of where we are coming from. In this country now you have just the opposite. We have, if you think and believe a certain way than I cant agree with you. Well that’s not America, that’s not the United states. We don’t have to agree, but we should be able to listen to each other.”



