



Published on *This Can't Be Happening* (<http://www.thiscantbehappening.net>)

Home > America's Teachers: Heroes or Greedy Moochers at the Public Trough?

America's Teachers: Heroes or Greedy Moochers at the Public Trough?

By *lindorff*

Created 12/16/2012 - 09:34

by:

Dave Lindorff

I'll be brief here. Let's just note that the heroic teachers who died while courageously trying to protect their kids at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, and the others who survived but stayed to protect the kids, were all part of a school system where the employees are members of the American Federation of Teachers.

Let's just let that sink in for a moment. Those teachers, who are routinely being accused by our politicians of being drones and selfish, incompetent money grubbers worried more about their pensions than about teaching our children (though most, even after 10 years, earn less than \$55,000 a year for doing a very difficult job that involves at least 12-14 hours a day of work and prep time counting meetings with parents), stood their ground when confronted with a psychotic assailant armed with semi-automatic pistols and a semi-automatic assault rifle, and protected their kids. The principal too, a veteran teacher herself, stood her ground, reportedly suicidally charging at the assailant along with the school's psychologist in a doomed effort to tackle him and stop the carnage.

How many of us would have had to the courage to stand in front of a closet door to keep an armed madman from finding the kids hidden behind it, as one slain young teacher, Vicki Soto, 29, died doing? How many of us would charge at an armed shooter, to almost certain death, in an effort to stop him from further killing? How many would bravely hide in a bathroom with a class of kids when we could have run away and saved ourselves?

And this: How many of the politicians in Washington and in state capitals and how many conservative think-tank "researchers" who attack teachers as leeches and drones would have shown such heroism under fire?



Viki Soto, one of six teachers and administrators killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School, was shot while keeping the gunman from finding her kids, whom she had hidden in a closet

My guess is damned few -- if any. Yet it appears from the news reports that not one teacher in that unionized school fled the scene and abandoned the children to their fate. They all stuck with their kids. So did the custodian -- no doubt a unionized worker earning poverty wages -- who at incredible personal risk ran through the building warning everyone of the attacker's presence.

Just a couple of weeks ago, the Newtown school board, like school boards all over this country, was considering cutting the school's elementary music program and library program. It should be noted that both the school librarian and the school music teacher, whose jobs were on the line at the school board, stayed with the kids they were teaching when the attack began.

Yet in an attitude all too typical of many Americans' thinking, one man, in a discussion section of the local paper, discussing the local School Board's \$1-million budget cutting plans last spring, wrote to a teacher who had opposed the cuts:

You, as a public sector employee, don't generate ANY revenue. Every penny of the budget of your public sector enterprise is TAKEN from producers. It's other people's money versus money your organization EARNED. Your salary is not market based. Your salary, nor your benefits, nor your job, is in jeopardy during contracting economic times. If I want a raise I have to prove I have contributed more to the bottom line, and then it doesn't matter unless the entire firm has grown the bottom line sufficiently to give me that raise. You are insulated from that reality. Your private (sic) sector salary only goes up. How is that fair? Especially in light of the fact that you don't even generate the revenue that pays for your constantly rising salary?

Some of those "non-revenue-generating" unionized teachers, and the school's "non-revenue-generating" principal, just gave their lives defending those kids. It's become common to hear US soldiers called heroes, but armed up as they are, I suspect even many of them would agree they are nothing compared to these women who, unarmed and unprotected, put it all on the line in Newtown for their students.

I wonder how many of the obscene tax-obsessed denigrators of teachers across this country would have done the same?

Source URL: <http://www.thiscantbehappening.net/node/1474>