

Shootings put teachers in role as human shields

By Julie Turkewitz, New York Times

TAMARAC, Fla. – The shooting was all over, but the emotional reckoning had just begun, and so on Saturday the teachers of Broward County packed their union hall to discuss what it meant to have become the nation’s human shields.

“Last night I told my wife I would take a bullet for the kids,” said Robert Parish, a teacher at an elementary school just miles from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High, where a former student killed 17 people, including three staff members who found themselves in the line of fire.

Since the attack last week, said Parish, “I think about it all the time.”

Across the country, teachers are grappling with how their roles have expanded, from educator and counselor to bodyguard and protector. They wonder if their classrooms are properly equipped, if they would recognize the signs of a dangerous student, and most of all, if they are prepared to jump in front of a bullet.

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