

Blacksburg

Newtown

Uvalde

Parkland

Columbine

“BUT IT CAN’T HAPPEN HERE...”

Unfortunately, it can, as suggested by recent news accounts of an armed altercation between two students at Derwood’s Magruder High School that resulted in one being shot. He would survive but spend nearly two months in hospital.

In that case police were summoned but the alleged shooter still managed to wander the halls for a quarter hour carrying a loaded gun he reportedly had assembled from parts obtained on the Internet. And it would take another hour before the police found him in a classroom and arrested him.

It could have been worse. But, as the above datelines suggest, the decision by Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich to remove police from schools where they had been assigned seems to insist, “it can’t happen here.”

With a name change from School Resource Officers (SRO’s) to Community Engagement Officers (CEO’s), police still won’t walk the hallways but be stationed nearby ... though not too close by. As Elrich promises, “they’re not going to be parked on the parking lot and they won’t be on the grounds.”

Critics, including many parents, say that’s not good enough. In the time it would take for a policeman to arrive on the scene, lives could be lost.

But the all-Democrat county government seems to have different priorities. Indeed, two council members proposed legislation last year that would have permanently banned police from being stationed in schools.

It’s time for other voices to be heard insisting government get its priorities in order. It’s time for two-party government in Montgomery County.



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