

United after tragedy

Millard South school shooting affects the community

Kaitlin Johnson

On Jan. 5, Millard South High School came together after a normal school day turned into a tragedy. Robert Butler Jr., a senior at Millard South, entered the school despite his 19-day suspension for driving his car across the football field. Butler signed in to speak to Assistant Principal Vicki Kaspar, armed with what was believed to be a service weapon of his father, an Omaha police officer. Butler shot both Kaspar as well as Principal Curtis Case and was later found dead in a parking lot from a self-inflicted gunshot. Kaspar died hours later, and Case was in critical condition. After the tragedy, many local schools, including Marian, have been reaching out to the Millard South community.

“My brother is a freshman at Millard South. He was in study hall at the time, and the intercom system didn't work in his room. So, they didn't get the code red message. He went into the hall to get a drink at the vending machines but didn't hear gunshots. When he got back in his classroom, a security guard ran into the room and told them there was an intruder in the school. The students weren't told that there was a shooter in the school until it was on the news and people from other schools texted them. My sister texted me a couple times after it happened, but I didn't look at my phone. The first I heard about it was the second to last block. I was really scared because I didn't know any details. I just heard there was a shooting at Millard South. I called my sister, and she told me Joey, my brother, was okay.”

senior, Rachel Eckley

“I don't have any friends that go to Millard South, but I realized the tragedy brought Omaha schools together. I was very happy Marian showed our support by making posters to hang in their school.”

sophomore, Morgan Toohley

“I don't have any friends who go to school at Millard South, but the incident brought the community together in a time of need. Now as they come together to support each other, they will become closer as a school.”

junior, Rachel Lee

“When I was told about Millard South, I was shocked. I never thought another shooting would happen in our community. There was so much loss and grief that came out of it, but there were also things to be gained. As tragic as it was, it has brought our community closer together. It is great to see how everyone has stretched out a hand to help the staff, students and family of Millard South.”

freshman, Jill Salerno

“The shooting at Millard South affected me in small ways. It showed me that the violence in Omaha is becoming more real and needs more attention. I kept thinking, “What if this happened at Marian?” Those thoughts stayed with me for the next couple of days. I realized I need to appreciate everything I have because you never know what will happen. I also found it amazing how such a terrible tragedy can bring a community together.”

senior, Morgan Kaiser

“When I heard of the shooting at Millard South, I was in Block F and I thought it was all a rumor. Then, as I heard the details, I began to think of the few people I know who would be sitting in lock down at that time, overwhelmed with tears. It didn't really hit me until I talked to one of my friends at dance. She told me about the shocking experience, and I knew that all I could do is pray. I prayed for all involved. I just hope that nothing like this ever happens again.”

freshman, Miranda Reeder

“Right when I heard about Millard South, I panicked because my friend Rissa goes there. I tried texting her to see if she was okay, and she didn't respond. We had dance together that night so I was hoping I'd see her and find out the details. She never came, and I wasn't sure what to think. I talked to her later, and she said she was shaken up and that she wasn't in the mood for ballet. I understood and tried to make her feel better.”

senior, Brittany DeWitt

“I was personally affected by it because one of my best friends goes there. The night after it happened we were on the phone crying about how lucky she was and about Dr. Kaspar's death.”

freshman, Betsy Ryan



Community. Millard South students make a banner to hang alongside banners donated by local schools as a reminder to stay strong. The community has grieved and come together with the help of many schools in the Omaha area.

Photo by LexiWalz