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Armed Personnel in Schools Throughout the United States

Schools should to be a safe place for children to go to better their knowledge. Recent events have begun to reverse this belief to many people throughout the United States. Places such as banks and airports are safer than many of the schools throughout our country (Santoni). School shootings are becoming more common in our everyday lives. We were only twelve weeks into 2018, and we had already witnessed seventeen school shootings occur throughout our nation (Ahmed & Walker). Many will argue that the individuals behind the terror come from broken homes, or have serious mental health issues. Other may argue that these situations are easily preventable by placing trained individuals in schools. These recent events bring us to the debate: should authorized personnel be armed and placed in schools throughout the United States? Armed presence could potentially give parents a peace at mind knowing their child is less likely to be a victim of a school shooting.

Three of the largest school shootings to occur in United States were at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Sandy Hook Elementary, and Columbine High School. At Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School seventeen students had their lives cut short on February 14th, 2018. Classmate, Nikolas Cruz, arrived at school and upon his arrival Cruz entered on the first floor, triggered a firm alarm, and began shooting at victims

(Grinberg & Levenson). On April 20th 1999 the Columbine High School massacre was performed by Eric Harris 18 & Dylan Klebold 17. They created what were known as “Basement tapes” that consisted of them performing target practices, their suicide message and apologies to their parents for their actions (“The Important Of Columbine”) During the shootings they managed to take 13 lives, injured 24, and later on took their own lives in the library (Columbine High School Shootings Fast Facts). On December 14th 2012, Adam Peter Lanza, 20, opened fire at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Lanza killed his mother before taking the lives of 26 individuals at the elementary school. He committed suicide after completing the attack (“Remembering Sandy Hook”).

Society tends to point the blame at the gun, and not the person operating it. Guns aren't the bad thing here. It's a matter of how and who they are handled by. Kids are being raised around the thought that all guns are bad, but they are only if handled improperly. Gun control is a huge issue in our country that many people are uneducated about. People believe that gun control is that it taking away of guns, but it just adds stricter laws surrounding guns so that this type of violence does not occur. Placing armed personnel throughout schools could potentially help to reduce the amount of shootings that occur in schools. Some schools in our country have already allowed guns within the schools.

Schools around the United States have already begun to place armed personnel on property for safety reasons. About 22% of the United States public school districts have allowed staff to carry guns (Hennessy-Fiske). Individuals such as retired cops and unemployed military personnel would be ideal protectors for our children. Many states

require an individual to have consent from the school before bringing a weapon on premises along with a conceal carry permit and psychological tests performed" (Hennessy-Fiske). Having armed personnel on property would allow someone to intervene with a shooter faster than police. Argyle High Principal James Hill, who has three children in the school system, was skeptical about the policy when he was hired in 2015, but said, "Now I'm a believer" (Hennessy-Fiske). James Hill feels that, "The time for us just sitting back and waiting for it to happen is over... I want to give our kids a fighting chance." At a recent board meeting, Penn Delco School District has decided to hire a "sworn law enforcement officer known as a school resource officer for the 2018-19 school year" (Tustin). Not only would the individual be there to protect the student, but they would also use the individual as a resource for school safety trainings as well (Tustin).

Many people throughout the United States will argue that armed personnel would be beneficial in schools because it would not only protect our children in their learning environments, but also help so easier the mind of parents. Without placing protection in schools we could potentially see more school shooting occurring in the future. Schools are meant to be a safe learning place. We should not fear if our children will return home safely each day. Having armed personnel within schools would be beneficial to the safety of the students and staff within the school.

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