

Why?

Usually essays start off formal; we are told to never use personal pronouns or use questions as hooks but why? I get that it removes the professionalism of it but who's to say that expressing my opinion isn't formal? "Don't use 'I believe' in your sentence, it is weak" but why? We are often given assignments which require our opinion but graded on how much we can hide it. "Don't skip lines", "double space", "add the exact punctuation or your statement doesn't matter", "If it isn't perfect, it doesn't count", this is pretty much what every student hears when it's time to submit their work.

Similarly, schools are more worried about a missing comma than about the 23-year-old man that just walked into school with a duffle bag in his right hand and a mask over his head. They yell into our heads that we will never make it if we don't learn how to properly recite the names of all US presidents to ever exist but if the man has an ID over his neck, then he must be safe right? He doesn't attend this school but hey! don't you dare show your belly button or detention for you. I know that by now we've all heard about the recent shooting in Texas. 19 babies and 2 teachers shot, murdered in cold blood for doing absolutely nothing. Instead of addressing the issues, schools ignored them and proceeded on with lessons as if nothing happened. My school made an announcement the day after, reenforcing the dress code because kids were dressing too "informal", but I have yet to hear any announcement about the clear and obvious problem in the United States of America or as some may call it, the "land of the free".

I come from a country which isn't the safest; the government is very corrupt, and the economy is horrible, but one thing is for sure, no one touches the kids. Parents are able to send

their children to school knowing that they will be in amazing hands and well taken care of, yet many make the decision to move to the states thinking that they will be safer here, is this our definition of safe? Not knowing if we will ever see the soft smiles of our families ever again or hear their giggles and laughter... why? Why are we dropping our expectations of how secure schools should be? Why are we making it a trend to see another shooting every year and forget about it immediately after? Why are we not taking this seriously? Most importantly, why are schools not taking this seriously?

It is made clear every day that schools focus their attention on whether your son knows who the first man who stepped on the moon was but no on if he will return home that day. Ask someone who graduated school in 2017 and someone who graduated this year what the lockdown procedure in case of an intruder is at schools? They're bound to both give you the same response, sit silently in a corner and wait it out. Listen to the screams of your classmates in fear not knowing what will happen next. Have you wondered what the kids located at Robb Elementary School were thinking? Our protocols are outdated and are proven to not even work. Just the mere fact that students are required to learn how to fear for their lives monthly should be enough to raise flags.

We need to make it a point to prioritize the safety and wellness of the millions of innocent people around us. If schools aren't going to do it, we as citizens need to step it up immediately. Stop going to board meetings complaining about what kids are wearing to school and worry about whether your child's safety is being prioritized because clearly, it is not. Please look at the bigger picture. We as a country should be moving forwards from now on, not backwards.