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English

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Argumentive Essay

# Introduction

With every heinous incident of school shooting in the US, a debate gets triggered on gun violence. The issue is widely debated at the national level for days only to be put on back-burners after a while. The collective response from the American society to the shocking incidents of school shooting has been demand of deploying heavily armed security guards at the school premises. The proponents of this demand hold the view that the presence of heavily armed personnel within the school premises make up an additional layer of security. With this added layer, first response time to engage the armed attacker would reduce significantly. At the same time, children and teachers would feel safer. On the other hand, there exists a group that has always advocated for legally possessing guns. They argue that most of the school shooting incidents had armed guards deployed in close proximity to the school. The guards were not able to thwart the shootings. Hence, it would be a waste of taxpayer’s money and state’s resources to deploy armed security guards at the public schools. This paper will examine the contextual background of the school shootings. Additionally, the dissenting argument put forward by different sections of the society. In the end, this paper would try to draw up s logical conclusion to the malady that has plagued the US for quite some time now.

# Discussion

### Contextual Background

The demand for the deployment of armed guards must be understood contextually along with the series of school shooting incidents that has plagued the US. In 1999, Columbine High School shooting saw 13 students die. A more recent event of school shooting the collective conscience of the nation is the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in the year 2012. The 2012 school shooting resulted in 26 deaths, of which 20 were children aged less than seven. According to Barkoukis, in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, the National Rifle Association (NFA) suggested the deployment of armed security guards (Barkoukis, 2014). The suggestion was corresponding with the demands of most Americans, according to Rasmussen survey conducted in 2013. Certainly, the suggestion was made in response to a perceived threat. The idea behind the suggestion is having armed guards would not only provide protection to the children and teachers but they would also retaliate against the armed attacker. Without a shadow of a doubt, the suggestion has highlighted a grave issue within the US society. However, considering the ease of access to guns and existence of mentally sick monsters the National Rifle Association did not demonstrate a completed understanding of the issue revolving around guns and violence. The proposal from the NFA is narrowly perceived as they have assumed that there would be armed attackers willing to unleash terror. Although this might seem a practical solution to some, there is a dire need to dig deeper in this issue.

### Deployment of Armed Guards

Objectively speaking, the armed guards, in an event of school shooting, would respond in shortest amount of time. However, according to Martin, the response time is the biggest challenge in this problem. The police and the government are unable to effectively respond to emergency calls to shield the citizens from the deadly violence (Martin, 2013). As the police and government are unable respond timely, the only practical way to confront the armed attacker in shortest amount of time is to have armed guards deployed at the campus.

Statistically speaking, the occurrence of school shooting incidents in relatively low when compared to other deadly crimes. Hence, deployment of security guards in a low-threat environment would only waste resources of the state.

Additionally, minor issues would attain the significance of a crime which, otherwise, would have been treated as disciplinary matter. According to Advancement Project, a spike in arrests based on the color of the students has been witnessed after the deployment of security guards. Youth have been handcuffed, arrested and criminalized on petty issues.

Hence, there is a constant fear among the students of getting arrested on minor disciplinary issues. Minor problems are escalated to criminal level making students feel less safe. Undoubtedly, with guns around them, students would perceive it as a danger making them insecure.

Would Students feel safer?

Considering this issue from psychological perspective, question whether the students would feel safer or not with the presence of firearms around them. According to Plumer, in 2011, a study was conducted by Youth Society portrayed a grim picture about the feelings of the students regarding presence of firearms around them. Most of the students participating in the study expressed concerns about firearms present at the school premises (Plumer, 2012). Hence, it would be safer to conclude that most students have felt insecure from the guards that are meant to protect them.

According to (Hughes), the reason for this could be that students think that having firearms around them as a decrease in their safety (Hughes et.al, 2011). Another Reason could be that constant presence of firearms tends to create a feeling that there could be an armed attack on the school at any time (Hughes et.al, 2011).Hence, the guards are seen as primary source of fear and intimidation. The guards could become a threat to the safety of the students in the absence of any outside threat. Physical safety of the students is also on the line should the guards decide to become belligerent towards the students over petty disciplinary issues.

Jeopardizing Civil Rights

Whenever there is an incident of school shooting, two contrary opinions are disseminated from the masses. Looking this issue from the spectacle of civil liberties, should the students be empowered to exercise their right to not to be patrolled by security guards. According to Toppo, numerous civil rights groups have pleaded that armed guards tend to exacerbate the security situation. As a result, students become extremely disciplined regarding petty disciplinary issues (Toppo, 2015).

The civil rights of the students such as the right to life, freedom of movement, and safety are compromised. That the schools are not war zones on most of the days and there is no satisfactory justification to the deployment of armed guards. Hence, the overall culture of the school would take a step towards authoritarianism, compromising the rights of the students.

Liberty and safety are two points preached by their respective advocates. There is disagreement whether the threat the security guards pose to the right to liberty is greater than the safety those guards could offer. Keeping in mind that school shootings when compared to other violent crimes occur very rarely.

# Conclusion

Taking into account the discussion above, the deployment of security guards within the school premises cannot make the students feel safer. Additionally, civil rights of students are also compromised. Deploying armed security guards at school is only seen as a palliative measure by many. There is a far bigger problem of the wide and ease of availability of guns which cannot be solved by any cosmetic solution. In order to make schools safer, there is a dire need for legislation on stringent gun control laws within the United States. One must think that making availability of guns difficult need for security guards reduce significantly. The proponents of deploying armed security guards at school neglect this perspective. There should be a balance approach to this issue. An environment should be created, by taking all stakeholders on board, in which the neither the firearms nor the security guards would be perceived as a threat.

# Works Cited

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