

A school should be a facility in which a student can be educated in a safe, welcoming environment. Many times, however, this is not the case. I believe that schools are less safe than previously for obvious reasons such as the increase of violence, which I believe is helped by the number of students and the increased amount of anger in the students today.

My first, and most obvious, reason for thinking schools aren't as safe is the increased amount of violence even around Jefferson County. Just recently, Morristown West's officials were alerted to a "gang" that threatens other students on a hit list that they produced. Merely a few months ago Cambell County had a student who shot a principal. The one that hits closest to home, however, is the bomb threat two years ago on our own Jefferson County High School. Bang! I have just presented acts or threats of violence all surrounding or in our county, and that doesn't mention Columbine, Virginia Tech or any big cities at all. Violence in schools hits closer to home than one might think.

A further reason I believe schools have become more dangerous, is that the opportunity has never been better. With most high schools in East Tennessee having at least 1000 students, it is much easier to conceal a weapon. No one gets much one on one attention, so teachers would be oblivious to a student who is armed. Also, with more students come more with the same ideas. If more than one student rallies to "get revenge" on a teacher, student or principal, the result could literally be deadly.

My final, and most disturbing point, is that more students have an anger or hatred inside of them, and a vast number are actually starting to retaliate. If peers make fun, if teachers humiliate, or if principals punish some students, it can set them off. They are like a bomb, docile when left alone, but deadly if tampered with. A perfect example of this is Columbine. The two students who committed the shootings made a video expressing their hatred of certain students who had taunted or opposed them. It is a saddening thought that people could express such cruelty that it would push others over the edge.

In conclusion, the schools are not as safe as they should be, whether its increased amounts of violence, increased amounts of students, or increased amounts of anger, the school is more violent now, than ever before. It is a problem that desperately needs to be fixed. I'm not the one to explain how, but let's just hope that with some love and God's will, we can decrease violence, and make the school a better place.