

JUDGE JANIE

In the state of our society today, CCHS needs to update security policies to better protect students and staff from outside dangers.



BY JANIE RIPPS
Viewpoints Editor

Fourteen. As of April 13, 14 schools have been shot up in the United States in 2023. With most victims being students, 10 people have been killed, 14 injured. Countless traumatized. According to the Washington Post, 46 school shootings occurred in 2022, the most of any year since 1999. As school years go on, incidents of targeted school violence at K-12 schools are just increasing.

In Georgia, which is ranked #47 in the country for gun law strength, carrying a weapon is allowed in almost every public space, without presence of a permit.

Georgia's legislation has failed students, and the responsibility of protecting students has fallen on school districts like the Clarke County School District.

But what is stopping Clarke Central High School from joining this list of 14 schools that is only anticipated to grow?

According to a survey taken by 266 students at CCHS, nearly 60% feel that lockdown drills don't sufficiently prepare them for an emergency.

Because today's society is more determined to protect a citizen's right to carry a gun than the lives of actual citizens, schools like CCHS need to adapt their safety measures to better protect those inside the building.

"(During hard lockdowns) we're gonna huddle in a corner, and that's making us a big target and I think that's kind of interesting," CCHS junior Amya Hopkins said. "Like, how strong are these doors?"

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"I do feel like society is changing, and sometimes I feel that we are not doing enough," CCHS Principal Dr. Swade Huff said. "So the reason that we keep the door locked is truly safety. At the end of the day, the goal is to minimize any type of injuries or casualties or something to take place on our campus."

However, in a building with 1,880 students, keeping everyone who is not a student or staff member out and never opening the doors during the eight hour school day is almost impossible. More needs to be done.

To protect students and staff against intruders, CCHS should consider providing students with keycards that can open the doors, so only those who belong in the building have access to get inside and the risk of accidentally letting intruders in can be lowered.

Physical Education and Health classes should also include school safety units where they can teach students the fastest evacuation routes as well as the "Run, Hide, Fight" tactic. These courses could actually educate students on how they can protect themselves and peers in the event of an emergency.

Because the U.S. and Georgia government refuses to step up, schools and districts need to act fast to protect students.



Above: STEP BY STEP: Various steps illustrated above can be taken at Clarke Central High School to educate students on what to do in the event of an intruder or emergency. School shootings have increased across the United States, and because the government refuses to protect students, that responsibility has fallen on districts and schools. "To protect students and staff against intruders, CCHS should consider providing students with keycards that can open the doors, so only those who belong in the building have access to get inside and the risk of accidentally letting intruders in can be lowered," Viewpoints Editor Janie Ripps wrote. Illustration by Antonio Starks