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As we navigate the challenges in our classrooms, I feel it's important to address the concerning influx of behaviors we are witnessing. Teachers are facing significant issues, including violence, verbal abuse, and threats. I have personally experienced these behaviors, including threats on my life, particularly in first-grade classrooms. Unfortunately, this has created an atmosphere where students feel scared to come to school, leading to increased absenteeism due to anxiety over potential behaviors they may encounter.

These behaviors are not only affecting teachers but are also detrimental to the academic environment. I've spent considerable time managing these behaviors instead of providing quality instruction. In some instances, we have gone weeks without delivering tangible lessons due to the necessary focus on behavior management. When I signed my contract, I did not anticipate that my safety would be compromised while trying to protect my students. It is unacceptable for students to come to school without assurance of a safe environment. Those who engage in harmful actions must face appropriate consequences; without this, we cannot expect a change in behavior. Students need to know that school is a safe place. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, safety is fundamental, and without it, academic success is unattainable. By allowing unsafe behaviors to persist, we hinder both teaching and learning, ultimately impacting our schools' overall well-being. I recently resigned from my position in first grade, primarily due to these ongoing issues, and I am aware that many other educators are making similar decisions.

Thank you for taking the time to consider these serious concerns.

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