

Chapter 29

School Violence: Between Lives and Ideals



Alexandre da Silva Lessa 

Audience: Adults and youth (university students and teachers)

Field: Education

Joice was a school principal who sought to exercise her ideals of justice and equality through the practice of educational models based on theories of moral development, which advocate a comprehensive education founded on cooperation to stimulate autonomous consciousness. She was even attending graduate school and receiving a scholarship to complete her thesis on peaceful methodologies for the development of moral autonomy. She was admitted by a public open test for the headmaster of a municipal school in Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, where she found a scenario in which students did not respect anyone and even threatened teachers with aggressive words and gestures. The Secretary of Education, upon learning of some students carrying weapons in school premises and that a teacher had suffered death threats, decided to adopt measures to contain the violence, demanding strict discipline, and reinforced security with surveillance cameras, including the presence of police force. Codes of conduct searches at school entrances, punishments for students who did not comply with the rules, and judicial accountability of parents who did not show commitment to the educational process were implemented.

In a meeting between the principal and the teaching staff, the implementation or not of these measures was widely discussed. The teachers were divided between simply enforcing such actions and refusing to comply with the department's orders and developing a project to integrate the community into the school, promoting ethical coexistence and resolving conflicts through dialogue. Raise arguments for and against Joice's decision to accept or not to accept the implementation of coercive measures. Help her in her decision.

A. da Silva Lessa (✉)
University of the Air Force, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
e-mail: lessaasl@fab.mil.br