

Unruly Learners Leave Parents Complaining

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07 August 2024

Velile Senior Secondary School located in Bathurst Location in the Eastern Cape has become a nightmare for students and parents but more especially for teachers.

The school was built 30 years ago in the location to increase literacy as the location is well known for its criminal activities inside the premises and some teachers are running away or find work in other schools as Velile is usually called 'Yizo Yizo'. The school's yearly pass rate has been continually dropping every year as students do not attend classes. Some of those who attend use illicit drugs, whether they are in Grade 8 to grade 12.

On 30 July 2024, the school principal Wanga Ntantiso gathered the community as he felt the behaviour of the learners was too scary. Some of the learners are as old as some of the teachers in the school. Mr Ntantiso called a meeting at the school premises updating and pleading for help from parents and the School Governing Body (SGB) to try and fix the school of heroes of Bathurst, as Velile is sometimes called.

When it was first built in 1994, the school was constructed using wood that is now crashing due to lack of maintenance. Classes are falling apart, there are no fields for any sport. There is no computer lab and no science lab as well. The teachers also commented on how much the learners behaviour is affecting the teaching and learning.

Mrs Khephe who is a teacher in the school speaks of criminal activities the students get up to inside the school premises even in front of them. She mentioned that students were smoking dangerous drugs and threatening to harm them they become rude, refusing to participate in the day-to-day running of the school.

The community was shocked to learn that the students behaved so poorly and that some teachers left the school to work in other school, although they were running away for their safety.

"I caught a student smoking weed and told him to throw it away but the student told me he is [busy] smoking it and he won't throw it away," said the principal. The teachers mentioned that the entire school only had 40 learners who are well behaved and still attending classes. Others have a spot outside the classes known as "the sun city". They used to sit and smoke while it's lesson time.

According to one grade 8 learner, "some students behave like thugs in the end carry scary weapons inside the school, even knives are now part of the stationery and they do not hide them at all but flash them around in front of other students".

The student also revealed that some teachers are rude and insult their parents which also provokes the students. The principal concluded that he also wants to leave and that the school should be closed as it is no longer a place of learning but a crime circus.

Students have become dangerous and use the school as a drug house.

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