It’s the same every morning. You come to school and the security officers force you to take off your belts, jackets, hats and everything in your pockets. Furthermore, they’ll search your bags and confiscate your water bottles or any other items that they think are inappropriate for school. Is that really how we deserve to be treated? Is the scanning system in our school worth having?

Many teachers and staff members in our school claim that the scanning system is necessary for our own safety and security. So, how does scanning protect us and is it good for us? International Minds spoke to a few security officers to find out more. Officer M explains that scanning is more than just a rule; it’s a safety requirement. “We have scanning to keep the building safe and to keep weapons out of building,” Officer M says. Her co-worker, the security officer who prefers to stay anonymous, adds, “Scanning system is set up to prevent incidents.”

Interestingly, many students actually agree that a scanning system in our school is a good idea. Maaz, a student from the 10th grade says, “Security is one of the main concerns parents have. That’s why I think it is necessary to have a scanning system.” Officer M explains that, “Scanning makes students feel safer in school and they can get an education without having to worry about weapons and violence.” The anonymous officer adds, “A scanning system makes the school a very safe place for students.”

While many of us understand the importance of the scanning system, some of us might think that it’s a form of an unjust treatment that violates our rights. We decided to go a little bit deeper and asked our social studies teachers how does the scanning system affect our civil rights and liberties? The social studies teacher, Matthew Hoffman, explained that “according to US law, everyone has a right to receive an education. They also have a right not to be subject to unreasonable searches. People against scanning argue that it is a violation of privacy to be searched before entering the building everyday, especially if they have done nothing wrong. People in favor of scanning argue that a dangerous school would prevent individuals from receiving their education. In the past, incidents of violence were so common at Lafayette that searches were judged to be reasonable. Thus, not to scan would violate a student’s right to go to school. Since they scan everyone, it is not discriminatory. Discovery team social studies teacher, Hannah Whang said, “I feel that students have the right to get their education in a safe community environment, and scanning is an important part of creating that sense of security. We all have to face similar procedures in airports and government buildings, and students deserve the same amount of protection.”

Scanning clearly plays an important role in the safety of the school but how exactly does the system work to protect us? On a typical day when you arrive at school and go through the scanner, an officer might tell you to go to the back. Here, a couple of other officers are waiting for you to get rescanned. Officer M and her colleague were kind enough to tell us why this happens. “Students have metal on them and it makes a machine
“People against scanning argue that it is a violation of privacy to be searched before entering the building everyday, especially if they have done nothing wrong,” says Matthew Hoffman.

Okay, no metal, but what about the water bottles? When the first announcements about no open bottles were made, the students were all very confused. The adults in our school claimed again that the rule had been introduced for ‘our own good’, but the students kept asking, “What harm could a single water bottle do to us?” International Minds asked the same question to Officer M and her co-worker. The anonymous officer states, “You are not allowed to bring open bottles because the liquid sometimes spills when your bag goes through the scanning machine. As a result, the machines get damaged and it costs a lot of money to fix them. If a machine doesn’t work, the kids can’t come to school.” Officer M had a quite different reason. She said, “We don’t know what’s in the bottle. It might contain chemicals or alcohol, which are not allowed in school.”

Another point of anger and frustration for students is the fact that we cannot bring cell phones and other types of electronics to school. Just like with the ‘no open water bottles’ rule, students believe that bringing cell phones and other electronics is not dangerous at all. Therefore we should be allowed to bring electronic devices to school. Ali Ahmed, a 12th grade student says, “I want to be able to bring my phone to school.” Ali is not against the scanning system in our school, but he thinks that “the school should let us bring phones and other electronics that are not harmful.” Maaz, a student from the 10th grade agrees that these limitations are not fair and that we should be allowed to bring electronics to school. Eleventh grade English teacher, Anjali Wason, disagrees. “Students are not distracted by ringing phones and text messages during school hours and that means a lot more focus in the classroom.”

On the other hand, students are unaware of the many safety precautions officers take to maintain a safe environment in our school. The anonymous officer told International Minds about the “perimeter check”. During the “Perimeter Check”, every security officer in our school walks around the building and makes sure there are no interruptions, violations or any other types of disturbance. “We patrol the hallways, check the exits and staircases. If anybody needs us, we are there,” concludes Officer M.