

Florida gunman had extra ammo at school, fired for 3 minutes

Associated Press

PARKLAND, Fla. — The teenager accused of using a semi-automatic rifle to kill 17 people at a Florida high school confessed to carrying out one of the nation's deadliest school shootings and carried extra ammunition in his backpack, according to a sheriff's department report released Thursday.

Nikolas Cruz told investigators that he shot students in the hallways and on the grounds of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, north of Miami, the report from the Broward County Sheriff's Office said.

Cruz said he brought more loaded magazines to the school and kept them in the backpack until he got to campus.

As the gunman moved through the school, he fired into five classrooms — four on the first floor and one on the second floor, Sheriff Scott Israel said.

The shooting lasted for three minutes. The assailant then went to the third floor and dropped his AR-15 rifle and the backpack and ran out of the building, attempting to blend in with fleeing students, Israel said.

After the rampage, the suspect headed to a Wal-Mart and bought a drink at a Subway restaurant before walking to a McDonald's. He was taken into custody about 40 minutes after leaving the McDonald's, the sheriff said.

A day after the attack, a fuller portrait emerged of the shooter, a loner who had worked at a dollar store, joined the school's ROTC program and posted photos of weapons on Instagram. At least one student said classmates joked that Cruz would "be the one to shoot up the school."

The 19-year-old orphan whose mother died last year was charged with murder Thursday in the assault that devastated this sleepy community on the edge of the Everglades. It was the nation's deadliest school attack since a gunman targeted an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, more than five years ago.

Meanwhile, students struggled to describe the violence that ripped through their classrooms just before the school day ended.

Catarina Linden, a 16-year-old sophomore, said she was in an advanced math class Wednesday when the gunfire began.



A student mourns the loss of her friend during a community vigil at Pine Trails Park, Thursday in Parkland, Fla., for the victims of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.



A video monitor shows school shooting suspect Nikolas Cruz, left, making an appearance before Judge Kim Theresa Mollica in Broward County Court, Thursday in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Cruz is accused of opening fire Wednesday at the school killing more than a dozen people and injuring several.

"He shot the girl next to me," she said, adding that when she finally was able to leave the classroom, the air was foggy with gun smoke. "I stepped on so many shell casings. There were bodies on the ground, and there was blood everywhere."

State Sen. Bill Galvano visited the high school Thursday and was

allowed to go up to the third floor, where he was shown bullet holes that marked where Cruz had tried to shoot out the windows at point-blank range. But the high-impact glass did not shatter.

Authorities told Galvano that Cruz apparently wanted to shoot out the windows so he could fire

on the students running away from the school. Police told Galvano that it was not that difficult to open the windows.

"Thank God he didn't," Galvano said.

Among the dead were a football coach who also worked as a security guard, a senior who planned to attend Lynn University and an athletic director who was active in his Roman Catholic church.

The last of the bodies were removed from the high school Thursday after authorities analyzed the crime scene. Thirteen wounded survivors were still hospitalized, including two in critical condition.

Authorities have not offered any specific motive, except to say that Cruz had been kicked out of the high school, which has about 3,000 students and serves an affluent suburb where the median home price is nearly \$600,000. Students who knew him described a volatile teenager whose strange behavior had caused others to end friendships with him.

Cruz was ordered held without bond at a brief court hearing. He wore an orange jumpsuit with his hands cuffed at his waist. His attorney had her arm around Cruz during the short appearance. Afterward, she called

Warning signs may have been missed

PARKLAND, Fla. (AP) — Months before authorities say Nikolas Cruz walked into his former high school and slaughtered 17 people, the troubled teen began showing what may have been warning signs he was bent on violence.

"Im going to be a professional school shooter," a YouTube user with the screen name "Nikolas Cruz" posted in September.

The 19-year-old got expelled last year from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School for undisclosed disciplinary reasons. And less than a year ago, the former Junior ROTC cadet bought a military-style AR-15 rifle.

As investigators tried to establish the motive for Wednesday's shooting rampage, students and neighbors portrayed Cruz as an often strange and hostile figure who threatened others, talked about killing animals, and posed with guns in disturbing photos on social media.

"I think everyone had in their minds if anybody was going to do it, it was going to be him," 17-year-old Dakota Mutchler said after Cruz was identified as the gunman in the nation's deadliest school shooting in more than five years.

Cruz was an orphan — his mother, Lynda Cruz, died of pneumonia Nov. 1, and her husband died of a heart attack years ago, neighbors, friends and family members told the Sun Sentinel.

him a "broken human being."

He was being held under a suicide watch, Executive Chief Public Defender Gordon Weekes told reporters.

Wednesday's shooting was the 17th incident of gunfire at an American school this year.

As the criminal case began to take shape, President Donald Trump, in an address to the nation, promised to "tackle the difficult issue of mental health," but avoided any mention of guns. Trump, who owns a private club in Palm Beach, about 40 miles from Parkland, said he planned to visit the grieving community.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON & EVENING

Table with columns for time slots (12 PM, 12:30, 1 PM, 1:30, 2 PM, 2:30, 3 PM, 3:30, 4 PM, 4:30, 5 PM, 5:30, 6 PM, 6:30, 7 PM, 7:30, 8 PM, 8:30, 9 PM, 9:30, 10 PM, 10:30, 11 PM, 11:30) and rows for various TV channels (FOX, CBS, NBC, ABC, PBS, CABLE, PREMIUM) listing programs and their details.

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FRIDAY LATE NIGHT & SATURDAY MORNING

Table with columns for time slots (12 AM, 12:30, 1 AM, 2 AM, 2:30, 3 AM, 4 AM, 4:30, 5 AM, 5:30, 6 AM, 6:30, 7 AM, 7:30, 8 AM, 8:30, 9 AM, 9:30, 10 AM, 10:30, 11 AM, 11:30) and rows for various TV channels (FOX, CBS, NBC, ABC, PBS) listing programs and their details.