

## **17 killed in Florida school shooting, suspect in custody; Trump says no child should ever feel unsafe**

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**Students released from a lockdown are overcome with emotion following a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018.**

**Florida:** At least 17 people were killed at a Florida school last night when a former student opened fire. The 19-year-old suspect was taken into custody without a fight about an hour after he left the scene, authorities said.

Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said the suspect, who was previously expelled for disciplinary reasons, had at least one rifle and multiple magazines.

Expressing grief over the incident, US President Donald Trump said that his office was working closely with law enforcement on the terrible shooting incident. "My prayers and condolences to the families of the victims of the terrible Florida shooting. No child, teacher or anyone else should ever feel unsafe in an American school," he tweeted.

"Just spoke to Governor Rick Scott. We are working closely with law enforcement on the terrible Florida school shooting," he said in another tweet.

Frantic parents rushed to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School to find SWAT team members and ambulances surrounding the campus as classes prepared to dismiss for the day. Live footage showed emergency workers who appeared to be treating the wounded on sidewalks.

"It is a horrific situation," said Robert Runcie, superintendent of the school district in Parkland, about an hour's drive north of Miami. "It is a horrible day for us."

"It's catastrophic. There really are no words," Israel said on Twitter.

Most of the fatalities were inside the building, though some victims were found fatally shot outside, the sheriff said.

The gunman was identified as Nicolas Cruz by a US official briefed on the investigation. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the information publicly.

In a cul-de-sac near the school, Michael Nembhard was sitting in his garage when he saw a young man in a burgundy shirt walking down the street. In an instant, a police cruiser pulled up and officers jumped out with guns drawn.

**In this frame grab from video provided by WPLG-TV, students from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., evacuate the school following a shooting, Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018.**

"All I heard was 'Get on the ground! Get on the ground!'" Nembhard said. He said he could not see the suspect's face, but that the man got on the ground without incident.

The day started normally at the school, which had a morning fire drill, and students were in class around 2:30 p.m. when another alarm sounded.

Noah Parness, a 17-year-old junior, said he and the other students calmly went outside to their fire-drill areas when he suddenly heard popping sounds.

“We saw a bunch of teachers running down the stairway, and then everybody shifted and broke into a sprint,” Parness said. “I hopped a fence.”

Beth Feingold said her daughter, Brittani, sent a text at 2:32 p.m. that said, “We’re on code red. I’m fine,” but sent another text shortly afterwards saying, “Mom, I’m so scared.”

Brittani later was able to escape the school, which is one of the largest in the state, with about 3,000 students.

Inside the school, students heard loud bangs as the shooter fired. Many of them hid under desks or in closets and barricaded doors.

Television footage showed those students who fled leaving in a single-file line with their hands over their heads as officers urged them to evacuate quickly. Parents hurried to the scene.

Caesar Figueroa said when he got to the school to check on his 16-year-old daughter, he saw police officers drawing machine guns as they approached the campus.

“My wife called me that there was an active shooter, and the school was on lockdown. I got on the road and saw helicopters. ... It was crazy and my daughter wasn’t answering her phone.” She finally texted him that she was inside a closet with friends.

Len Murray’s 17-year-old son, a junior at the school, sent his parents a chilling text: “Mom and Dad, there have been shots fired on campus at school. There are police sirens outside. I’m in the auditorium and the doors are locked.”

A few minutes later, he texted again: “I’m fine.”

Murray said he raced to the school only to be stopped by authorities under a highway overpass within view of the school buildings. He said he told his son to save his battery and stop texting. The boy’s mother told him to turn off his ringer.

Authorities told parents to gather at a nearby hotel to get information.

“I’m scared for the other parents here. You can see the concern on everybody’s faces. Everybody is asking, ‘Have you heard from your child yet?’” Murray said.

Murray said he’s had just one thought running through his mind since he got his son’s text: “All I keep thinking about is when I dropped him off this morning. I usually say, ‘I love you,’ and I didn’t this morning. He’s 17, he’s at that age, and I didn’t say it this morning, and I’m just kicking myself right now over and over and over. Say it early and often, I’m telling you.”

- (With inputs from AP)