

Details Come To Light In Roswell Shooting; 12 Year Old In Custody **News**

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ROSWELL, N.M. (AP) — A student opened fire Tuesday morning at a middle school in the southeastern New Mexico city of Roswell, shooting two students before being taken into custody.



Officials at University Medical Center in Lubbock, Texas, say a 14-year-old boy was flown there in critical condition and a 13-year-old girl was en route in serious condition. Information from nurses treating the boy indicates he was the shooter's target, hospital spokesman Eric Finley said.

Police say the suspect opened fire at Berrendo Middle School as classes were starting for the day.

A student who witnessed the shooting said a male student shot the boy twice in the face and shot the girl in the arm.

Eighth grader Odie Carranza said she was walking to the school gym when a boy bumped into her as he rushed past. She told him to be careful, and he apologized and continued on. He ran to the gym, where he pulled a gun out of a band instrument case and fired at the students.

"Then he shot up in the sky, then dropped the gun, and then some teacher grabbed the kid that had the gun," Carranza said.

Carranza described the shooter as a "smart kid and a nice kid."

A statement from the state police said authorities responded at 8:11 a.m. Roswell police say the school was placed on lockdown, and the suspected shooter was arrested. Age and other details on the suspect were not immediately released.

Police said children were bused to a nearby mall, where parents could pick up them up.

"I'm still scared to go back to school," Carranza said.

Sixth-grade student Anyssa Vegara told the Albuquerque Journal she was talking to a security guard when she heard a shot.

"I turned around, and all I saw was someone on the floor with their arm bleeding," Vegara told the Journal.

She said the security guard ran to assist the injured student, and school officials ordered all the other students to their classrooms.

Eventually, she was able to text her mother, Monica Vegara.

"From the time hearing about it until the time she texted, it was a nightmare," Monica Vegara said.

Fawna Hendricks, whose son is a seventh-grader at Berrendo Middle School, told the newspaper she heard about the shooting on the radio. "Basically I jumped outta bed, threw on clothes, panicked," Hendricks said.

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<http://www.kttn.com/kgofm/modules/news/article.php?storyid=111107>

Another student, Gabby Vasquez, said the boy who was shot "was really nice, got along with everybody." Hospital officials said Tuesday afternoon that the 14-year-old had undergone surgery but was still in critical condition.

Employees who arrived early to work at United Drilling Inc., across the street from the school, heard no gunshots. They didn't know about the commotion until around 8 a.m., when their parking lot filled with police and rescue vehicles.

At the Roswell mall, parents waited anxiously for their children. Some held hands, while others hugged each other.

Two prayer services were scheduled for Tuesday night at Roswell's Calvary Baptist and First Baptist churches. Pastor Chris Mullennix said parents were worried and heartbroken, but there was a sense among many he spoke with that the community would be able to come together.

"This is something that strikes people to the core," he said in an interview. "We're not talking about a flesh wound or just a mental wound, we're talking about the very souls of people being shaken and rocked by something like this."

Mullennix said the prayer services will start the healing process.

"This is tragic but yet people in Roswell are tough, and people in Roswell will recover because we do have a sense of community, and I think that's really important," he said.

In the hours after the shooting, social media sites were flooded with sentiments offering prayers for the community. Some Berrendo students posted on their Facebook sites that they were scared and didn't want to return to school.

At a briefing later in the day, White House press secretary Jay Carney said the president was aware of the shooting.

"Our understanding is this is not an active shooter situation," he said. "The president's team is monitoring the situation and is in close touch with our federal partners."

Roswell has a population of about 50,000. It is a center for ranching and farming, and is home to the New Mexico Military Institute, the only state-supported military college in the West. The city is perhaps best-known as the site of an alleged UFO crash in 1947.