

The Bakersfield Californian

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SENSELESS



JESSICA HILL / AP

A woman waits to hear about her sister, a teacher, following a shooting at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., about 60 miles northeast of New York City, Friday. An official with knowledge of Friday's shooting said 28 people were dead, including 20 children and the gunman. It was the nation's second-deadliest school shooting.

Nation grieves over massacre at Connecticut elementary school

BY JOHN CHRISTOFFERSEN
The Associated Press

— NEWTOWN, Conn.

A man killed his mother at their home and then opened fire Friday inside an elementary school, massacring 26 people, including 20 children, as youngsters covered in fear to the sound of gunshots reverberating through the building and screams echoing over the intercom.

The 20-year-old killer, carrying at least two handguns, committed suicide at the school, bringing the death toll to 28, authorities said.

The rampage, coming less than two weeks before Christmas, was the nation's second-deadliest school shooting, exceeded only by the Virginia Tech massacre that claimed 33

lives in 2007.

"Our hearts are broken today," a tearful President Barack Obama, struggling to maintain his composure, said at the White House. He called for "meaningful action" to prevent such shootings, saying, "As a country, we have been through this too many times."

Police shed no light on the motive for the attack. The gunman, Adam Lanza, was believed to suffer from a personality disorder and lived with his mother, said a law enforcement official who was briefed on the investigation but was not authorized to discuss it.

Panicked parents looking for their children raced to Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, a prosperous New England community of about 27,000 people 60 miles northeast

of New York City. Police told youngsters at the kindergarten-through-fourth-grade school to close their eyes as they were led from the building so that they wouldn't see the blood and broken glass.

Schoolchildren — some crying, others looking frightened — were escorted through a parking lot in a line, hands on each other's shoulders.

Law enforcement officials speaking on condition of anonymity said that Lanza killed his mother, Nancy Lanza, then drove to the school in her car with at least three guns, including a high-powered rifle that he apparently left in the back of the vehicle, and shot up two classrooms around 9:30 a.m.

A custodian ran through the halls, warning

INSIDE

Complete shooting coverage.
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of a gunman on the loose, and someone switched on the intercom, alerting people in the building to the attack — and perhaps saving many lives — by letting them hear the hysteria going on in the school office, a teacher said. Teachers locked their doors and ordered children to huddle in a corner or hide in closets as shots echoed through the building.

Authorities gave no details on exactly how the attack unfolded, but police radio traffic

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