

# Record-Journal

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## Man kills 26 at Newtown school

### Gunman shoots mother, then children and staff at elementary school

By John Christoffersen  
Associated Press

NEWTOWN — 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 cowered in fear to the sound of gunshots reverberating through the building and screams echoing over the intercom.

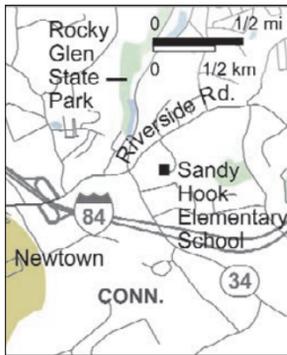
The 20-year-old killer, carrying at least two handguns, committed suicide at the school, bringing the death toll to 28, authorities said.

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 School in this prosperous 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.



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- ▶ "Who would do this?" anguished parents ask. **Page 4.**
- ▶ Waiting and hoping to find a child safe. **Page 4.**

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, and then drove to the school in her car with three guns, including a high-powered rifle that he apparently

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Melanie Stengel, New Haven Register / Associated Press

A mother hugs her daughter after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown Friday morning, which left 20 children and several staff members dead.

### Killer called intelligent but fidgety

By David M. Halbfinger  
New York Times News Service

He carried a black briefcase to his 10th-grade honors English class and sat near the door, so he could readily slip in and out. When called upon, he was intelligent, but nervous and fidgety, spitting his words out, as if having to speak up were painful.

Pale, tall and scrawny, Adam Lanza walked through high school in Newtown, Conn., with his hands glued to his sides, the pens in the pocket of his short-sleeve, button-down shirts among the few things that his classmates recalled about him.

He did all he could to avoid attention, it seemed.

Until Friday. The authorities said Lanza, 20, wearing combat gear, carried out one of the deadliest mass slayings in the nation's history.

He killed his mother, who was a kindergarten teacher, and 20 children at an elementary school in Newtown, Conn., and he killed six other

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- ▶ A special town, shattered by tragedy. **Page 5.**
- ▶ Hundreds pack Newtown church for vigil. **Page 5.**

adults at the school, including the principal and a school psychologist, before apparently turning his gun on himself.

In his brief adulthood, Lanza had left few footprints, electronic or otherwise. He apparently had no Facebook page, unlike his older brother, Ryan, a Hoboken, N.J., resident who for several hours on Friday was misidentified in news reports as the perpetrator of the massacre.

Adam Lanza did not even appear in his high school yearbook, that of the class of 2010. His spot on the page said "camera shy." Others who graduated that year said they did not believe he had finished school.

Matt Baier, now a junior at the University of Connecticut, and other high school classmates, recalled how deeply uncomfortable Lanza was in social situations.

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### Safety always comes first, say school leaders here

By Eric Heredia  
Record-Journal staff

Local school systems stayed in close touch with police Friday and took efforts to keep schools safe and secure following the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown.

When asked what long-term effects the shootings would have on school security procedures, Southington School Superintendent Joseph Erardi said "safety trumps everything else that we do" and that his heart and prayers were with the victims and their families.

"To think of what it would be like to be in the shoes of one of those parents ... it's unconscionable," Erardi said after meeting with his administrative staff in the afternoon.

He said it was important for schools to continue their partnership with police, town government and parents to ensure

safety.

"There is no easy answer and it's changing every day," Erardi said.

All Southington schools went into a passive lockdown in the afternoon, in which students could move freely within schools, and remained that way until dismissal time. There was someone stationed at the entrances and students could leave the building only through one door. Every door in every school was checked to make sure that they locked properly. All evening school-related activities were canceled.

School administrators cleared their schedules and were available for parents at the end of the school day. The schools kept in constant communication with police regarding school dismissal. Erardi will be available to meet with

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Charles Krupa / Associated Press

Hundreds stand outside Saint Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church in Newtown, which was filled to capacity Friday night during a service for victims of the shooting.

### Parents just want to know their kids are safe

By Russell Blair  
Record-Journal staff

When Erin Hermann heard the news of a deadly shooting at an elementary school in Newtown, she immediately thought of her son, a second-grader.

"I just wanted to bring the kids home and hug them," she said as she stood outside Moses Y. Beach School in Wallingford Friday afternoon. "I knew they were safe here, but I wanted to get them

home."

Around the area Friday, parents hugged their kids tight and grappled with the idea that a tragedy of this magnitude could occur at an elementary school.

"Oh my God," said Lilly Torres as she waited outside Casimir Pulaski School in Meriden to pick up her child. "I have no words. You have your kids and you bring your kids to school, they're happy to be in school, and you don't know if you're going to have

them back. I don't know how a person could do so much damage."

Many parents first heard news of the shooting on the television or radio.

"My heart was pounding," Kimberly Cosentino said as she waited outside Moses Y. Beach to pick up her son, Brandin. "I had to stop and sit down."

When the doors of Moses Y. opened and the children rushed out at the end of the school day, parents leaned

down and embraced them.

"It's frightening," Deron Chang said as he scooped up his son, Cal. "The first thing I wanted to do was take him out of school, but I knew that was irrational. My heart goes out to those poor parents."

Chang said the situation "made him think," but he still felt safe sending his son to school and didn't want to change his routine by picking him up in the middle of the

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**Sunny, then afternoon clouds.**  
Highs in 40s, lows in 30s.  
Forecast, **Page 31.**

#### Wallingford

▶ The school district's 21st Century Innovation Team, hoping to help achieve a 100 percent graduation rate, organized a townwide read of the book "Mindset: The New Psychology of Success." **Page 17.**

#### Cheshire

▶ Emergency repairs to the roof over the west gym at Cheshire High School will be under way as early as Monday at a cost of about \$219,000. **Page 17.**



#### Business

▶ Ragozzino's branching out with new company and new high-pressure food-processing technology. **Page 10.**

#### Region

▶ Could the losses from Hurricane Sandy help efforts to expand casino gambling in New York? **Page 3.**

#### Readers' Opinions

▶ "I cannot be more proud of the Southington High School Blue Knights Marching Band."

▶ "I just wanted to take a minute and publicly thank the Meriden Police Department for the job they do every day." **Page 20.**

#### Southington

▶ Bread for Life has been feeding people since 1984 — serving tens of thousands of meals per year — and the motto is still "that no one may go hungry." **Page 17.**



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