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One killed, two wounded in Jacksboro school shooting

Duncan Mansfield
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JACKSBORO, Tenn. — A teenager shot and killed an assistant principal and seriously wounded two other administrators at a high school on Tuesday, officials said. The student was arrested.

"I don't know what he was thinking or what his motives were," Sheriff Ron McClellan said.

Campbell County High School Assistant Principal Ken Bruce was shot in the chest just after 2 p.m. and died soon after at a hospital, law enforcement and school officials said.

The suspect was grazed in the hand by a bullet fired from his own .22-caliber handgun during a scuffle with the administrators and an unidentified teacher who helped wrestle the gun away, the sheriff said.

No other students were injured.

Principal Gary Seale was shot in the lower abdomen, and Assistant Principal Jim Pierce was shot in the chest. Seale was in serious condition and Pierce in critical condition at University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville, spokeswoman Lisa McNeal said.

School will be closed the rest of the week, and counselors will be available to help students and teachers on Monday, schools director Judy Blevins said.

"This situation could have gotten much worse. It did not because our staff followed the (emergency) plan in place," said Mark Wells, vice chairman of the Campbell County Board of Education.

Authorities were unsure if the suspect would be charged as a



Jeff Adkins / The Knoxville Sentinel

Students and parents comfort each other outside Campbell County High School in Jacksboro, Tenn. on Tuesday. According to officials, a student at the school shot three administrators before being arrested. An assistant principal was shot to death.

juvenile or an adult. He was being held in a juvenile detention facility in nearby Scott County.

The 1,400-student school, located about 30 miles northwest of Knoxville, was locked down after the shooting. Students said Seale was able to get to the school intercom and order the lockdown after being shot.

"Knowing him, he probably did," the sheriff said. "He is a tough fellow and a great individual. That sounds like him. Whoever did it, he did the right thing."

Clifford Kohlmeyer, a former assistant principal at the school, said the three victims were dedicated educators and family men. Both Seale and Pierce have been educators more than 30 years, he said.

"Mr. Bruce, the one who got killed, had been a lieutenant colonel in the Army and came back to teach about eight years

ago," Kohlmeyer said. "We shared an office for two years. He was very dedicated to the students."

Pierce was a longtime physical education teacher and cross country team coach before moving into administration, Kohlmeyer said.

All three men have children, he said.

The incident caused a huge traffic jam at the school as bus drivers and parent rushed to remove students from the campus closed by police to the public.

"It is scary, it is terrifying," said Darren Davidson, waiting for his son Justin to come through the school's gates. "I thought I would have a heart attack before I got here," added his wife, Kizzie Davidson.

Roger Wallace, a driver at a pizza restaurant near the school, said he saw the students being evacuated from the high school and loaded onto buses.

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