

CBS/AP November 27, 2017, 6:12 PM

"Columbine-style" threat investigated in Telluride, Colorado



One student is in custody and at least five others are being questioned in Colorado after investigators said they discovered a "Columbine-style" threat being discussed on Snapchat.

SAN MIGUEL SHERIFF'S OFFICE/TWITTER

TELLURIDE, Colo. -- One student is in custody and at least five others are being questioned in Telluride, Colorado, after investigators said they discovered a "Columbine-Style" threat being discussed on Snapchat.

Telluride High School was closed Monday as various law enforcement agencies searched the high school in the Rocky Mountain town of fewer than 3,000 residents. The Telluride Marshal's Department said in a [statement](#) that a student notified school staff about a possible threat Sunday afternoon.

Investigators later discovered another threat to detonate explosives around the school. The department said a rifle and handgun were found in the home of the Telluride High student taken into custody.

In a statement, Chief Marshal James Kolar said, "We take these threats seriously and our investigation will be efficient and thorough."

School Superintendent Mike Gass called it an excellent example of kids doing the right thing by notifying adults of suspicious activity.

CBS Denver reports that school officials said they take "every threat seriously and run down all leads to ensure safety of students and staff."

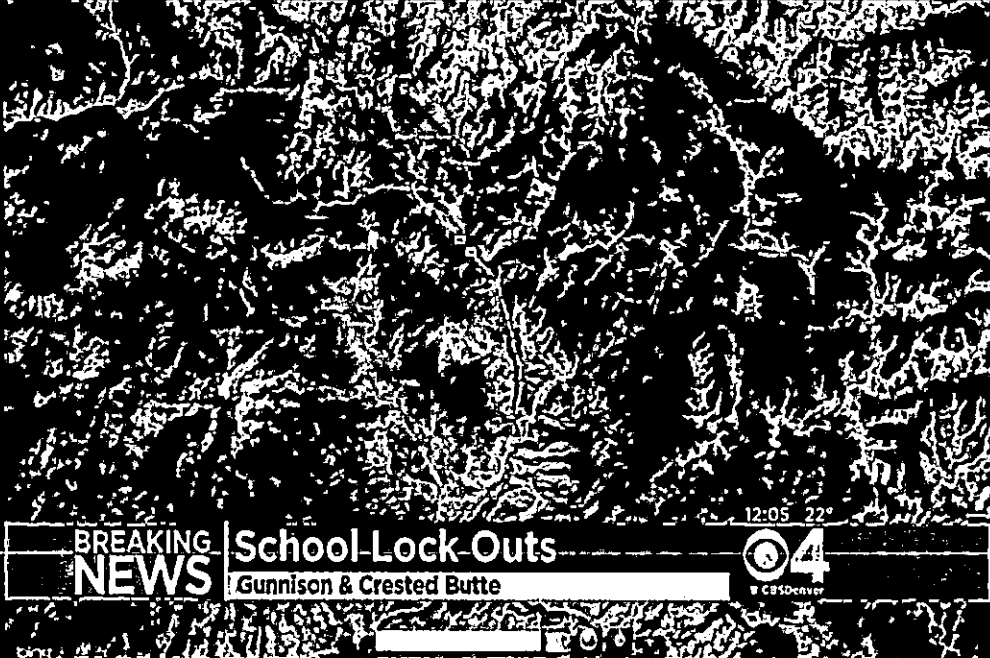
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Online News Story (Screenprint) of Threats to Schools in Gunnison/Crested Butte in December 2017

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BREAKING NEWS School-Lock-Outs
Gunnison & Crested Butte

12:05 22°

CBS Denver

Possible Threat Forces Lockout At Gunnison, Crested Butte Schools

CBS Denver Duration: 00:35 12/21/2017

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Law enforcement agencies are investigating a possible threat against schools in Gunnison County.

Source: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/possible-threat-forces-lockout-at-gunnison-crested-butte-schools/vi-BBH83hs?ocid=se>. 12/27/17, MSN.COM (2017).

Delivery alert until NaN

Colorado ski town school searched for weapons after threat

By Associated Press

Published: Monday, November 27th, 2017 at 12:56pm
Updated: Monday, November 27th, 2017 at 7:34pm

TELLURIDE, Colo. — FBI agents and police searched a high school campus for weapons and explosives in the scenic Rocky Mountains resort of Telluride on Monday after a tip about alleged plans for a “Columbine-style” attack shut down the school.

Officials said one student was taken into custody and a handgun and a rifle at his home also were seized. The boy was taken into custody Sunday, was questioned and remained in custody Monday but had not been placed under arrest, said Susan Lilly, a spokeswoman for a multiagency task force conducting the investigation.

No weapons were found on the campus of Telluride High School and officials said it would reopen Tuesday with extra security as a precaution.

The investigation into the social media threats — reported to school officials on Sunday — was continuing, Lilly said.

The threats rattled Telluride, a former mining town turned resort destination that is surrounded by mountains and attracts celebrities to its ski slopes and its annual Telluride Film Festival.

The male student taken into custody is a juvenile who is suspected of posting on Snapchat a threat to detonate explosives on the campus of the school, which has about 255 students, Lilly said. His name and age were being withheld and he had not been formally charged by late Monday, she said.

Lilly did not provide additional details about the guns seized at the homes and no other details about the search were disclosed.

Authorities were trying to determine the author of an earlier Snapchat post that threatened a shooting at the school and specifically referred to the 1999 Columbine High School shootings in suburban Denver, Lilly said. Thirteen people were killed at Columbine, and the two student gunmen took their own lives.

The Columbine massacre, in Littleton, has led to dozens of copycat plots or incidents nationwide. It also led to more aggressive prevention efforts and police responses to active-shooter situations at schools.

“We take every threat seriously and run down all leads to ensure safety of students and staff,” school superintendent Mike Gass said in a message to parents.

Investigators have spoken with an additional six students as part of their probe and planned to speak with three more, Lilly said. None of them were considered suspects as of late Monday, she said.

FBI agents were involved because the case potentially involved explosives or firearms, Lilly said.

This story has been corrected to show that one student was taken into custody but has not been arrested.



TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2017

Central High School Lockdown update

MESA COUNTY, Colo - This morning, at 9:54, a call came into the Grand Junction Regional Communication Center from a male subject threatening the lives of students and staff at Central High School. The caller claimed to be hiding in the school with weapons. The threat was determined to be unsubstantiated after a thorough search of the school campus, and no such person or weapons of any kind were found. The Mesa County Sheriff's Office, along with the Grand Junction Police Department, and the FBI determined that the threat is not real. We are confident there is not a credible threat to any of our local schools today or in the near future.

While the investigation is in the early stages and still very active, there are indications that this call did not originate locally. The investigation into the caller's identity is ongoing.

Law enforcement from around the county, including the Mesa County Sheriff's Office, the Grand Junction Police Department, and the Colorado State Patrol, immediately responded to the school. The campus was put on lockdown.

Law enforcement entered the school and began the process of methodically checking the school for any potential threat, and none was found.

Deputies and officers then went classroom by classroom and safely evacuated all 1,400 students and staff to Palisade High School to be reunited with parents through the School District's reunification process.

Once the school was completely evacuated, the Grand Junction Police Department Bomb Squad swept Central High School for any suspicious items. None were found.

Rumors that a suspect was seen by students inside the school with a device, and that a suspect was barricaded in a classroom, are not accurate. Any threat to student safety is taken very seriously and will be thoroughly investigated. However, we caution people against believing everything they read on social media. Please look to your trusted media outlets, or law enforcement agency, for the latest correct information during a developing situation.

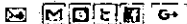
In response to questions about why we evacuated the school despite the fact the threats to student safety were not substantiated, student and staff safety is always the top priority. Threats are taken seriously, and are thoroughly investigated. Although this process is lengthy and labor intensive, we cannot take any chances where threats to the safety of our schools is concerned.

We want to thank parents for their patience and cooperation during today's events. We know how stressful being separated from your loved ones during the unknown can be.

If your child has a car at Central High School, the campus is now open, and they can come pick it up at this time. They cannot, however, go inside to the school to retrieve belongings including car keys until tomorrow.

We will share additional information about this investigation as it becomes available.

Posted by Megan Terlecky at 4:18 PM



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 Dep. Amanda Erkman
 Gerry Wichige

For all PUBLIC Contacts, visit this webpage.

BLOG ARCHIVE

2018 (5)

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October (9)

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Source: <http://www.mcsonews.com/2017/03/central-high-school-lockdown-update.html>. 3/28/17,
<http://www.mcsonews.com> (2017).

Central High School in Grand Junction evacuated; reports of bombs, armed suspect 'not true'

POSTED 11:00 AM, MARCH 28, 2017, BY CHUCK HICKEY, UPDATED AT 12:42PM, MARCH 28, 2017



This is an archived article and the information in the article may be outdated. Please look at the time stamp on the story to see when it was last updated.

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. — Central High School in Grand Junction was being evacuated Tuesday morning because of “unconfirmed threats,” the Mesa County Sheriff’s Office said.

The sheriff’s office said reports that there was the presence of bombs or an armed suspect in the school were false.

“This is not true,” the sheriff’s office wrote on Facebook. “No physical threat has been found in or around the building.”



Mesa County Sheriff's Office

about 10 months ago

There is false information being shared that law enforcement has confirmed the presence of bombs and/or armed suspects in the school. Again, THIS IS NOT TRUE. Law enforcement has saturated Central High School and is actively evacuating classrooms and searching and clearing the entire campus. No physical threat has been found in or around the building. Any threat to student safety is taken very seriously and will be thoroughly investigated. Law enforcement will remain on scene until the campus and all students and staff are determined to be safe.



Mesa County Sheriff's Office

about 10 months ago

Teachers and staff are trained on evacuation protocols and are actively following those procedures. Staff members will be on the buses with students. The evacuation process has started.

61 6 32



Mesa County Sheriff's Office

about 10 months ago

Law enforcement is actively working to search the building. Information that we have confirmed that someone is barricaded and armed in the building IS NOT TRUE.

79 20 156

District 51 said about 1,400 students are being evacuated to Palisade High School where parents can meet them. All students will be taken to Palisade by bus, even students who drove to school.



Mesa County Valley School District 51

about 10 months ago

UPDATE 4:30 p.m.: Central students may now pick up their cars from the parking lot if they have their keys. The building will remain locked through the night. Students can collect their belongings first thing in the morning. Full statement from Principal Lanc Sellden here:

<https://www.facebook.com/schooldistrict51/posts/10155128764709122>

UPDATE 2:45 p.m.:

In response to the incident at Central High School today, March 28th, the school will remain locked down this afternoon a... See More



Mesa County Sheriff's Office

Government Organization · 26,168 Likes · March 28, 2017 · 🌐

There is a heavy law enforcement presence at Central High School, responding to some unconfirmed threats. All threats to student safety are taken very seriously...

See More

35 26 1

“We are working to get kids evacuated as quickly and safely as possible,” the sheriff’s office said.



Mesa County Sheriff's Office
about 10 months ago

Students have not yet been evacuated. This process will take some time. No student will be released from Central High School. All students and parents will need to be prepared to go through the required reunification process, which includes showing a picture ID to pick up your child. We are working to get kids evacuated as quickly and safely as possible. Reunification will take place at Palisade High School, but no students have been transported yet. We appreciate your patience and understanding. Your child's safety is our number one priority.

66 25 160

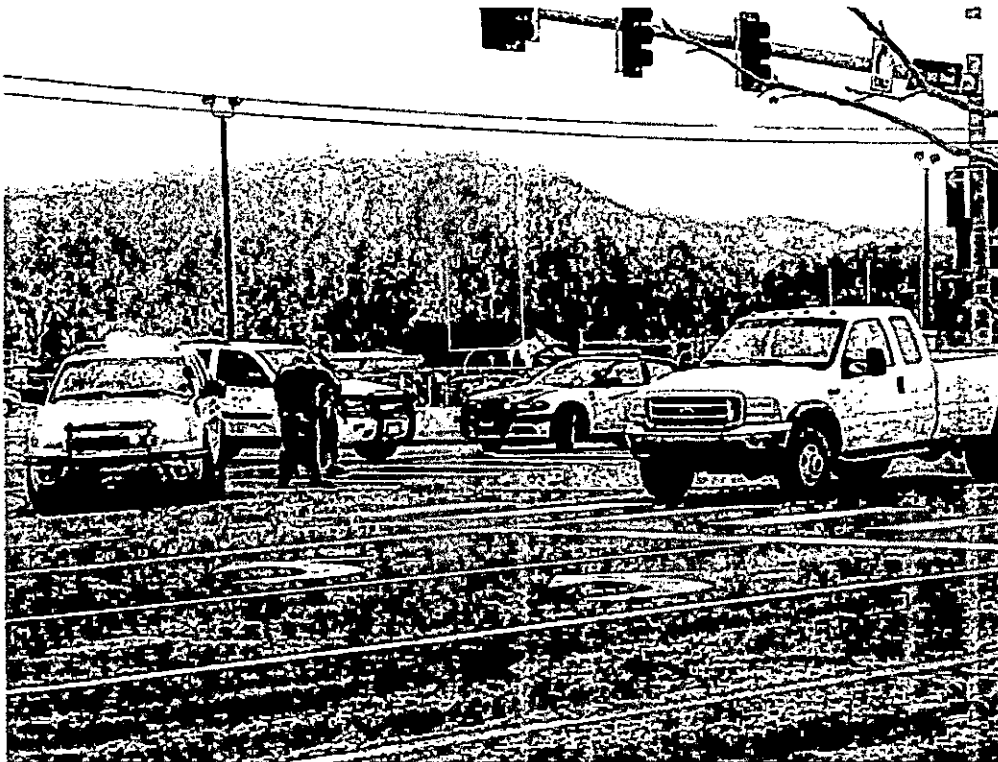


Mesa County Sheriff's Office
about 10 months ago

All students will be bused to Palisade, including kids that drove to school. Again, the reunification process will take time. We will continue to provide updates of any new information as it becomes available.

30 1 64

The school was put in lockdown as police officers and deputies responded to the threats. There have been no reports of any injuries.



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Police activity in the area. Putting Central high School on lockdown and Grand Mesa Middle on shelter and place

Grand Junction High School and Grand Mesa Middle School also sheltered in place as a safety precaution during the investigation, the sheriff's office said.



Sheriff: Serious Threat Against Palisade High School Foiled, Student Arrested



By Tim Ciesco | Posted: Tue 1:11 PM, Sep 29, 2009 | Updated: Tue 11:46 PM, Sep 29, 2009

The Mesa County Sheriff's Office says it has foiled a possible plot by a student against Palisade High School thanks to the swift work of deputies and the school district.

Officials are releasing few details about the plot as they continue their investigation into the threat.

Students walked out the doors of Palisade High School Tuesday afternoon like it was any normal day – something officials say they're glad to see after a possible threat was made against the school.

"We believe there was a potential threat to Palisade High School," said Sheriff Stan Hilkey. "And that the threat involved the use of weapons and or explosives."

The Mesa County Sheriff's Office says it caught wind of the plot during the day, Monday. And while officials would not go into detail about how they were tipped off or where the investigation went from there, they arrested 18-year-old Robert Johnson on charges of criminal solicitation and interference with an educational institution. They say Johnson is a current student at Palisade High School.

"In working with school officials, we still feel like we have very safe schools in Mesa County," said Hilkey. "This is a process that worked, information was discovered and it was acted on very swiftly."

Johnson's arrest affidavit has been sealed while deputies continue their investigation.

"We don't want to compromise our own ability to get good information and to do this investigation correctly," said Hilkey.

During Johnson's court appearance Tuesday afternoon, District Attorney Pete Hautzinger called the details in the affidavit "profoundly disturbing." He also said there were some allegations that drug use was involved with this case.

"This was a serious incident," said Hilkey.

School District 51 says safety is its top priority and it's glad to see the policies in place and staff training did exactly what they were supposed to do.

"I think the response by school administrators and law enforcement was handled very appropriately," said Steve Schultz, Superintendent of Schools for School District 51.

School officials say they only hope this incident will reinforce the good that comes from working together and doing the right thing.

"I think it just underscores the importance of how we need to work together as a community to always be vigilant and watchful, and take things like this seriously," said Schultz.

The Mesa County Sheriff's Office would not say if Johnson was their only suspect in the case.

The District Attorney's office says once the investigation is complete, it is very likely more charges will be filed against Johnson. His bond was set at \$100,000.

During Johnson's court appearance, his mother made a few brief remarks with tears in her eyes. She told the judge they did not have the resources to bail her son out and she "didn't know what was best" for him. She declined to comment to 11 News.

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[Sheriff: PHS school attack plot foiled, student arrested](#)

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NEWS > CRIME & COURTS

16-year-old girls arrested in Douglas County high school murder plot



Denver Post file photo

Mountain Vista High School in
Highlands Ranch.

By **JESSE PAUL** | jpaul@denverpost.com |

The Denver Post

PUBLISHED: December 15, 2015 at 4:03 am

| UPDATED: May 25, 2016 at 6:30 am

Two 16-year-old girls have been arrested in Douglas County on suspicion of plotting to kill classmates and staff members at Mountain Vista High School.

The sheriff's office said authorities learned of the threats Saturday. In addition to conspiracy to commit first-degree murder, officials said the girls could face other charges.

Investigators called the threats against the Highlands Ranch school credible, but they did not elaborate.

"It was a threat against students," Sgt. Lori Bronner, spokeswoman for the sheriff's office, told The Denver Post. "They took an overt — a substantial — step in their plans. Luckily, we were able to find out about it and stop it."

Bronner said one girl was arrested Monday night, and she declined to say when the other was taken into custody.

Officials were alerted to the threat through a “Text-A-Tip” program in the Douglas County School District.

Students were not in classes Tuesday because of a snow day.

“I didn’t hear anything about it (until Tuesday),” said Thomas Johnson, a 16-year-old junior at Mountain Vista. “I am very glad for this snow day we got today. I am very glad that my friends and our Vista student body is safe today. Who knows what could have happened if we had school today.”

Johnson said his high school has great students, and he was shocked to hear about the plot.

“We take these types of threats extremely seriously and will take all efforts necessary to ensure the safety of our schools, students and teachers,” Sheriff Tony Spurlock said in a statement. “We thank the Douglas County School District for all their assistance during the investigation.”

Authorities did not immediately release further details, citing their ongoing investigation. The girls' names have been withheld.

County prosecutors are working with the sheriff's office on the case but declined to comment because the case involves juveniles.

A spokeswoman for the district attorney's office said she is barred from releasing information unless either girl is charged as an adult.

Court records have been sealed.

"At this time, we believe the situation has been contained and the threat disrupted," the sheriff's office said.

"We want you to know that many of the safety systems we have in place worked well," Liz Fagen, superintendent of the school district, said in a letter to parents.

Fagen said the systems helped identify the plot and prevent it from being carried out.

“These two students have been apprehended and face serious felony charges,” Michael Weaver, principal of the 2,200-student high school, said in a letter to parents.

Chris Grollnek, a Dallas-based police expert whose studies include incidents of school violence, said the Mountain Vista plot stands out because two-girl attack teams are historically rare.

“There have been active (attacker) events with girls in school, but there’s never been a dynamic duo, if you will,” said Grollnek, a former SWAT officer.

The sheriff’s statement came on the same day that an e-mailed threat shut down the nation’s largest school district, closing 900 public schools and 187 charter schools in Los Angeles.

Also Tuesday, Mesa County authorities arrested a 13-year-old girl who allegedly posted a photo on Face book of a gun and threatened to harm her middle school classmates in Palisade.

Dozens of Mountain Vista students took to social media to share news of the threats and comfort each other. Many were bewildered and expressed thanks that the plot didn't come to fruition.

“Love you all Vista,” one girl posted on Twitter.

Chris Torres, the parent of two boys who attend Mountain Vista, called news of the threats a “pretty big shock.” He learned of the plot through the letters from Fagen and Weaver.

“There always seems to be security or police presence around,” he said of the school's campus. “To me, it just seems like a safe and secure facility. I'm thankful that nothing actually went down.”

*Jesse Paul: 303-954-1733,
jpaul@denverpost.com or @JesseAPaul*

To help:

Anyone with information on the case is asked to call the sheriff's office at 303-660-7500. Non-emergent information should be phoned into 303-660-7579.