

# 19 Students Hurt in Pennsylvania High-School Stabbings

## Security Guard Also Among at Least 20 Victims of Stabbing Rampage After 16-Year-Old Allegedly Wields Two Knives

By

KRIS MAHER

Updated April 9, 2014 4:56 p.m. ET

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304058204579491291056738728?mg=reno64-wsj&url=http%3A%2F%2Fonline.wsj.com%2Farticle%2FSB10001424052702304058204579491291056738728.html>

A teenager armed with two knives allegedly injured at least 20 people during an early-morning stabbing rampage inside his suburban Pennsylvania high school Wednesday, authorities said.

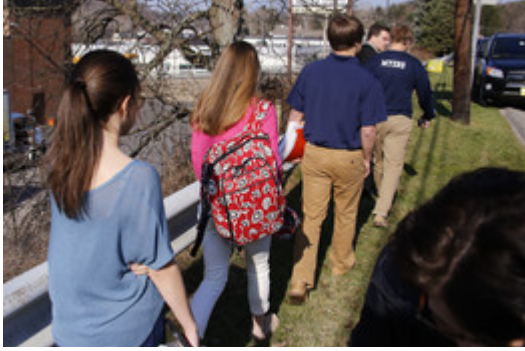
The attack at Franklin Regional Senior High School in Murrysville, Pa., rocked the affluent bedroom community near Pittsburgh and left local and federal investigators seeking a motive in the latest outbreak of school violence.

The victims—at least 19 students and one security guard—were stabbed or slashed, and one or two were in critical condition, authorities said. An additional adult was treated for an unspecified medical condition and released. All were expected to survive. Police didn't immediately release the name of the 16-year-old sophomore taken into custody.

Murrysville Police Chief Thomas Seefeld said the incident began at about 7:13 a.m., just before classes were scheduled to start for the day, when the teen allegedly went into classrooms and down a first-floor hallway "flashing two knives."

Students described a bloody and chaotic scene. Mr. Seefeld said the suspect attacked students with two "straight knives" about 8 inches to 10 inches long. He praised one student for pulling a fire alarm that sent students streaming out of the school, possibly limiting the number of potential victims. The attacker was subdued within about five minutes by an assistant principal and a school security guard, who wrestled him to the ground, he said. The guard was injured during the scuffle.

[Enlarge Image](#)



Students leave campus after stabbings at Franklin Regional Senior High School in Murrysville, Pa., on Wednesday. *AP*

"The situation was brought under control in the best manner," Mr. Seefeld said.

Mr. Seefeld said police were investigating whether a threatening phone call was made involving the suspect the night before, but he added, "we don't know what led up to this." The alleged attacker was treated for injuries to his hands, he said.

Eight patients, including seven male students and one adult, were taken to Forbes Regional Hospital in Monroeville, Pa. Mark Rubino, chief medical officer at the hospital, said many had suffered multiple stab wounds to the abdomen, back and chest, and several underwent surgery. Another student was sent to Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh and was released.

A spokesman for UPMC, the region's biggest health network, said 12 victims had been sent to several of its hospitals, including several with stab wounds to the chest and arms. A 17-year-old female student suffered lacerations to her face.

In an annual safety report filed with the state, the school reported 17 incidents in the 2012-13 school year, most of which involved fighting or drugs. None involved assaults on students or weapons.

The high school has three security guards but no metal detectors, said Mark Drear, vice president of Capital Asset Protection, which employs the guards.

Authorities said the high school, which has about 1,200 students, would remain closed for several days as investigators combed through the crime scene. On Wednesday, it posted a notice on its website saying the campus was locked down after "a critical incident."

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett released a statement saying he was "shocked and saddened" by the incident. "As a parent and grandparent, I can think of nothing more distressing than senseless violence against children," he said.

Standing beside local officials at a news conference, Mr. Corbett commended the response of students and staff and called it "another sad day" not only for the region but the entire country. "This is not something you could ever completely plan on," he said, adding that he thought the incident would force government officials to look at safety precautions as well as mental-health resources.

**Write to** Kris Maher at [kris.maher@wsj.com](mailto:kris.maher@wsj.com)