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MINNESOTA SCHOOL SHOOTING

## Chief: ‘No evidence will ever make sense’

Authorities say shooter was ‘obsessed’ with the idea of killing children

By Steve Karnowski, Mark Vancleave and Claudia Lauer  
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The shooter who killed two Catholic school students and wounded more than a dozen youngsters sitting in the pews of a Minneapolis church once attended the same school and was “obsessed” with the idea of killing children, authorities said Thursday.

The shooter, identified as 23

-year-old Robin Westman, fired 116 rifle rounds through stained-glass windows while the children celebrated Mass during the first week of classes at the Annunciation Catholic School, said Minneapolis police Chief Brian O’Hara.

“It is very clear that this shooter had the intention to terrorize those innocent children,” Chief O’Hara said.

Acting U.S. Attorney Joe Thompson said videos and



Abbie Parr/Associated Press

Susan Saly, right, and Meagan Pierlouissi place flowers at a memorial at Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis on Thursday, one day after two children were killed in a shooting.

## Terror, then heroism, as the attack unfolded

By Reid Forgrave  
Minnesota Star Tribune

MINNEAPOLIS — The excitement of new beginnings seemed all around Wednesday morning at Annunciation Catholic School in south Minneapolis: The first week of the school year. A new principal, and a new priest at the adjoining parish.

Signs posted outside the church captured the mood: “A future filled with HOPE!”

Shea McAdaragh, whose oldest child is a second grader at Annunciation, hadn’t planned on attending the annual back-to-school Mass. At the last minute, he crept into the back pew behind the teachers, parents and students, some as young as 6.

## MEAT AND GREET



Lucy Schaly/Post-Gazette

Archie Frasier, of Myrtle Beach, S.C., sings about the ribs, chicken and sausage he cooked for Carolina Rib King at the Acrisure Stadium Kickoff & Rib Festival along Art Rooney Avenue on the North Shore on Thursday. The festival runs through Monday.

STATE BUDGET

## IMPASSE HURTS SCHOOLS’ PLANNING

Hiring, income and upgrades are affected

By Ford Turner and Megan Tomasic  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

HARRISBURG — The 59-day-old state budget mess is inflicting varying levels of financial pain on school districts, from keeping pre-kindergarten kids home to using capital projects money for payroll to — in the case of Butler Area School District — denying professional development conferences for teachers and administrators.

Many sore spots were described by school district managers from around the state during a news conference Thursday morning in the Capitol Rotunda. Butler Superintendent Brian White wasn’t there, but said in a later interview his district has enough property tax revenue to keep it going through November or December.

Nonetheless, Mr. White said the district is making strategic choices, including leaving some support staff openings vacant. The budget debacle in Harrisburg, he said, makes it seem like schools and children “are being held hostage by all the parties involved.”

That statement captured the sentiments of many school officials on Thursday. Lawmakers and Gov. Josh Shapiro have said negotiations are continuing — Mr. Shapiro said on Thursday an agreement is “very close” — but it is clear financial stress on education organizations is increasing.

“We are staring down a very real cash

## Colleges grapple with shooting hoax calls

By Maddie Aiken  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

As colleges across the country kick off the fall semester, the return to campus at nearly a dozen schools — including West Virginia University — has been plagued by false reports of mass shootings.

And after a shooter killed two schoolchildren and injured 18 others at a Minneapolis Catholic school on Wednesday, tensions are high on college campuses and at K-12 schools across the country.

“The [hoax calls] are throwing gas on the fire,” said Ari Lightman, a Carnegie Mellon University professor of digital media marketing in the Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy.

“There’s so much indecision and chaos already going on [at the beginning of the school year]. Students are trying to figure out classes, books, friend circles, support services, and then this sort of thing happens. It’s really tough.”

In the past week, 11 universities have reported incidents of swatting, or deliberate false reports to police with the goal of summoning law enforcement, specifically a SWAT team, to a location.

## Group claims site of ‘Esplanade’ project is contaminated

Developer counters that it has ‘met and exceeded’ all standards

By Madaleine Rubin  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Standing in front of a group of Manchester residents in the middle of a vacant lot, Stanley Lowe held up a sign:

*You didn’t tell the whole story!*

The founder of the Manchester Neighbors, a nonprofit that represents the small North Side community, then gestured at his surroundings, empty today, but slated to become a \$600 million riverfront development with a Ferris wheel, high-rise apartments and a marina — possibly with floating homes on the Ohio River — within the next few years.

“How do you show and tell everyone all that glitters is gold, and there’s dirt and pollution and garbage beneath our feet?” Mr. Lowe said.

The neighborhood group held an event Thursday to release a report that identifies toxic, contaminated soil and groundwater at the site of the “Esplanade” project, the ambitious development approved in the Chateau neighborhood over the last two years despite intense pushback from some residents.

The 15-acre site is a brownfield, vacant today but previously used for industrial use for more than 140 years. Redevelopment of such sites is common across Western Pennsylvania — on the other end of Pittsburgh, SouthSide Works was once a steel mill, while another former mill in Hazelwood is in the midst of an ongoing yearslong transformation.

At all former industrial hubs, state law requires developers to clean up the land before building on it to prevent future health and environmental concerns.



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Mattie Williams, of Manchester, holds her great-granddaughter Maxwell White, 3, as she listens to speakers Thursday. Residents gathered at the site of a controversial project to demand transparency from developers.