

New details emerge about warnings before Georgia school shooting

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11 September 2024

In the week since the massacre at Apalachee High School in Winder, Georgia, in which two students and two teachers were killed and nine others injured, new details have emerged about the 14-year-old shooter Colt Gray and his family.

On Saturday, the *Washington Post* reported that the teen's mother, Marcee Gray, informed family members that she had called the school on the morning of the shooting and warned a counselor about an "extreme emergency" involving her son.

The *Post* says that it obtained copies of text messages and a phone call log which shows a ten-minute call from the mother's phone to the school starting at 9:50 a.m., approximately 30 minutes before the shooting started on September 4.

In one text message, Marcee Gray told her sister, "I was the one that notified the school counselor at the high school. I told them it was an extreme emergency and for them to go immediately and find [my son] to check on him."

The *Post* report says that the sister, Annie Brown, described a discussion between Marcee Gray and the school counselor in which the counselor said that the boy "had been talking about a school shooting that morning."

In an interview with ABC News on Wednesday, Marcee Gray explained, "The counselor said, 'I wanted to let you know that earlier this morning, one of Colt's teachers had sent me an email saying Colt had been making references to school shootings.' ... Between my gut feelings, the text messages, and now this email, you need to, like, run to the classroom."

In a separate interview, a fellow student Lyela Sayarath told the *Post* that a school administrator came to the math classroom looking for another student with a name similar to Colt Gray. The report says, "Neither

student was in the room, and the official left with a backpack belonging to the similarly named student, she said. The shooting began minutes later."

Marcee Gray said that she was prompted to call the school after receiving a text message from her son that said, "I'm sorry."

Additionally, the text messages showed that the school and family had been communicating a week before the shooting about Colt Gray's mental health. Text messages from Annie Brown to a relative said that the teen was having "homicidal and suicidal thoughts."

Brown also said previously that her nephew had requested mental health care for months and that "adults around him failed him."

The conditions in the home were difficult, with Marcee Gray pleading guilty in December to a charge of family violence, and ordered to have limited contact with her son. The *Post* reported that in 2022 the Grays were evicted from their home and the parents had separated. State authorities said that the family has also had contacts with Georgia's child welfare agency.

Representatives of the Barrow County School District, the Barrow County Sheriff's Office, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and Piedmont Judicial Court District Attorney Brad Smith declined to answer questions about the latest news reports.

According to official accounts of the shooting, the 14-year-old left his math classroom saying he was going to the bathroom and shortly thereafter attempted to reenter with an AR-15-style firearm. However, the door was closed and locked and students refused to let him in. He turned away from the door and then fired his weapon, striking people in the hallway and in an adjacent classroom. Two school resource workers approached the shooter and he surrendered.

The victims of the shooting have been identified as

14-year-olds Christian Angulo and Mason Schermerhorn, 53-year-old math teacher Cristina Irimie and 39-year-old math teacher and assistant football coach Richard Aspinwall.

According to the Barrow County sheriff, when asked about the shooting during questioning, Colt Gray said, “I did it.” In a search of his home, investigators found documents allegedly written by the teenager that reference previous school shootings, including references to the 2018 massacre at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

Colt Gray and his father Colin Gray appeared one after the other before Judge Currie M. Mingledorff II in Barrow County Superior Court on Friday. The teenager has been charged as an adult with four counts of felony murder. The elder Gray, who allegedly bought the firearm for the youth as a Christmas present and gave him access to it, is being charged with two counts of second degree murder, four counts of involuntary manslaughter and eight counts of cruelty to children.

On Tuesday, the Jackson County Sheriff’s Office released bodycam video of police officers interviewing Colt Gray and his father outside their home on May 21, 2023 after the FBI received reports of online threats about a school shooting. During the interview, the youth denied that he had anything to do with social media posts regarding a school shooting. The father stated that he encouraged his son to use weapons for hunting and other outdoor activities but that he did not have access to the firearms or ammunition.



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