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Lockdown at Houston Can Academy lifted after gun found at school



Inside C5

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Friday, February 16, 2018

Accused Florida gunman visited restaurants, store after killing: police

PARKLAND, Fla. (Reuters) - The 19-year-old man accused of killing 17 people at a Florida high school fled hidden in a crowd of frightened students and visited two fast food restaurants before he was arrested less than two hours after the massacre, officials said on Thursday.

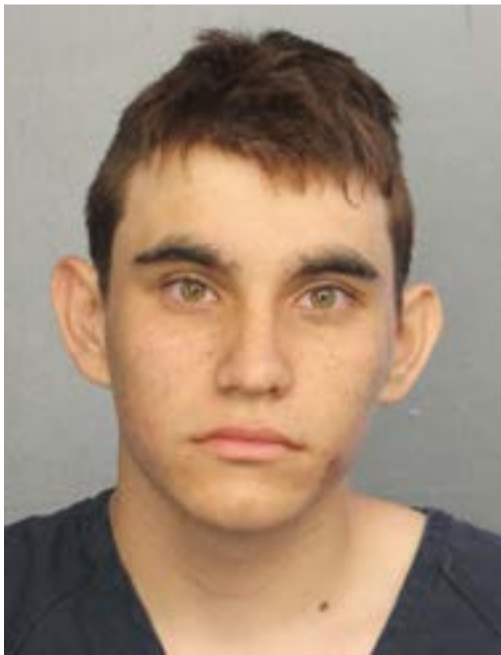
Authorities said the alleged gunman, Nikolas Cruz, stopped at a Wal-Mart, a Subway restaurant and a McDonald's immediately after carrying out the second-deadliest mass shooting at a public school in U.S. history. "The suspect crossed fields and ran west along with others who were fleeing and tried to mix in with the group that were running away, fearing for their lives," Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel told reporters.

Cruz, who has been charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder, is accused of using a legally purchased AR-15-style weapon in Wednesday's attack, moving through Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland outside Miami. Cruz was a former student of the school who had been expelled.

The accused shooter may have left warning signs on social media in the form of a comment on YouTube video that read "I'm going to be a professional school shooter."

A YouTube user passed that comment on the Federal Bureau of Investigation in September, but the FBI did not connect it to Cruz.

"No other information was included with that comment which would indicate a time, location or the true identity of the person who made the comment," FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert Lasky told reporters. He noted that the YouTube user who reported the comment lives in Mississippi and said that investigators saw nothing to link it to Florida.



Cruz appears in a police booking photo after being charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder following a Parkland school shooting

Wednesday's shooting was the 18th in a U.S. school this year, according to gun control group Everytown for Gun Safety. It stirred the long-simmering U.S. debate on the right to bear arms, which is protected by the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. President Donald Trump addressed the shooting in a White House speech that emphasized

school safety and mental health while avoiding any mention of gun policy.

"It is not enough to simply take actions that make us feel like we are making a difference," Trump said at the White House. "We must actually make that difference."

Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives criticized the Republican leadership for refusing to take up legislation on tightening background checks for prospective gun buyers.

"It's appalling," Representative Mike Thompson told reporters. "Thirty people every day are killed by someone using a gun, and the best we can do is say we need more information?"

The Republican-controlled Congress last year revoked Obama-era regulations meant to make it harder for those with severe mental illness to pass FBI background checks for guns, saying the rule deprived the mentally ill of their gun rights.

Nikolas Cruz (C) appears via video monitor with Melisa McNeill (R), his public defender, at a bond court hearing after being charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, U.S., February 15, 2018. REUTERS/Susan Stocker/Pool

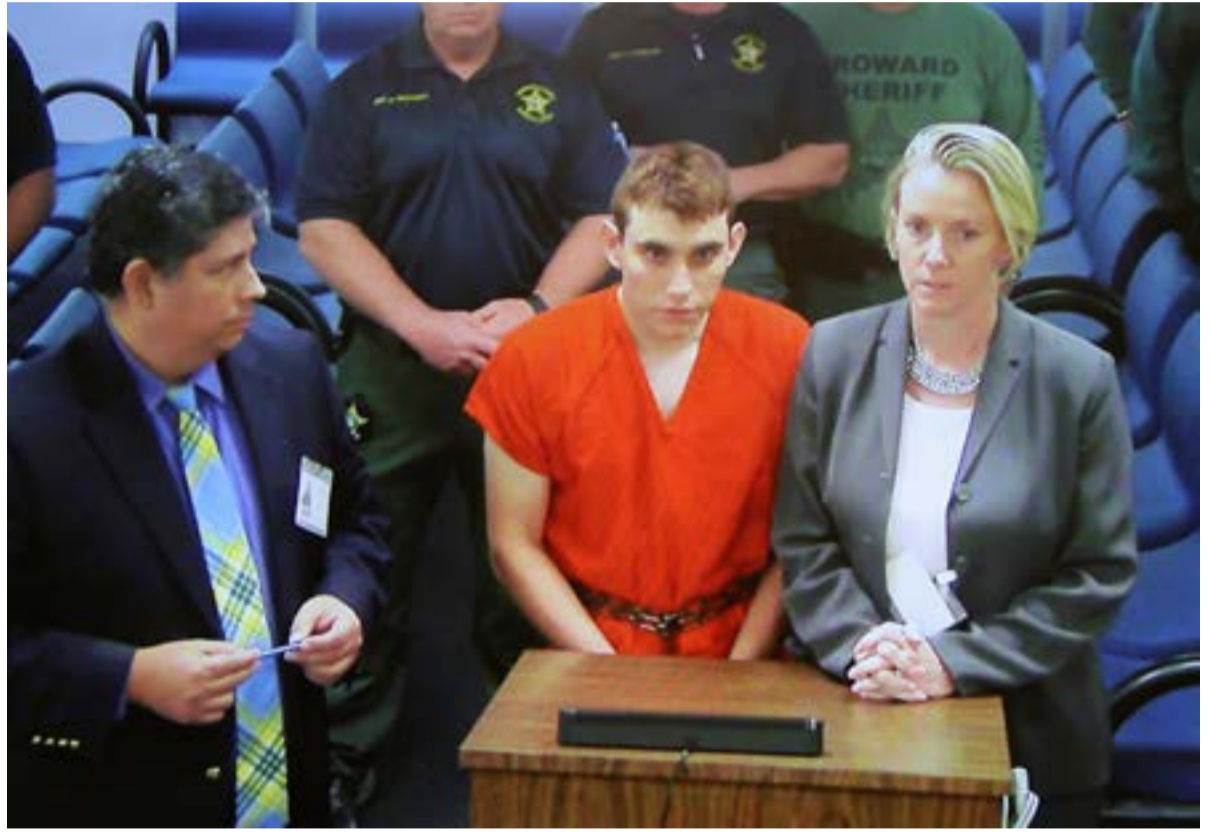
Fifteen people were injured in Wednesday's shooting, according to local hospital officials. Cruz's court-appointed lawyer said he had expressed remorse for his crimes.

"He's a broken human being," public defender Melisa McNeill told reporters. "He's sad, he's mournful, he's remorseful." Cruz had done paramilitary training with a white nationalist militia called the Republic of Florida, a leader of the group said.

"He had some involvement with the Clearwater Republic of Florida cell at some point," Jordan Jereb said in a telephone interview. Reuters could not immediately verify the claim.

Cruz loved guns and had been expelled from high school for disciplinary reasons, police and former classmates said.

Cruz told police that he had carried out the attack, according to an arrest document released on Thursday, which noted that he made that



Cruz appears at a bond court hearing after being charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder, in Fort Lauderdale

admission after being advised of his right not to incriminate himself.

In a brief court appearance, Cruz spoke only two words, "Yes ma'am," when a judge asked him to confirm his name. He was ordered held without bond.

Cruz had recently moved in with another family after his mother's death in November, according to Jim Lewis, a lawyer representing the family, bringing his AR-15 along with his other belongings.

The family believed Cruz was depressed, but attributed that to his mother's death, not mental illness,

Lewis said.

Victims included an assistant football coach who sheltered students, a social science teacher and multiple students. People who live on same street as Cruz said he alarmed them by shooting squirrels and rabbits in the neighborhood as well as chickens being raised in a nearby backyard. Several times a year, they observed law enforcement officials at his house.

"Killing animals was no problem for this young man," said Rhonda Roxburgh, 45, who lived on the block for several years and whose parents continue to live there.



Cruz appears at a bond court hearing after being charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder, in Fort Lauderdale

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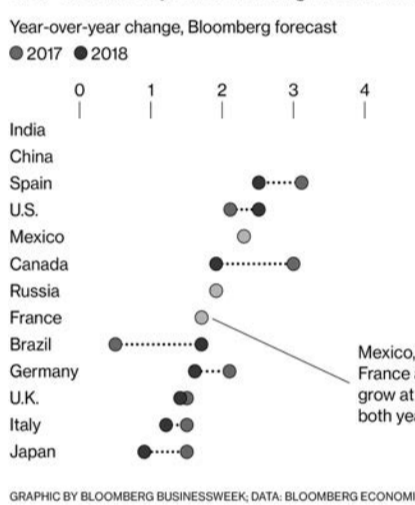
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Everyone in the world—plus the two SpaceX customers who technically won't be in the world when they do figure eights around the Earth and the moon for two weeks this coming year—can look forward to another year of healthy growth in 2018.

The big story for 2018 is likely to be how to manage the continued expansion. A turning point may come at the end of September, when the European Central Bank might stop or curtail monthly bond purchases.

The International Monetary Fund, which has reported subpar growth for years, now says "the global upswing in economic activity is strengthening."

GDP Growth Projections for Large Economies



GRAPHIC BY BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK; DATA: BLOOMBERG ECONOMICS

The Key Question Is Will Consumers And Businesses Continue To Ignore Worrisome Geopolitical Threats?

The Global Economy Looks Good For 2018

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



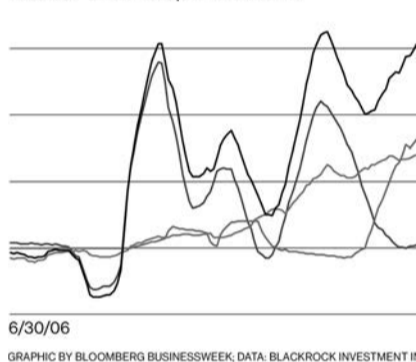
Revelers celebrate in this Jan. 1, 2016, file photo, as confetti flies over New York's Times Square after the clock strikes midnight during the New Year's Eve celebration as seen from the Marriott Marquis hotel. (AP Photo)

Bloomberg economists predict the U.S. will grow 2.5 percent in 2018; China, 6.4 percent; Japan, 0.9 percent; and Germany, 1.6 percent.

Still, brisk growth that's not shared by all is better than no growth at all. One reason for optimism about the outlook is that the global expansion seems to be based on strong fundamentals, not froth.

year, economists at JPMorgan Chase & Co. wrote on Oct. 25. The synchronized expansion reflects "a self-reinforcing turn in the global profit cycle that has boosted business confidence and spending in all corners of the world,"

Central Bank Net Asset Purchases



GRAPHIC BY BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK; DATA: BLACKROCK INVESTMENT INSTITUTE

Healthy growth puts the world in a better position to deal with the next downturn, whenever it comes. Governments fight recessions by lowering interest rates, cutting taxes, and raising spending.

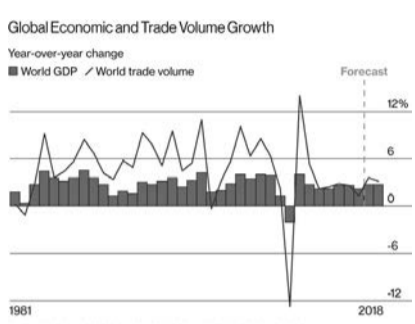
ements can't get away with bigger budget deficits. Policymakers' goal for now is to normalize interest rates and repair their countries' finances, gaining altitude so the next downdraft can't plunge them into a hillside.

It's also possible that we're already headed for a crash. Economists are lousy at picking turning points. After Queen Elizabeth II questioned the failure to foresee the financial crisis last decade, a group of British economists wrote her a letter saying it "was principally a failure of the collective imagination of many bright people, both in this country and internationally, to understand the risks to the system as a whole."

A key question for 2018 is whether consumers and businesspeople will continue to shrug off some pretty scary geopolitical threats. So far they've been nonchalant. The best example is South Korea, which has been rocked by threats of nuclear attack from the north, corporate scandals, and even a warning from President Donald Trump that its free-trade agreement with the U.S. might not survive.

near record highs. The Bank of Korea is confident enough in the outlook that it's signaling another interest rate hike on the horizon.

Similarly, on the other side of the planet, the economy of the U.K. has trundled along at a better-than-expected clip given the uncertainty over Britain's exit from the European Union, which must take place by the end of March 2019.



GRAPHIC BY BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK; DATA: WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

Or how about Spain, which could lose a fifth of its economy if Catalonia secedes? In the fraught leadup to Catalonia's unauthorized September referendum on independence, Spain somehow managed to post the fastest growth of the big four Continental economies.

One of the big stories to watch in 2018 will be how the EU reimagines itself in light of Brexit, the crisis in Catalonia, and the differing Euro-visions of French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

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Large advertisement for Southern Television 15.3 channel featuring various programs like '大朋哥', 'MEMOIRS IN CHINA', '電影藏密', '中国远征军', '男人要说话?', '女人要流泪?', '海峡两岸', and '明星加油站'.

美南電視本周節目單

Table with columns for days of the week (MON-SUN) and time slots (00:00-01:00, etc.), listing various TV programs and their categories.

A Snapshot Of The World



Cruz appears at a bond court hearing after being charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder, in Fort Lauderdale



Scene outside the courtroom where Cruz appears at a bond court hearing after being charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder, in Fort Lauderdale



A vendor prepares a grilled pig for sale along a street during Chinese Lunar New Year, in Phnom Penh



Scene outside the courtroom where Cruz appears at a bond court hearing after being charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder in Fort Lauderdale



Child holds Spring Festival decorations at a market ahead of the Chinese Lunar New Year in Hefei



Visitor hangs his wish to a lantern at a lantern fair ahead of the Chinese Lunar New Year, or Spring festival, in Xian



Actors Greta Gerwig, Jeff Goldblum and Bryan Craston arrive for the screening of the movie Isle of dogs at the 68th Berlin International Film Festival Berlinale in Berlin, Germany, February

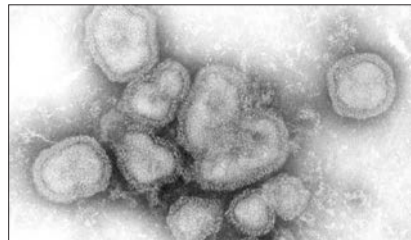


Fireworks light up the sky during a countdown welcoming the Chinese Lunar new year in Binondo district, metro Manila



Passengers experience a head massage at Shanghai's Hongqiao Railway Station as the annual Spring Festival travel rush begins ahead of the Chinese Lunar New Year in Shanghai

Influenza viruses are among the most unpredictable disease actors around. These constantly changing germs regularly humiliate anyone who is rash enough to forecast the potential severity of an upcoming flu season or how well — or poorly — the vaccine might work this year.



"I wouldn't," Dr. Kanta Subbarao, director of the World Health Organization's influenza collaborating center in Australia, said with a laugh when asked what she would project the Northern Hemisphere might be facing, flu-wise, in the coming months. "I've been in this business too long to fall into the trap of trying to predict."

That said, flu experts are a bit worried right now. There are some signals they think may foretell that we're facing a nasty flu season. But they hand-to-heart don't know whether the constellation of things that is worrying them will lead to clogged doctors offices.

Subbarao and other flu experts discussed with the press the coming flu season. Beyond the basics — there will be a wave or two of flu activity sometime between now and next spring, and the people caught up in the wave will curse the virus — we cannot tell you what's going to happen. But we can explain why experts are on edge.



Here are three things they've been watching.

The flu vaccine is probably not an optimal match

In the flu world, scientists in one hemisphere keep a close eye on the other to try to figure out what might be headed their way. And during their 2017 winter, parts of the Southern Hemisphere, including Australia,

had a pretty nasty flu season. Hong Kong and some other places in the tropics have also experienced a surprising amount of flu of late.

The illness has been caused mainly by H3N2 viruses, which trigger the worst outbreaks of the two influenza A viruses and two types of influenza B viruses that circulate among people. Flu seasons in which H3N2 viruses dominate are typically miserable, with lots of hospitalizations and more deaths.

"At this point the data look like it was a big season. Started earlier than usual, lasted a bit longer. ... And all segments of the population were affected, including people who were vaccinated," Subbarao said of the Australian winter outbreak.

The severity of the flu in at least some parts of the Southern Hemisphere has created concern a similar assault is heading toward the Northern Hemisphere.

But there's a complicating factor: Last winter North America had a pretty active flu season, caused mainly by H3N2 viruses. So did countries in the Southern Hemisphere follow us? Or are we about to follow them?

"That's the million-dollar question," Subbarao said.

People who were infected by the virus last year are less likely to fall prey to it again this winter. So the amount of illness experienced in North America last year could blunt the impact of this season, if another H3N2 onslaught is headed our way, suggested Jacqueline Katz, deputy director of the influenza division at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

SYMPTOMS OF FLU: Fever, Cough, Sore throat, Runny or stuffy nose, Feeling feverish/chills, Muscle or body aches, Headaches, Fatigue (tiredness)

The flu vaccine is probably not an optimal match

Late last month leading flu experts from around the world — Katz and Subbarao among them — met at the World Health

Organization for a twice-annual ritual. They selected the viruses that should be covered by the winter 2018 Southern Hemisphere flu vaccine, using recent viral surveillance data from flu laboratories around the globe.

It takes months to make and distribute flu vaccine, which is updated regularly in an effort to keep pace with the ever-changing viruses. The strain selection meeting for the Northern Hemisphere vaccine takes place every year in late February.



Rather than recommend a flu shot with the same composition as the ones clinics, pharmacies, and doctors' offices in the Northern Hemisphere are injecting right now, the experts decided to update two of the target viruses. Interpretation: The Northern Hemisphere shot is already a bit out of date. (Courtesy https://www.statnews.com/)

Related

Study Says Flu Hits Men Harder Than Women

As winter rolls into town, so does the flu and all its miserable symptoms. Yet, doctors and women alike have long noticed that men tend to bemoan those symptoms more than women. The phenomenon even has a name: the "man flu."



While the phrase "man flu" started as derision for what is seen as men whining about being sick, researchers say men's immune systems may be weaker than women's and respiratory illnesses may

actually hit them harder. (Photo by Wikimedia Commons)

So, are men just whiny wimps? No, a new analysis out of Canada suggests, because respiratory illnesses may indeed hit men harder than women. According to study author Dr. Kyle Sue, "there are already many physiologic differences between men and women, so it makes sense that we could differ in our responses to cold and flu viruses as well."

"The evidence in current studies points towards men having weaker immune systems than women, especially when it comes to common viral respiratory infections," Sue explained. "Men are more susceptible to them, symptoms are worse, they last longer, and men are more likely to be hospitalized and die from the flu."



The evidence in current studies points towards men having weaker immune systems than women, especially when it comes to common viral respiratory infections.

One investigation out of Hong Kong suggested that when the flu strikes, adult men face a greater risk for being admitted to the hospital than their female peers. Another American study also found that, all things being equal, men seem to face a higher risk for actually dying from the flu than women.

Still another investigation indicated that in the face of both the flu and other respiratory illnesses, men face a higher risk for developing complications than women. What's more, several mouse studies suggested that hormonal differences between men and women may actually offer women greater protection from the full brunt of

flu symptoms. Other patient-based studies similarly indicated that the onset of a flu may trigger a stronger immune response among women than men, blunting the full impact of symptoms.

And yet another study found that women tend to develop a stronger reaction to the flu vaccine than men, perhaps because higher testosterone levels among men tend to suppress the overall immune response, the review team suggested. The analysis was published Dec. 11 in the BMJ.

Sue acknowledged that more research is needed. But he suggested that the findings to date indicate that the "man flu" has some basis in reality.



"Men are regularly stereotyped to exaggerate cold and flu symptoms," Sue noted. "That's how the term 'man flu' became so commonly used internationally, regardless of differences in culture," he said. "[But] from my clinical work, personal experiences and my social circles, I've seen men suffer worse from colds and flus. In other words, be less functional."

And Sue added that if the underpinnings of "man flu" are real, it could mean that flu treatment may have to be tailored to address gender differences. "Medically treating both genders exactly the same will do both genders a disservice," Sue said. "We already screen men earlier for cardiovascular diseases because they are more susceptible. Why should it be so controversial for men to suffer worse from colds and flus?"

Dr. Ebbing Lautenbach, chief of the division of infectious diseases at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine, said the latest analysis "does a nice job of reviewing how much real data there are to back up these commonly held impressions." He wasn't involved with the review.

Still, Lautenbach stressed that the analysis does not prove that a "man's response to a respiratory infection is, in fact, worse than a woman's and, if so, by how much. Much more work needs to be done to figure out whether differences exist and, if so, what biological mechanisms might explain them." (Courtesy https://www.upi.com/Health_News)

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Texas businesses busted by TABC this year for refilling, substituting alcohol

By Fernando Alfonso III

More than a dozen businesses across Texas have been busted for substituting alcohol or refilling bottles so far this year.

The county with the most offenders was Harris, with six, according to data obtained by Chron.com from the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC).

The Houston strip club Moments, on North Freeway, received the largest fine, \$1,800 in January for refilling. The business also received a suspension or civil penalty, which usually happens to businesses that have committed the same offense more than once within a few years, TABC spokesman Chris Porter told Chron.com.

Refilling is the illegal practice of refilling a bottle of alcohol with that same or a different type of drink, Porter said. Twelve businesses in Texas were cited for refilling in 2017. Two other businesses were penalized for brand substitution, which is when a patron is served a different type of alcohol than they ordered, Porter said.

It is unclear how each business was found to be refilling or substituting, though Porter added that it's not uncommon for employees and customers to call TABC with information. Competing businesses have also called TABC to alert them to both offenses.

Whiskey Cake had two of its locations cited by TABC this summer because they were repurposing empty whiskey bottles for water and tea service, vice president of operations Scott Sharrer told Chron.com Thursday morning. This was a common practice at all six Whiskey Cake locations for years in its effort to reduce their carbon footprint. Despite previous visits from TABC at Whiskey Cake locations, the commission only decided to cite the restaurants this summer, Sharrer said.

Whiskey Cake no longer repurposes whiskey bottles a three-year period, going from 146 arrests in 2014 to 433 in 2017.

The sheriff's office provided the media with the mugshots of all the men arrested in this year's sting. They are innocent until proven guilty.



Avani Lounge, Harris County 5711 Hillcroft Suite D6, Houston Violation date: April 27, 2017

Violation: Refilling Penalty: Written warning

Lockdown at Houston Can Academy lifted after gun found at school



Police are seeking felony charges against a 17-year-old who is accused of bringing a gun to a southeast Houston charter school where he is a student.

The Houston Can Academy Hobby campus was on lockdown for several hours Thursday after a security guard found the gun in the student's jacket about 7:50 a.m., said Houston Police spokesman John Cannon.

The student fled but was detained and questioned by police. He will be charged with exhibition of a firearm on school grounds, police said. His name has not been released.

The school, at 9020 Gulf Freeway, was placed under a lockdown as a precautionary measure. All students are safe and the school is secure, school spokeswoman Allison Rhodes said. "Due to the swift response of our security staff, students and staff were not in any immediate danger," Rhodes said. "The safety of the students is always our top priority. Our security process worked this morning, keeping all students and staff safe."

The security guard found the gun during a routine screening of

students that occurs each morning as students walk into school, Rhodes said. The school uses metal detectors, and the security guards are armed. The student had enrolled at Houston Can Academy two weeks ago, Rhodes said. The gun was not loaded, Houston Police Capt. William McPherson said. The lockdown and chase of the suspected student didn't result in any injuries. The school is offering counseling to students who need it.

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