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The San Diego Union-Tribune

Convicted CA school bomber sent to mental hospital

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
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REDWOOD CITY, Calif. — A teenager convicted in a 2009 attack at his former Northern California high school pleaded no contest to more charges Friday and will be sent to a mental hospital.

Alex Youshock, 19, entered his plea in San Mateo County Superior Court to a second attempted murder charge and six counts of possessing a bomb on school grounds, the San Mateo County Times reported.

In March, he was convicted of six counts, including the attempted murder of a chemistry teacher.

Jurors, however, had deadlocked on whether Youshock was sane at the time of the August 2009 attack, and prosecutors had vowed to retry the sanity phase of the trial.

Investigators said Youshock set off two pipe bombs at Hillsdale High School after his chainsaw failed in a plot to hack to death teachers who had given him bad grades. He was tackled by a teacher, and no one was seriously hurt.

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Youshock's lawyers argued the teenager is schizophrenic and shouldn't be held criminally responsible for the attack, which prosecutors said was planned for months and detailed in a journal, a hit list and a videotaped manifesto.

After Friday's plea, Judge Stephen Hall ordered Youshock sent to Napa State Mental Hospital indefinitely. If doctors ever decide that he's recovered his sanity, he'll have to serve nearly 25 years in prison.

"The public is protected, and he will get the mental health treatment of which he is obviously in need," Chief Deputy District Attorney Karen Guidotti told the Times after the hearing. "It will be nice to start the school year with this completely in the past."



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The defendant's mother, Carol Youshock, said she was grateful the possible prison sentence was reduced. If he had been convicted of all counts at trial, he could have faced life in prison.

"He has a chance at life when he gets out," she said.

Hall set a June 24 hearing to make sure Youshock has been transferred from jail to the Napa hospital.

Information from: San Mateo County Times, <https://www.sanmateotimes.com>

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