

Janitor accused of killing principal was not going to be fired

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

John Luebbers, the elementary school janitor accused of gunning down his principal, told investigators he shot the boss because he had been fired from his job, Placerville police said Thursday.

But school district officials said later in the day that the lead custodian at Louisiana Schnell School in Placerville wasn't dismissed at all.

They said Luebbers apparently confronted principal Sam LaCara, his friend and longtime golfing companion, over the fact the school district had assembled a panel to hire a new night janitor, whose job wouldn't have affected Luebbers' employment.

"Mr. LaCara told him that he needed to go home and cool off for the day," Placerville Union School District Superintendent Nancy Lynch said.

Instead, Luebbers went home and retrieved a gun, said Placerville Police Capt. Mike Scott.

Luebbers, who was arrested after he went back to his home after the shooting, confessed to police that he had entered the principal's office and fired two shots at his friend, Scott said. He is scheduled to be arraigned today in El Dorado Superior Court.

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