

Youth charged in Paso killing

A 17-year-old inmate of El Paso de Robles School is in county jail today, charged with the March 31 rape-murder of Marie Romero at the California Youth Authority institution, Sheriff John Pierce reported today.

Pierce said that more information about the suspect, who was arrested Friday night, will be available at a press conference Monday at 11 a.m. at the Sheriff's facility.

The inmate was not one of the original four inmates suspected of the brutal murder of Mrs. Romero, a 51-year-old San Luis Obispo woman who had been teaching at the school since mid-February.

The suspect, who Pierce said is "officially charged" with the murder, was serving a sentence in the Paso Robles institution for an armed robbery in which an elderly woman was shot,

according to Telegram-Tribune sources.

He was examined Friday night by at least one psychiatrist, the sources said.

The original four suspects, who have been in special isolation cells since shortly after the murder, were released in the last two days. They were cleared of the crime by the physical evidence obtained by Dr. Thomas Noguchi, chief medical examiner and coroner of Los Angeles County, sources in Noguchi's office told the Telegram-Tribune. He assisted in the murder investigation.

Mrs. Romero, who lived at 1186 Madonna Road, was raped and murdered in her classroom sometime between 2:35 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on March 31. She reportedly was stomped to death.

Normal operations at El Paso de Robles School have resumed.