

Several Kids Arrested After Food Fight

CHICAGO (CBS) More than two dozen students were slapped with criminal charges in connection with a food fight in the cafeteria at a Chicago charter school.

CBS 2's Pamela Jones was there Friday when the kids got released from police custody.

The students were caught in chaos at Perspectives Charter Schools Calumet Campus. Police arrested 25 students ranging in age from 11 to 15 after a food fight broke out in the cafeteria Thursday.

"The next thing you know I saw a tray fly up in the air, and then I saw an orange fly," student Jordan Grevious said. "Then, I heard the words 'food fight.'"

The incident injured about three students. Student Porche Carter says she tried to help one of them but was arrested and handcuffed.

"That felt like embarrassing," she said.

Some students say a staff member belittled them, calling them "animals," then police hauled them off. They stayed at the 6th District Chicago police station for hours before parents say they were notified.

"He's been sitting here from 12 until 5," parent Keith Holmes said. "They wouldn't let him call -- obvious they wouldn't."

"I'm angry. Yes, I'm very angry … because it's already hard enough for a black brother because we're black. Now we've got a record," said Andra Reed, the brother of one of the students.

They fear some of the kids will have a tough time getting a job or applying for college until their misdemeanor reckless-conduct charge disappears from their records. They'll appear in court Nov. 30.

"These kids are going to have records for things that they potentially did not even do," parent Monique Greene complained. "Twenty-seven children up here for a food fight."

The president and co-founder of Perspectives, Diana Cose, says several adults were on hand at the time of the incident and were able to identify the students involved. She called the situation inexcusable.

Cose says staff has met to create a response plan, and they'll be presenting that plan to parents and students next week. In the meantime, the students who were arrested are suspended until next week.

Even the innocent students will face lasting consequences. If the charges are dropped, juvenile records can't be expunged until the accused becomes 17. Parents are worried this could affect future jobs and college applications.