S.C. students to receive payment after drug raid

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
CHARLESTON, S.C. —
Students searched during a
2003 drug raid by police at
Stratford High School are eligible for compensation of
between \$6,000 and \$12,000
apiece, now that a federal
judge has approved a \$1.6
million class-action settlement

ment U.S. District Judge Patrick U.S. District Judge Patrick Michael Duffy approved the settlement Monday in a law-suit filed against the Berkeley County School District and the Goose Creek Police Department by families of students affected by the raid.

Surveillance video captured the raid in which officers drew their guns, ordered students to lie on the floor and used a dog to search them for illegal drugs. Police found no drugs and no arrests were made. About 140 students were at the school.

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The students will split \$1.2 million and their attorneys' will receive the remaining \$400,000.

Also, Goose Creek police

will be required to obtain a warrant before searching stu-dents on campus, according to the settlement.

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Typically, officers have not had to obtain warrants or show probable cause to search students on campuses, said Graham Boyd, an attorney with the America Civil Liberties Union, which represented some of the students. "That is, by our analysis, why the problem in Goose Creek happened," Boyd said. The police took advantage of more lenient rules and abused that discretion. (The settlement) gives to the students of Goose Creek a set of protections that is as robust as the protections adults enjoy."

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Students involved in the drug sweep must file claims by July 28, said Marlon Kimpson, one of the attorneys for the students. A court-appointed claims administrator will determine which students are eligible for the money.

"It is now incumbent on the

students to take action and have their claim considered," Kimpson said.

The exact amount each student receives will depend on the final number of claims.

Since the raid, the school district and the Goose Creek Police Department have changed their policies for drug sweeps.

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"You must conduct drug searches according to the U.S Constitution," Kimpson said. "This settlement and this class-action lawsuit is notice to police officers and school officials across the nation that students don't shed their constitutional rights merely by entering a schoolhouse door."
Kimpson said many of thefirm's clients have said they plan to use the money to pay for college or additional education.

cation.

The case drew national attention as a result of the videotapes. The Rev Jesse Jackson led a protest march amid accusations blacks were amid accusations blacks w unfairly targeted.





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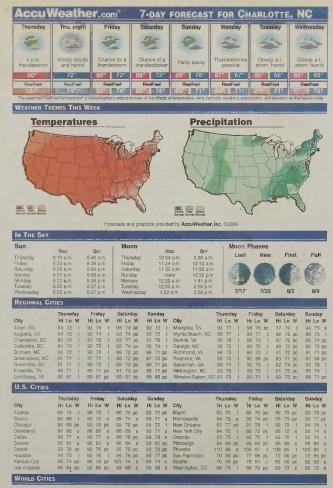
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