



## SEE SECTIONS B-F FOR TAX SALE PARCELS FOR 1ST AND 2ND DISTRICTS

# Jackson Public School District placed on probation

**By Othor Cain**  
*Contributing writer*

It took just under 45 minutes for the state's second-largest school district to learn its fate Aug. 16, when the Commission on School Accreditation voted to downgrade the Jackson Public School District's accreditation status to "probation."

The downgrade was in response to an audit of 22 schools



**Gray** that found the district in violation of the state's accreditation standards.

Paula Vanderford, executive director of the state Education Department's accreditation office, led the discussion that delivered the unwanted grade to JPS. Vanderford said, "Out of all

the findings within the report, the state recommended the probationary status because of two findings: maintaining a safe school environment and the district's graduation requirements."

It was noted in the report that schools were regularly without fire extinguishers, evacuation plans and smoke detectors. Broken windows, inoperable air conditioners and toilets were also

highlighted.

JPS Superintendent Cedrick Gray, who was not allowed to address the commission during the hearings spoke to members of the media after the meeting. "The sky isn't falling ... this isn't a funeral for JPS," Gray said. "We will get through this, and we will address every concern."

**Schools**  
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**What does probation mean for JPS?**

The probation status for JPS gives the district 60 days to create a corrective action plan and timeline. No programs will be affected. Students attending high schools, whose accreditation has been assigned probation, will continue to receive Carnegie unit credits that count toward meeting graduation requirements. Students who meet the graduation requirements established by the district and the Mississippi State Board of Education will be awarded a diploma. Admission to any Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning or any Mississippi community or junior college is based on the specific criteria required by the individual institution. As such, the probationary status should not affect a student's ability to enter college.

# House District 72 candidates share plans



Candidates for House District 72 participated in a public forum Tuesday at Fresh Start Christian Church. Pictured are Theresa G. Kennedy (from left), Synarus Green, Debra Gibbs and A. Shae Buchanon-Williams. The election is Aug. 23. PHOTO BY STEPHANIE R. JONES

**Election is Aug. 23**  
**By Stephanie R. Jones**  
*Contributing Writer*

Four candidates in the running for District 72 Mississippi House of Representative fielded questions from moderators and the audience during a forum Tuesday evening at Fresh Start Christian Church in North Jackson.

Candidates who participated in the forum were Theresa G. Kennedy, Synarus Green, Debra Hendrix

Gibbs and A. Shae Buchanon-Williams. The forum was organized by Women for Progress and S.T.A.N.D., a coalition of women's organizations and support groups.

The Aug. 23 special election is to fill the seat vacated by Kimberly Campbell, who was re-elected in November but recently left the Legislature for a position as state director of AARP.

All the hopefuls expressed commitments to working on better funding for public education and better

health care options for Mississippians.

All, too, said they recognized that as Democrats they would be stepping into an arena ruled by a Republican majority.

Green, a Legislative/Congressional liaison for the city of Jackson said, "This is not the first time we've had to deal with a super majority. This is not a time to be passive."

Buchanon-Williams, a former Marine who called herself a "ser-

vant leader," said she recognizes that in order to be effective she must cross the aisle.

While Green said there were some good things that came out of the recent Legislative session, Kennedy, who has worked with Dress For Success – an organization that helps women re-enter the workforce – and various other community organizations, said it was the "worst by far for the city of Jackson." She

**Election**  
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# Floodwaters recede as determination continues

**By Michael Kunzelman, Melinda Deslatte and Kevin Mcgill**  
*Associated Press*

ALBANY, La. – The smell of muddy water hung heavy in the air as people began sorting through water-logged belongings and ripping out carpets Wednesday in flood-wracked southern Louisiana, which now faces a long-term challenge of how to house thousands of displaced people.

Even as the water receded in some areas, it was rising in other communities downstream, sending people fleeing to shelters.

Officials painted a stark picture of the crisis: at least 40,000 homes damaged and 11 people killed in some of the worst flooding in Louisiana history. More than 30,000 people have been rescued since Friday.

More than 110 state highways remained closed Wednesday, along with even more local roadways.

Amid scattered reports of looting, Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said parishes with widespread damage were being placed under curfew as of Tuesday night.

Residents and business owners in the town of Albany repeatedly noted that the area had never flooded before – and flood insurance wasn't required.

As the water receded, people donned surgical masks and began the back-breaking job of ripping out soggy carpet, drywall and insulation. They cleared out spiders and cockroaches that had bubbled up through the sewer grates.

Some businesses already have placed huge garbage bins out front to hold ruined inventory and soggy debris. In residential areas a powerful stench wafts off huge piles of sodden garbage, soaked upholstery and carpets and discarded appliances.

Chris Bankston was with workers mucking out his family owned auto parts store Wednesday. He said his father opened the business nearly 70 years ago. Water had never gotten within 200 yards of his business until

**Floods**  
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# Conference empowers women to stay strong, healthy

**By Shanderia K. Posey**  
*Editor*

More than 100 women from all walks of life were rejuvenated after attending the What If Women's Health and Empowerment Conference at 6 p.m. Aug. 12, at the Mississippi e-Center at Jackson State University.

The gathering was the second annual Stiletto on the Pavement conference presented by Another Family Gathering. The purpose of the conference was to challenge the status quo that women cannot work together and to empower and educate women on being healthy.

Stiletto on the Pavement is described as an experience allowing professional



Stiletto on the Pavement and Flats on the Pavement representatives are (from left) Dee Bookert Nixon, Lillian Garrett, Maya Avery Jenkins, Tameka Garrett, Kim Robinson, Genetra Robinson, Latasha McGill and Kynnedi Henry. PHOTO BY SHANDERIA K. POSEY

and business women to network.

For younger women, age 18-25,

Flats on the Pavement offers a way to build and maintain business relation-

ships, become entrepreneurs and support each other through challenges specific to their age group. Events are held throughout the year.

Stiletto on the Pavement founder, Tameka Garrett, kicked off the conference with a skit where she walked around the room showing women the freedom and power of taking off their layers – literally and figuratively.

"My point to you is to begin to take these layers off. I, Tameka, am not always comfortable with who I am ... I have to be free to be me ... I have to be able to say 'I'm here,'" Garrett said.

She encouraged the women to treat other women the same regardless of

whether they don sweat pants or are dressed to the nines.

"We all have things that we are striving and trying and crawling and praying to get through," she said. "In Stiletto, there is no judgment, but there is taking off layers. This is a safe haven for people who are ready to be supportive."

Speakers for the conference touched on a variety of topics including physical and mental abuse, child molestation, mental health, faith and stress.

Latasha McGill, 39, of the Tasha

**Conference**  
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**Check out scenes from the CBC's conference in Tunica**

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**Actor Nate Parker accepts Sundance Award, creates youth fellowship**

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