ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



WELCOME

This year's Annual Report tells a powerful story—a story of innovation, resilience, equity, and joy.

I'm excited to highlight the achievements of the Jackson Public School District (JPS) for the 2023-2024 school year. As we advance in fulfilling our strategic goals, we take pride in the significant strides we've made in enhancing academic outcomes, nurturing joy, and creating more opportunities for every scholar we serve.

This year's Annual Report tells a powerful story—a story of innovation, resilience, equity, and joy. From transformative investments in facilities and early learning to groundbreaking academic initiatives and wraparound supports, Jackson Public Schools continues to lead with boldness and heart.



Errick L. Greene, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

We've made historic strides in early childhood education, fueled by the state's largest-ever Early Learning Collaborative grant. Our Pre-K program now serves over 840 scholars—a 75% increase in just four years—with plans to expand even further. We know that bright futures begin early, and we're delivering on that promise.

We are also reimagining what education looks like in a rapidly evolving world. This year, we launched the Jackson Middle College, a dual enrollment program with Jackson State University, with a focus on mathematics for its inaugural year. The program is planned to expand to other curriculum areas beyond mathematics in subsequent years. We continue to expand our advanced coursework, arts programming, and study abroad experiences, ensuring that our scholars are prepared for a global society.

In alignment with our mission to empower those who educate and serve, we've invested deeply in professional development. This includes monthly learning days, and the launch of a national education conference created exclusively for JPS educators and staff, affirming our belief that every team member deserves to grow, thrive, and lead.

Our dedication to organizational effectiveness is ongoing. Since the launch of our Optimizing for Equity initiative in 2019, we've made strategic decisions to consolidate schools, repurpose facilities, and combine offices—all while maintaining focus on scholar outcomes and community impact. It hasn't always been easy, but our resolve has never wavered.

This year's report highlights more than just data—it captures the heartbeat of our community. We've made strategic investments in capital improvements, staff development, expanded programs, and mental health supports—investing where it matters most. Through our **Strong Finish** initiative, we're guiding every scholar toward success beyond graduation—whether in college, career, or military service. Our scholars are thriving, earning scholarships, and redefining what's possible. We're laying strong foundations for even stronger futures.

I invite our families, community members, and business leaders to walk with us. Join Team JPS as we continue to chart this incredible journey together. Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your belief in our mission. Together, we will reach new heights.

With gratitude and vision,

Errick L. Greene, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Jackson Public Schools

#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Dr. Edward D. Sivak Jr., President



Barbara T. Hilliard, Vice President



Cynthia Thompson, Secretary



Frank Figgers, Member



Dr. Jeanne Middleton Hairston, Member



Mitch McGuffey, Member



Burbette Taylor, Member

#WeAreJPS

CONTENTS

VISION & MISSION	4
ACCOUNTABILITY	6
ENROLLMENT	8
SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE	10
SURVEY	12
STRATEGIC PLAN	14
EARLY CHILDHOOD	16
ATHLETICS	18
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	20
VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL	22
GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP	24
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	26
MIDDLE COLLEGE	28
RECRUITMENT/RETENTION	30
NIGHT OF STARS	32
MCKINNEY-VENTO	34
COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS	36
JROTC	38
BEST OF THE BEST	40
ESSER	42
COMMUNITY	44
STRONG FINISH	48
CLASS OF 24	50

VISION & MISSION

VISION

We prepare scholars to achieve globally, to contribute locally, and to be fulfilled individually.

MISSION

We develop scholars through world-class learning experiences to attain an exceptional knowledge base, critical and relevant skill sets, and the necessary dispositions for great success.



#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION

#WeAreJPS

CORE VALUES

Equity

Our vision of equity, put simply, is “all means all.” We celebrate each scholar’s individuality and ensure equitable access to quality instruction, resources, and high expectations. Similarly, staff receive equitable opportunities for growth and clear, transparent development processes.

Excellence

High expectations prepare our scholars for college and careers. High standards among staff foster ownership, consistency, and transparency. Every district member performs with the required attention to detail and quality to achieve excellent outcomes.

Growth Mindset

Our leaders thrive in environments that affirm their abilities and embrace the ideal that effort and perseverance lead to success.

Relationships

Building mutual respect for culture, social context, and community fosters safety, trust, and genuine connection. Celebrating successes and valuing constructive feedback create a supportive community.

Relevance

Scholars receive engaging and motivating education that inspires lifelong learning. They connect with each other, the community, and the world, developing the agency to contribute positively locally and globally.

Positive & Respectful Culture

Scholars and staff excel in environments prioritizing growth and achievement, fostering safe, positive, and respectful climates. These settings engage scholars, sparking their desire for knowledge. All adults contribute to a productive and joyful culture.

WE BELIEVE IN THE IMPORTANCE OF EQUITY, EXCELLENCE, GROWTH MINDSET, RELATIONSHIPS, RELEVANCE, AND A POSITIVE AND RESPECTFUL CULTURE.

2024 ACCOUNTABILITY

29.0
% ELA/READING PROFICIENCY

44.3 % ELA/ READING GROWTH

45.5 % ELA / READING GROWTH LOWEST QUARTILE





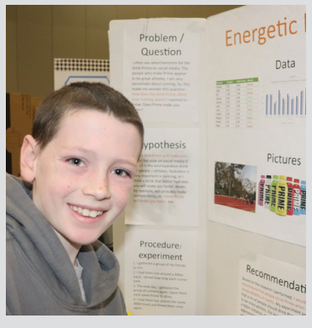
29.5
% MATH PROFICIENCY

57.1 % MATH GROWTH

66.7 % MATH GROWTH LOWEST QUARTILE

40.5
% SCIENCE PROFICIENCY

49.9
% HISTORY PROFICIENCY



"C" RATING FROM MDE IN 2024.

#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION

COLLEGE/CAREER READINESS	ACCELERATION	% LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PROFICIENT	% LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY GROWTH
28.3	67.5	4.2	42.9

Although proficiency decreased from 2023 levels in most subjects, 2-year growth was still positive.

	2022	2023	2024	2-YR GROWTH
ELA/ READING				
% PROFICIENT	26.7	34.3	29.0	8.6%
STATE	41.9	46.6	47.9	14.3%
MATH				
% PROFICIENT	21.7	30.4	29.5	35.9%
STATE	46.8	51.9	55.9	19.4%
SCIENCE				
% PROFICIENT	31.5	40.0	40.5	28.6%
STATE	55.5	58.6	63.4	14.2%
U. S. HISTORY				
% PROFICIENT	48.3	56.1	49.9	3.3%
STATE	69.4	71.3	71.1	2.4%

GRADUATION AND DROPOUT RATES

	STATE GRADUATION RATE	JPS GRADUATION RATE	JPS DROPOUT RATE
CLASS OF 2021	88.4	84.6	12.7
CLASS OF 2022	88.9	84.1	14.1
CLASS OF 2023	89.4	83.7	14.6
CLASS OF 2024	89.2	83.7	13.9

#WeAreJPS

ENROLLMENT &

Declining school enrollment is a challenge for Jackson Public Schools as it is for most Mississippi public school districts. Challenges are compounded by the rapidly decreasing population of the city of Jackson, which, in May, 2023, the *Clarion Ledger* named "the fastest-shrinking city with at least 50,000 residents in the United States" according to the U. S. Census Bureau.

	2020	2024	CHANGE	
PK - 5TH	11245	8318	-2927	-26.2%
6TH-8TH	4696	3386	-1310	-27.9%
9TH-12TH	6569	6014	-555	-8.4%
TOTAL	22510	17747	-4763	-21.2%

Note: MDE masks enrollment figures for some grades to meet FERPA requirements. Counts for those grades are excluded except in final total.

CHANGES IN JPS ENROLLMENT SINCE 2020

ENROLLMENT BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	2022	2023	2024
ALL	19348	18710	17747
FEMALE	9559	9236	8774
MALE	9789	9474	8973
ASIAN	*	*	*
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	18294	17580	16581
HISPANIC OR LATINO	529	565	648
TWO OR MORE RACES	249	260	225
WHITE	260	285	268

ATTENDANCE

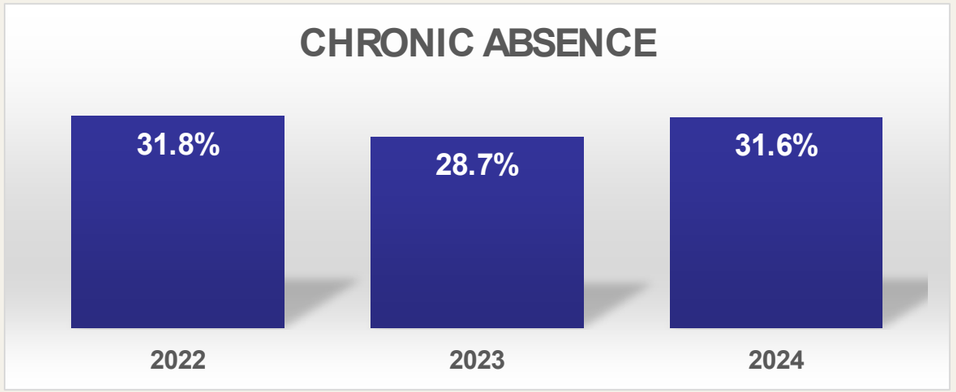
AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE

	2022	2023	2024
K - 5TH	90.7%	91.6%	92.5%
6TH-8TH	92.0%	90.8%	92.0%
9TH-12TH	84.2%	88.0%	87.5%
TOTAL	89.5%	91.6%	91.2%

Average Daily Attendance (ADA) percentages for this table are calculated by dividing ADA by grade enrollment. Total percentages are calculated by averaging grade percentages. Since enrollment is compiled in October of each school year, while ADA is compiled in May, discrepancies may occur. Special Education classes and prekindergarten are not represented here.

% CHRONIC ABSENCE

Chronic absence means missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. It means missing 10 percent or more of the school year for any reason - excused, unexcused and suspensions.



SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE

2024 RATING A

- OBAMA MAGNET ELEMENTARY
- CASEY ELEMENTARY
- WELLS APAC ELEMENTARY
- MCWILLIE ELEMENTARY
- NORTHWEST JACKSON MIDDLE

2024 RATING B

- BAILEY APAC MIDDLE
- CALLAWAY HIGH
- JIM HILL HIGH
- LAKE ELEMENTARY
- MURRAH HIGH
- NORTH JACKSON ELEMENTARY
- SPANN ELEMENTARY

2024 RATING C

- CLAUSELL ELEMENTARY
- GREEN ELEMENTARY
- SHIRLEY ELEMENTARY
- ISABLE ELEMENTARY
- TIMBERLAWN ELEMENTARY
- WALTON ELEMENTARY
- FOREST HILL HIGH

SELECT SCHOOL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

- ***July 2023*** Casey Elementary named a Model Whole School by the Mississippi Arts Commission again along with a $9,000 grant to support arts integration and $4,000 for staff and professional development.
- ***September 2023*** JPS hosted the Magnolia Marching Band Championships at Hughes Field. Jim Hill and Murrah -- Overall Superior; Murrah -- 1st place Best Colorguard; Jim Hill 1st place Best Drum Major.
- ***January 2024*** JPS Career Development Center team again won the Congressional App Challenge for the 2nd Congressional District of Mississippi for their invention *Task Hive*, a mobile application to help people coping with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- ***March 2024*** Eleven Jackson Middle College/JPS Career Development Center students placed at the 2024 MS Educators Rising Competition in their inaugural year of participation.
- ***March 2024*** Scholars at McWillie Elementary School won first place in the Computer Science Wonder Coding Robotic Competition.
- ***June 2024*** Wells APAC Theatre Scholars represented Mississippi at the International Festival in Bloomington, Indiana. The Thespian Troupe 4909 was selected as one of the top high school productions in the nation.

#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION

#WeAreJPS

YOUR VOICE, OUR COMMITMENT

BY GATHERING YOUR INSIGHTS THROUGH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CNA), WE CAN IDENTIFY STRENGTHS, ADDRESS CHALLENGES, AND CREATE ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE TEACHING, LEARNING, AND THE OVERALL EXPERIENCE FOR OUR STUDENTS.

Each year, Jackson Public Schools (JPS) invites stakeholders to participate in the CNA, a vital process for gathering feedback on academics, climate and culture, and social-emotional learning. Your voice is essential in shaping the future of our schools.

At JPS, we believe that collaboration is the foundation of success. This feedback directly informs decisions that impact classrooms, schools, and our district as a whole.

Here are some of the ways we use your feedback to drive improvement:

- ***Enhancing Academic Programs:*** *Refined curriculum and expanded learning opportunities.*
- ***Fostering Positive School Culture:*** *Strengthened relationships and built inclusive environments.*
- ***Supporting Social-Emotional Growth:*** *Prioritized initiatives for student and staff well-being.*
- ***Improving School Lunches:*** *Introduced high school specialty bar stations featuring wings, Asian cuisine, and more because of student feedback.*

We are committed to keeping the lines of communication open and transparent, and your participation is critical to the success of this effort. The CNA survey is not just a tool; it is your opportunity to influence the direction of our schools and make a lasting impact on the future of education in JPS. We encourage all stakeholders to join us annually in this important process. Together, we can create a brighter future for our students, schools, and community.



#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION

#WeAreJPS

2024 JPS COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

80.3% of stakeholders are satisfied with the quality of the educational program offered to students.

85.9 % of stakeholders think that teachers hold high expectations and provide instructional activities in which students can take an active role in their own learning.

78.8 % of stakeholders think the programs of this school or district meet the requirements of students with special needs (handicapped, learning disabled, gifted and talented, etc.).

76.3 % of stakeholders think JPS provides students and teachers with a safe and orderly, clean, and well-maintained environment for learning.

80.8 % of stakeholder think JPS has effective procedures for addressing school safety.

85.3 % **of stakeholders are satisfied with the educational experience afford by their school.**

THE POWER OF PEOPLE & POSSIBILITIES

JPS STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029

Commitment 1: *Innovative Teaching & Learning*

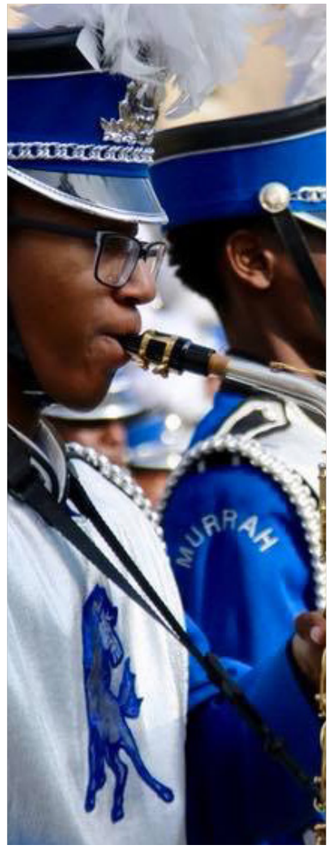
JPS is committed to elevating scholar achievement by tailoring teaching and learning to each scholar's unique strengths, needs, cultures, interests, and aspirations. Our approach involves continuous innovation in classrooms, schools, and beyond. By fostering an environment that welcomes new ideas and diverse methods of learning, we aim to transform the educational experience into one that is engaging, relevant, and directly connected to each scholar's life and future while never losing sight of the goal – scholar learning and development.

Commitment 2: *Talented Individuals & Teams*

All JPS team members must maintain high expectations for themselves and others. Scholars excel when they are guided by adults who understand their unique needs and are skilled in facilitating high-quality and differentiated learning experiences. To achieve this, we will enhance our recruitment processes and increase our skills across the entire district, including our ability to maintain safe, functional, and supportive environments for all. While increasing our individual capacities is critical, it is also imperative that we increase our ability to work in cohesive and effective teams.

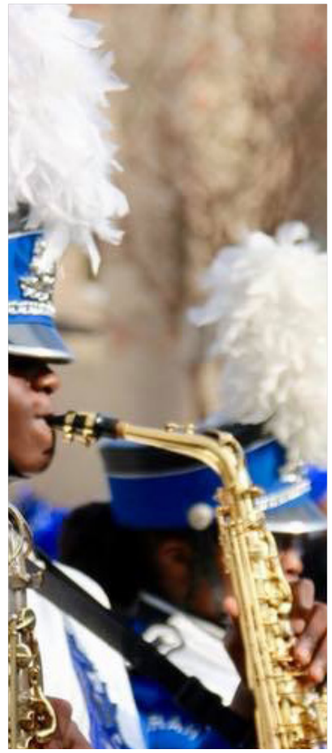
This plan replaces and extends the JPS 2019-2024 five-year strategic plan ***EXCELLENCE FOR ALL***. Commitments in that plan included 1) ***A Strong Start***, 2) ***Innovative Teaching and Learning***, 3) ***Talented and Empowered Teams***, 4) ***Joyful Learning Environments***, and 5) ***Accountability and Excellence***. Because of the successful launch of the JPS-Hinds Early Learning Collaborative, the district now shifts its focus on ***A Strong Start*** to ***Innovative Teaching and Learning*** and adds ***Strong Finish***, concentrating on putting every scholar on a pathway to post-secondary success, ensuring that they graduate college-ready and career-minded. The new plan also maintains the district's commitments to fostering innovative teaching and learning, hiring and retaining talented individuals and teams, ensuring joyful learning environments, and providing outstanding organizational effectiveness.

#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION



Commitment 3: *JPS Joy*

A joyful educational environment is foundational to learning and development. Joy in schools and across the district is cultivated through a holistic approach that prioritizes academic success and emotional well-being, creative expression, social connections, and personal fulfillment. We commit to fostering a sense of belonging, nurturing trusted relationships, while promoting the kind of risk-taking, engagement, and inquiry that are vital for lifelong learning throughout the district.



Commitment 4: *Organizational Effectiveness*

We are dedicated to fostering a district-wide culture of accountability and excellence that aligns with our Mission, Vision, Core Values, and strategic Commitments. Achieving our goals requires that all stakeholders adhere to the highest standards of professionalism and actively support our foundational principles. This commitment will be realized through meticulous planning, consistent utilization of systems and data analysis, and an unwavering dedication to professional development. Finally, more intentional partnerships and support for scholars and families to access community resources will allow the district to focus on delivering excellence in educational experiences.



Commitment 5: *Strong Finish*

Scholars thrive when they can connect what they do in school to their hopes and dreams for life after high school. Jackson Public Schools is committed to putting every scholar on a pathway to post-secondary success, ensuring that they graduate college-ready and career-minded. The district endorses the state's post-secondary attainment goal, Ascent to 55%, which supports efforts to increase the number of Mississippians with a degree, credential, or industry certification earned beyond high school. Through the strategic initiatives below, we will help all scholars identify and pursue pathways that align with their goals and interests, help them earn valuable credentials, and prepare them for success in education, employment, or enlistment.

#WeAreJPS

COMMITMENT #1: INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

JPS is committed to elevating scholar achievement by tailoring teaching and learning to each scholar's unique strengths, needs, cultures, interests, and aspirations. Our approach involves continuous innovation in classrooms, schools, and beyond. By fostering an environment that welcomes new ideas and diverse methods of learning, we aim to transform the educational experience into one that is engaging, relevant, and directly connected to each scholar's life and future while never losing sight of the goal – scholar learning and development.

Jackson Public Schools (JPS) is setting the standard for academic excellence by investing in the future where it matters most—early childhood education. With a Pre-Kindergarten program that has grown and flourished over the past 25 years, JPS is shaping young minds and building a brighter tomorrow.

Thanks to Mississippi's largest-ever Early Learning Collaborative grant, JPS has received over $25 million to supercharge its Pre-K initiatives. These funds have paved the way for expanding Pre-K slots, hiring exceptional educators, and providing cutting-edge professional development for our teachers.

Success thrives on collaboration, and the Early Learning Collaborative exemplifies this. JPS has joined forces with transformative partners like the Hinds County Human Resource Agency (Head Start) and Lottie Thornton at Jackson State University. Together, we're combining resources, sharing expertise, and implementing best practices to create enriching early learning experiences for every child in our district.



> *"JPS is shaping young minds and building a brighter tomorrow."*

Our numbers speak volumes! Pre-K enrollment has grown 57% in just six years—from 540 students in 2019 to an impressive 846 scholars today! This remarkable progress underscores our unwavering commitment to providing quality education at the earliest stages, in alignment with ***Commitment 1: Innovative Teaching and Learning*** from the district's strategic plan.

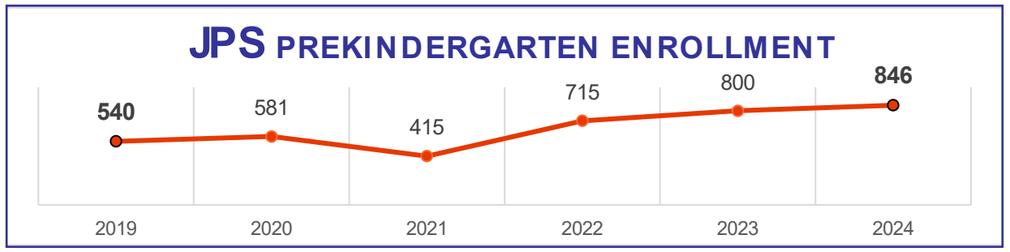
We're not stopping here! The Early Learning Collaborative has its sights set on serving 950 Pre-K scholars in the near future, further solidifying the school's role as a trailblazer in early childhood education.

At JPS, we believe that every child deserves a strong start, and we're proud to deliver on that promise. Together with our incredible educators, dedicated partners, and supportive community, we're shaping the leaders, innovators, and dreamers of tomorrow.

A $25 Million Investment in Our Youngest Scholars

Powerful Partnerships, Exceptional Outcomes

INVESTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, WHERE BRIGHT FUTURES BEGIN!









COMMITMENT #1: INNOVATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

WE ARE FAMILY

JPS ATHLETICS

The philosophy of Jackson Public Schools (JPS) Athletic Programs is based upon the development of the scholar-athlete from the inside out. Seeking to transform lives by altering hearts not behavior, we strive to teach scholar-athletes to become self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored and self-corrective while operating in a team-first environment.

Core Traits

Staff & Player Development – We believe in the continuous education of all JPS coaches and scholar-athletes. We seek to prepare customized training sessions for coaches and scholar-athletes that are relevant to the development of each individual.

District Unity - JPS athletic programs seek to establish the concept of "family" among schools. We believe that healthy rivalries make us all better. We will not speak negatively about our sister schools and will quickly admonish anyone who does.

Graduate and Win - We believe that scholar-athletes that participate in JPS athletic programs will be equipped with an excellent start to becoming successful in their personal lives after their playing days are over. If scholar-athletes are successful academically, they will also be successful on the track, field and court.

Excellence Without Excuse – We rally around doing more with less. We don't believe in making excuses; we "find a way". Athletic programs will not improve or develop without strong leadership and a relentless work ethic.

Community Service - We believe in sharing the gifts and abilities that we have been blessed with and helping those that are less fortunate than we are. We believe in teaching service in every phase of our athletic programs.





2023-2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2024 Callaway High School Girls Powerlifting Team Region Champions
2024 Callaway High School Girls and Boys Powerlifting MHSAA State Qualifiers
2023 Callaway High School Girls Basketball State Runner-up
2024 Callaway High School Boys Basketball State Playoffs
2024 Cardozo Middle School Girls Basketball Runner Up & State Semifinals
2024 Chastain Middle School Boys Basketball Team City Champions
2023 Chastain Middle School Football Team City Champions
2024 Chastain Middle School Girls Basketball City Champions
2024 Forest Hill Football Team State Playoffs
2024 Jim Hill Baseball Team State Playoffs
2023 Jim Hill High School Girls Powerlifting District Champions
2024 Jim Hill High School Girls Powerlifting South State Region Champions
2023 JPS Tougaloo Early College High School State Finalist Swimming and Diving Nicholas Sivak
2023 JPS Tougaloo Early College High School State Finalist Swimming and Diving Joshua Paul Johnson
2024 Lanier Girls Volleyball Team District Champions
2024 Lanier Girls Basketball Team District Champions
2024 Lanier Boys Track Team District Champions
2023 Lanier High School 9th Grade Basketball District Champions
2023 Murrah High School ESports State Champion Warren Meeks
2023 Murrah High School State Finalist Swimming and Diving David Carter
2023 Northwest Middle School Volleyball Team City Champions
2024 Provine Boys Basketball Team District & Region Champions



COMMITMENT #1: INNOVATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

JPS scholars are enrolled in grades pre-K–12 and may take part in the District's special program offerings designed to meet the needs and interests of a large and diverse student and parent population. Pre-K is offered at 21 elementary schools, and the Montessori curriculum is taught at one elementary school. There are programs for the intellectually and academically gifted, including Open Doors, which is available to intellectually gifted scholars in grades 2–6, and APAC (Academic and Performing Arts Complex) for scholars in grades 4–12. Besides the academic component, the APAC program includes an intense visual and performing arts school. Students may audition as early as third grade to enter the program in the fourth grade.

Based on an international standard that includes accelerated language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and foreign language curricula, the International Baccalaureate Programme in JPS offers instruction for scholars in grades K–5 through the Primary Years Programme, for scholars in grades 6–10 through the Middle Years Programme, and for scholars in grades 11–12 through the Diploma Programme.

MS WHOLE SCHOOLS ARTS

Mississippi Whole Schools, a program of the Mississippi Arts Commission, is Mississippi's first comprehensive statewide arts education program, which uses the arts as a vehicle for promoting high-quality instruction and learning for students in all disciplines. In 1991, WS began as a response to "back to basics" school reform and calls for the integration of the arts into daily classroom instruction and sequential, comprehensive instruction in dance, theatre, visual arts, and music.

Casey Elementary is a designated Model Whole School and receives support from the Mississippi Arts Commission. At Casey Elementary, the arts are an essential part of learning for each student. Teachers expose students to an arts-integrated curriculum each school day. It fosters a community of growth, artistic excellence, and self-awareness. It also enhances awareness of their contributions to the world and social-emotional learning.

Students receive quality lessons in music, visual arts, theater, dance, and media arts.

"Arts Education is so very important because it allows students to be immersed in various ways of learning. They are learning through dance; they are learning through drama; they are learning through the visual arts; they are learning through music."

Vanessa Dean Principal
Casey Elementary School





Green Elementary initiated the Mississippi Whole Schools **Arts in the Classroom (AIC)** in 2023-24, a one-year program designed to provide professional development for teachers and administrators in the foundations of arts integration as a teaching tool to enhance teaching skills. Teachers begin to identify where arts integration will improve student achievement as they infuse the arts into the basic curriculum. The concepts are taught through hands-on experiences that connect the Mississippi College and Career-Readiness Arts Learning Standards and the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards.

Students at Green Elementary participated in an Artist in Residence Project made possible through a grant by the Mississippi Arts Commission. Local artist and illustrator Chuck Galey served as the Artist in Residence at Green. He provided a two-week arts residency that included 50-minute arts integrated lessons for scholars in grades K-5, exposing them to the artistic process and providing them with real-world visual arts experiences to strengthen their knowledge of the art form.



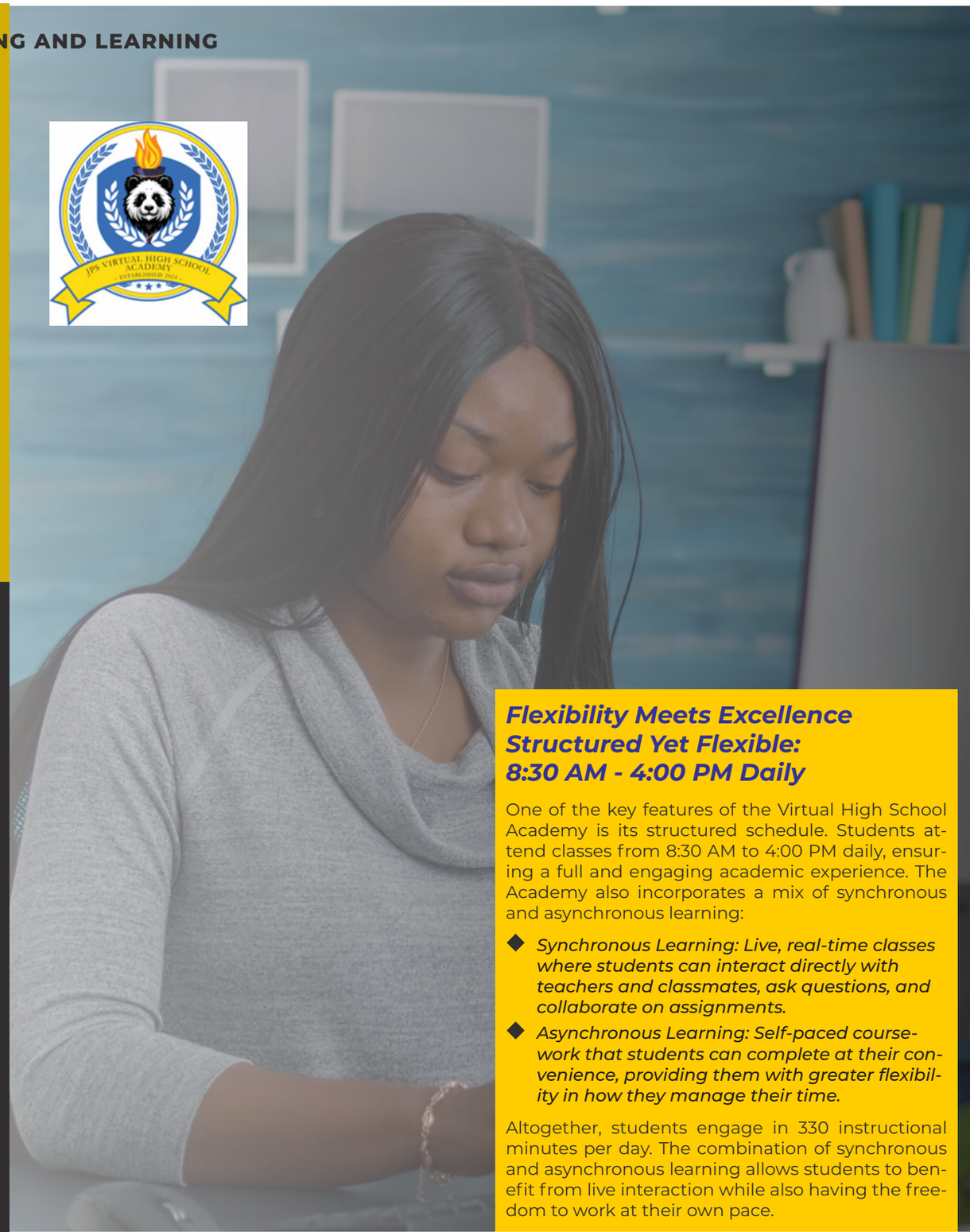
COMMITMENT #1: INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

THE JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY

The Jackson Public Schools Virtual High School Academy is transforming the educational landscape for high school students in Jackson. Serving grades 9-12 from all six Jackson Public High Schools, the Academy offers a flexible, innovative online learning platform designed to meet the diverse needs of students highlighting our JPS core value of Equity.

Serving Students from All Six JPS High Schools

The Virtual High School Academy is open to students from all six Jackson Public High Schools, creating a diverse learning environment where students from across the city can come together, collaborate, and thrive. The program ensures that students can access high-quality education from anywhere, offering a level of flexibility not typically found in traditional classroom settings.



Flexibility Meets Excellence Structured Yet Flexible: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM Daily

One of the key features of the Virtual High School Academy is its structured schedule. Students attend classes from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM daily, ensuring a full and engaging academic experience. The Academy also incorporates a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning:

- *Synchronous Learning: Live, real-time classes where students can interact directly with teachers and classmates, ask questions, and collaborate on assignments.*
- *Asynchronous Learning: Self-paced coursework that students can complete at their convenience, providing them with greater flexibility in how they manage their time.*

Altogether, students engage in 330 instructional minutes per day. The combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning allows students to benefit from live interaction while also having the freedom to work at their own pace.

A Diverse Range of Courses

Whether you're aiming for academic excellence or need additional support, the Virtual High School Academy offers a wide variety of courses to suit every student's needs. Students can choose from:

- *AP/Honors classes for those seeking a challenge*
- *Support classes for students needing extra help*
- *Dual Credit courses that allow high schoolers to earn college credits while still completing their high school education*

These diverse course offerings give students the chance to push themselves academically, while also providing a supportive environment for those who need it.

50 Scholars and Growing

Currently, 50 students are enrolled in the Academy, each taking advantage of the personalized, self-paced learning environment. As the program grows, it continues to provide students with the tools they need to succeed both in high school and beyond.

Looking Ahead: Future Growth

As the Jackson Public School Virtual High School Academy continues to grow, more students will have access to this innovative educational model. With its diverse course offerings, flexible schedule, and focus on academic excellence, the Academy is poised to become an increasingly important part of the Jackson educational landscape.

Virtual High School Academy provides a flexible, high-quality education. With a blend of live instruction and self-paced learning, scholars are empowered to succeed on their own terms, while still benefiting from the support and guidance of dedicated educators.

COMMITMENT #1: INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

THE JPS GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP PROJECT

The JPS Global Citizenship Project (GCP) was launched in 2021-2022 as part of Jackson Public Schools' (JPS) commitment to ***Innovative Teaching and Learning*** and its vision to prepare scholars to achieve globally, contribute locally, and fulfill their individual potential.

The GCP offers a unique opportunity for 11th-grade students to engage with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds, creating meaningful exchanges with schools in Lagos and Abuja, Nigeria. These exchanges foster a deeper understanding of global perspectives and help students build lasting friendships.

In addition to the international connections, GCP scholars embark on a journey to Washington, D.C., where they explore American history, culture, and government, while also delving into the essential themes of global citizenship. The 2023 GCP scholars trip includes college visits to the University of the District of Columbia, Howard University, and Georgetown Law School, where students learn about the significant contributions of these institutions in civil rights and leadership within the African American community.

At Georgetown Law School, scholars also participate in the Street Law Program, a community engagement initiative that provides law students with professional experience by teaching practical law to high school students.

The GCP is not just about travel; it is a powerful platform for personal growth and skill development. Scholars engage in collaborative learning, critically examining issues of equity across social and economic contexts. Throughout the program, students develop essential skills: team building, research, journalism, social activism, and public speaking.

Moreover, GCP scholars have the opportunity to:

- Learn about the educational and cultural backgrounds of their peers in Abuja and Lagos.
- Collaborate on creating educational materials that highlight the histories, cultures, and communities they plan to visit.

Through this experience, JPS scholars are empowered to make a meaningful, lasting impact on the world. They expand their perspectives, deepen their understanding, and gain the tools needed to become catalysts for positive change. The Global Citizenship Project is not just an educational program; it is a transformative experience that equips students to engage in and contribute to a global society.







- WASHINGTON, D.C.
- HOWARD UNIVERSITY
- GEORGETOWN LAW SCHOOL
- LAGOS, NIGERIA
- ABUJA, NIGERIA

#WeAreJPS



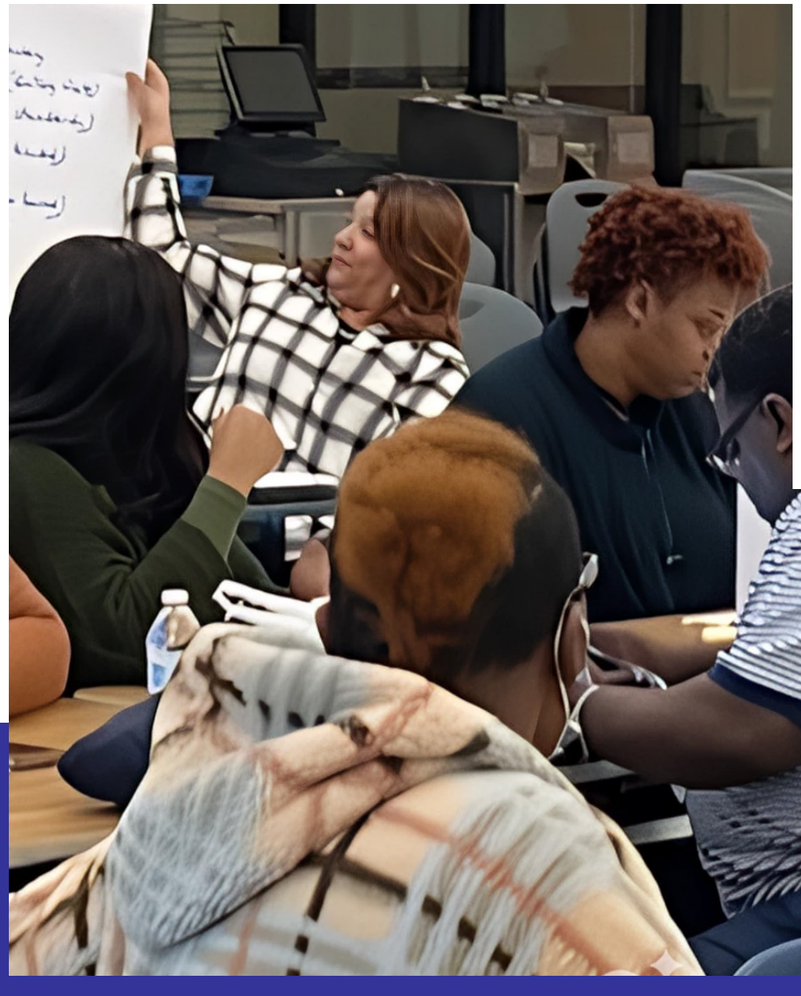
COMMITMENT #1: INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

TRANSFORMING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING THAT IMPACTS ADULT LEARNER BEHAVIORS AND ACTIONS

The Office of Teaching and Learning manages the professional learning opportunities for employees in Jackson Public Schools. Understanding that a growth mindset was essential for transforming practices and behaviors, we developed the Five Design Principles for Adult Professional Learning. These principles were: The Primacy of Practice (20/80), Less is Best, Begin with the End in Mind, Show Your Own, and Use Your Tools.

When adult learners actively engaged with new information through practice, they processed and retained it more effectively. This concept became known as the Primacy of Practice. In designing professional learning sessions, we aimed to have learners practice 80% of the session and learn new concepts for the remaining 20%. This approach allowed learners to not only understand the new ideas but also apply them in meaningful ways.

"When adult learners actively engaged with new information through practice, they processed and retained it more effectively."



Every professional learning session had a clear end goal: what we wanted learners to know and be able to do by the end. We adopted two key principles, Less is Best and Begin with the End in Mind, to ensure our sessions stayed focused and manageable within the available time. As a result, learners left the sessions with a refreshed "can-do" mindset, rather than feeling overwhelmed by too much information. Each session was carefully crafted with targeted activities and discussion questions, all designed to guide learners toward the desired end goal.

The principles of Show Your Own and Use Your Tools became powerful strategies for demonstrating how to implement best practices and district resources effectively. In every session, we intentionally showcased how the tools we already used were applied with our own teachers, students, and staff members. This approach helped build a strong sense of community and support among team members.

Our session evaluations showed that over 95% of participants found the sessions relevant and packed with useful information they could immediately implement. More than 90% reported that the practical application of the content helped them better understand the new material. We are thrilled to continue maintaining this structured and supportive system to deliver meaningful professional learning in Jackson Public Schools.



COMMITMENT #2: TALENTED INDIVIDUALS & TEAMS

Jackson Public Schools emphasizes high expectations for all team members, recognizing that scholar success depends on skilled, understanding educators who provide quality, differentiated learning experiences. The district is committed to improving recruitment, enhancing skills, and fostering safe, supportive environments, while prioritizing teamwork to ensure cohesive and effective collaboration.

COUNT ME IN: FUTURE TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS MIDDLE COLLEGE PROGRAM



The "Count Me In: Future Teachers of Mathematics Middle College Program" is a collaborative effort between the Jackson Public School District, Jackson State University, and the Mississippi Department of Education. The initiative addresses the critical shortage of qualified math teachers by creating a pipeline of certified educators while helping students reach their full potential.

The Middle College (MC) program is an innovative pilot initiative aiming to identify and nurture students with high mathematical aptitude. The program is structured as a dual enrollment partnership, where students take both high school and college courses, enabling them to earn university credits while still in high school. Starting with 11th-grade, 17 students joined the program in the 2023-2024 school year. The program seeks to enroll approximately 10-20 students in its pilot year, with plans to expand annually.

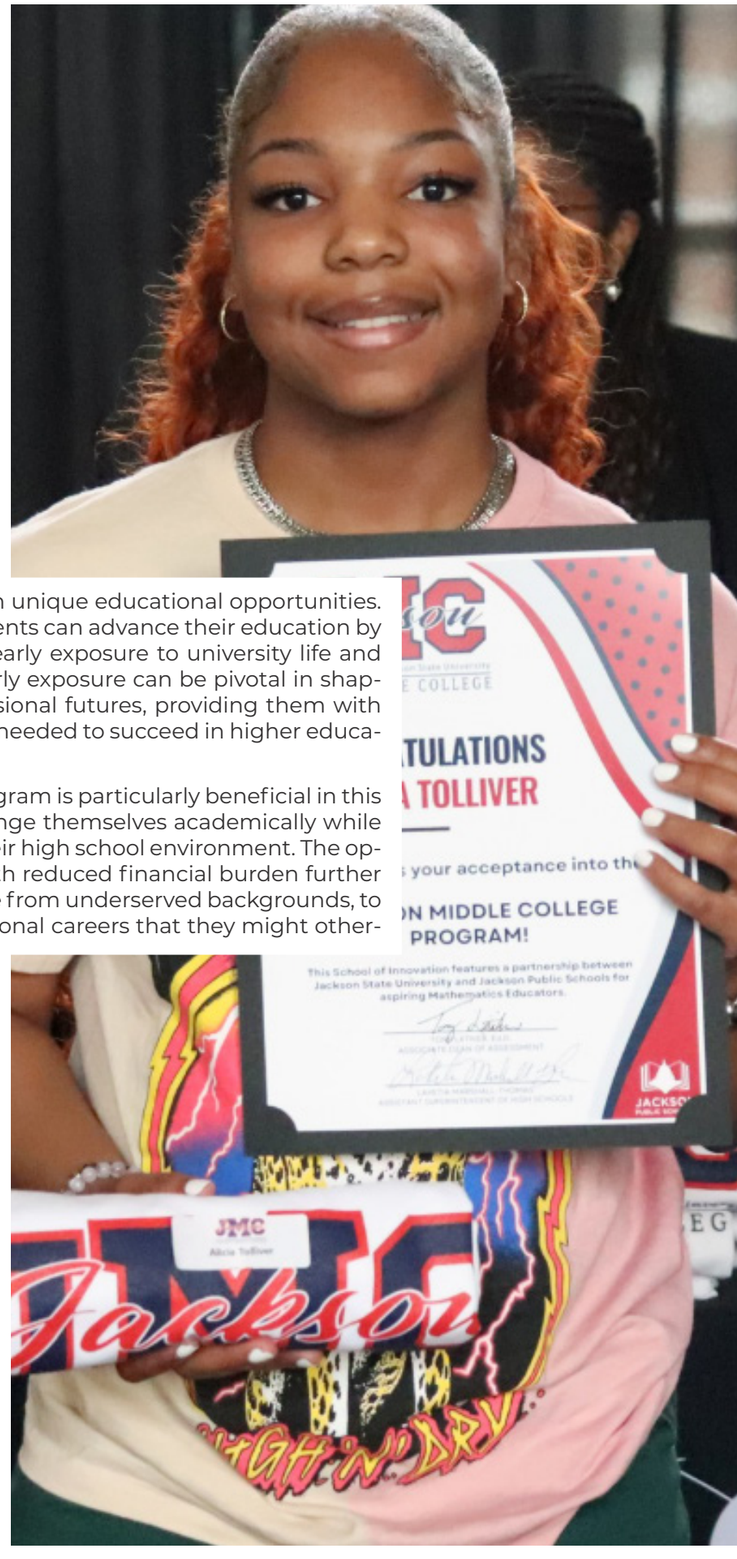
Students enrolled in the MC program will spend part of their day at their high school taking non-dual credit courses and the remainder at Jackson State University (JSU) engaged in dual enrollment or dual credit coursework. Upon high school graduation, students who meet specific criteria can continue their education at JSU with tuition waivers, eventually earning a bachelor's degree in Mathematics Education. After graduation, these students will be contractually obligated to return to the Jackson Public School District to serve as math teachers, thus fulfilling the program's mission of creating a "grow your own" pipeline of educators.

IMPORTANCE OF CREATING A PIPELINE OF MATH TEACHERS

Given the nationwide shortage of qualified educators in this field, the establishment of a pipeline for math teachers is crucial. By identifying and nurturing students with a strong aptitude for mathematics early on, the program ensures a steady supply of qualified teachers. It addresses the specific needs of the Jackson Public School District. This initiative helps mitigate the challenges associated with recruiting and retaining math teachers, particularly in underserved areas.

Moreover, the program fosters a sense of purpose and direction by providing these students with a clear and structured pathway from high school to a teaching career. This approach benefits the students, the school district, and the broader community, as it ensures that local students are trained and invested in their communities, leading to long-term stability and educational improvement.

"INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF BOTH STUDENTS AND THE BROADER COMMUNITY."



IMPORTANCE OF HELPING STUDENTS REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

The Middle College program is also designed to help students realize their fullest potential by offering them unique educational opportunities. By participating in this program, students can advance their education by earning college credits and gaining early exposure to university life and rigorous academic standards. This early exposure can be pivotal in shaping students' educational and professional futures, providing them with the skills, confidence, and credentials needed to succeed in higher education and beyond.

The dual enrollment aspect of the program is particularly beneficial in this regard, as it allows students to challenge themselves academically while still benefiting from the support of their high school environment. The opportunity to earn a college degree with reduced financial burden further empowers students, particularly those from underserved backgrounds, to pursue higher education and professional careers that they might otherwise consider out of reach.

In summary, the "Count Me In: Future Teachers of Mathematics Middle College Program" is an essential initiative that addresses critical educational needs by creating a sustainable pipeline of math teachers and empowering students to achieve their full academic potential. Through this program, the Jackson Public School District, Jackson State University, and the Mississippi Department of Education are investing in the future of both students and the broader community.

COMMITMENT #2: TALENTED INDIVIDUALS AND TEAMS



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Jackson Public Schools (JPS) is dedicated to attracting, developing, and retaining top-tier educators who are committed to delivering high-quality instruction and positively impacting student achievement. Through strategic partnerships and targeted programs, JPS continues to strengthen its teacher pipeline and address staffing needs in high-priority areas.

TEACH JPS RESIDENCY PROGRAM

Launching in Spring 2025, the TEACH JPS Residency Program—in partnership with William Carey University—offers a comprehensive, hands-on teacher preparation experience. Residents are hired as full-time teaching assistants and receive structured support while completing coursework toward a bachelor's degree and a five-year standard Mississippi educator license in Elementary Education or Special Education. Participants benefit from full tuition coverage, free instructional materials, and guidance from experienced mentors. Upon completing the program, residents commit to teaching in JPS for three years, ensuring continuity and classroom readiness from the start.

This residency program reflects JPS's ongoing investment in building a strong, sustainable pipeline of highly capable educators ready to meet the demands of the modern classroom.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Continued Partnership with William Carey University

The district has renewed its Teacher Certification Program with William Carey University, allowing current JPS employees—including non-certified and out-of-field certified teachers—to earn full licensure. Since 2021, over 85% of participants have successfully obtained certification, with more than two-thirds remaining in the classroom. The program provides an affordable, Mississippi Department of Education–approved pathway with robust academic and professional support to ensure success.

MENTORING AND INDUCTION SUPPORT

JPS is committed to ensuring that new educators receive the support needed to thrive in their roles. The New Teacher Mentoring Program pairs first- and second-year educators with trained, experienced mentors who provide guidance on classroom management, professional growth, and strategies that promote educator well-being and resilience. Mentors support new teachers in navigating the challenges of the profession while helping them build habits that foster balance, confidence, and long-term success in the classroom. Lead mentors receive ongoing training and resources to strengthen their support and foster a positive, encouraging start to each new teacher's journey. This structured mentorship model has contributed significantly to teacher retention and overall professional satisfaction during the most critical years of a teacher's career.

INTERNATIONAL TEACHER RECRUITMENT

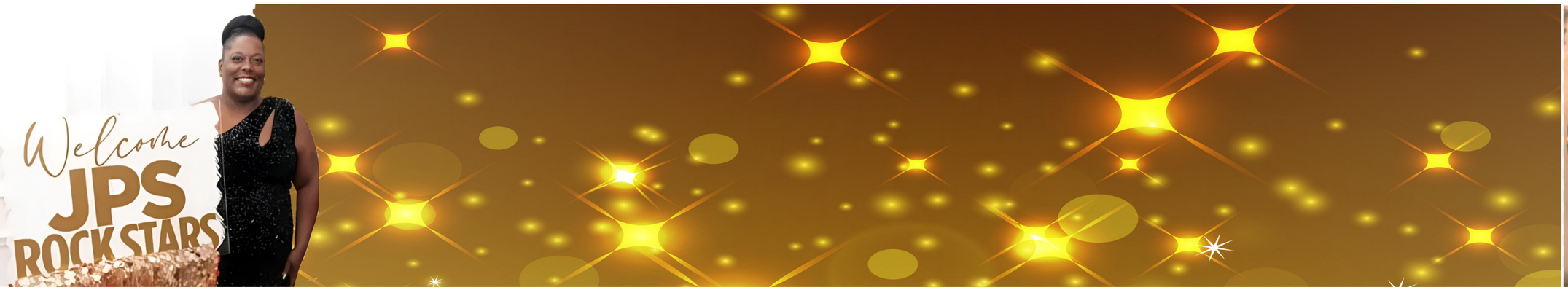
To support hard-to-staff positions in science, mathematics, special education, and elementary education, JPS has expanded its international teacher recruitment efforts. Through strategic engagement, the district has supported the visa application, renewal, and transfer processes for 96 international educators and their families. These efforts have allowed JPS to fill key positions with highly qualified teachers who bring valuable instructional experience and a strong commitment to student learning.







In collaboration with @ Career Studios Inc., the JPS Office of Human Resources-Recruitment is pleased to announce the arrival of our inaugural cohort of international teachers on November 9, 2023!





COMMITMENT #3: JPS JOY

A joyful educational environment is essential for learning, development, and community engagement. By fostering academic success, emotional well-being, creative expression, and social connections, Jackson Public Schools (JPS) cultivates joy across classrooms, schools, and beyond. This holistic approach nurtures belonging, trusted relationships, and encourages risk-taking and inquiry, empowering scholars, educators, and the community to thrive.

A Night of Stars Gala – A Celebration of Excellence

As part of our inaugural strategic plan, "Excellence for ALL," Dr. Errick Greene prioritized celebrating our exceptional staff with an elegant evening where they can dress to impress and walk the red carpet. This event reflects the district's commitment to cultivating a sense of belonging and building strong, trusting relationships within our community. Each year, Jackson Public Schools hosts the Night of Stars gala, honoring participants as JPS Rock Stars. Since its inception, over 450 team members have been celebrated. Nominees are chosen based on state assessment (MAAP) data and JPS core values.



The 2023 gala was a spectacular evening filled with grace, excitement, and heartfelt recognition of those making a lasting impact on our students. It wasn't just a celebration but a tribute to the JPS "rock stars"—those who go above and beyond to create an environment where every student can succeed. At the 2023 gala, we proudly honored some of our district's brightest stars: Administrator of the Year, Teacher of the Year, Support Staff of the Year, and District Leader of the Year. These remarkable individuals were celebrated for their extraordinary contributions and unwavering commitment to excellence in education.

Guests enjoyed a night of laughter, music, and connection, made possible by the generous sponsorship of the Kellogg Foundation. Their continued support ensures that this celebration of excellence remains an annual tradition, providing a platform to recognize those making a profound impact in Jackson Public Schools. We eagerly anticipate next year's event as we continue to celebrate the individuals who help make JPS a shining example of success and opportunity for all.

#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION

#WeAreJPS

COMMITMENT #3: JPS JOY

Jackson Public Schools is committed to ensuring that every student, regardless of their living situation, has access to a high-quality education. Through the development of our **McKinney-Vento Program**, we are taking intentional steps to support students experiencing homelessness by bringing education directly to them.

WE TAKE PRIDE IN CREATING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN SHELTERS

Recognizing that many of our scholars reside in homeless shelters, we have transformed living spaces into supportive learning environments. We have established dedicated educational spaces in three shelters:

- Matt's House
- Lizzie's House
- The Jackson Resource Center (Langley)

By reimagining these spaces, we are ensuring that students experiencing housing instability have access to resources that foster learning, confidence, and academic success. We love transforming spaces for academic success. Inside both bedrooms and common areas, we have made impactful changes to create environments that encourage growth and learning:

- **Affirmation Posters:** Inspirational messages and positive reinforcement now adorn the walls, reminding students of their resilience and potential.
- **Furniture:** Dedicated study areas have been added to help students focus on their schoolwork in a structured and comfortable setting.
- **Educational Materials and Clothes:** Tutors, parents, and guardians now have access to essential learning resources to support students academically.
- **Clothes:** Every scholar is provided with stylish uniforms and shoes, ensuring they feel confident and prepared for success

A NEW APPROACH TO LEARNING & STABILITY



The McKinney-Vento Program is about ensuring stability, support, and success for our scholars. By embedding educational spaces within shelters, we are removing barriers to learning and making it easier for students to stay engaged in their education, regardless of their housing situation.

#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION

SERVICES WE PROVIDE FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES SUFFERING HOMELESSNESS:

- Assistance with Jackson Public Schools enrollment and registration process
- Technical assistance to schools, shelters and parents regarding any issues involving children and youth experiencing homelessness
- Assistance to obtain transportation to the child's school of origin when possible
- Assistance with school supplies, school uniforms and other resources needed for school
- Assistance with fees related to the full participation of school and school activities (i.e. field trips, graduation)
- Transportation assistance to promote parental involvement



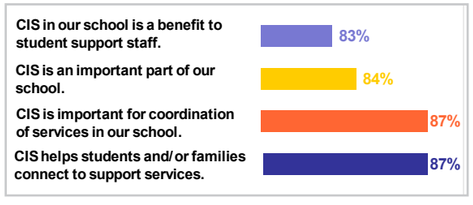
- Referrals to community resources that include medical, food, housing, mental health and others
- Referrals to other Jackson Public Schools programs and departments
- Evening academic services in shelters for school-age children
- Distribution of donated materials

We believe that every child deserves an opportunity to succeed—and that begins with providing safe, affirming, and resource-rich environments where they live. As we continue to expand these initiatives, we remain dedicated to strengthening partnerships with community organizations, shelters, and families to ensure that all students, regardless of their circumstances, have the tools they need to thrive.

#WeAreJPS

COMMITMENT #3: JPS JOY

JPS & COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS (CIS): BUILDING STRONGER SCHOOLS



Since 2017, families, educators, and community leaders have passionately advocated for a community schools strategy in Jackson Public Schools (JPS)—a vision aimed at transforming our schools into vibrant hubs of support, services, and enrichment. That vision became a reality with the introduction of Communities In Schools (CIS), a model that aligns seamlessly with the U.S. Department of Education's framework for full-service community schools. Specifically, CIS strengthens the "integrated student supports" pillar, ensuring that scholars have access to the resources they need to excel.

JPS launched its first CIS cohort in the Lanier Feeder pattern in the 2023-2024 school year, with a focused mission to boost Average Daily Attendance (ADA), reduce chronic absenteeism, and enhance academic proficiency in ELA and Math. This year, we are expanding our reach by welcoming the Forest Hill Feeder pattern into the initiative, further solidifying our commitment to removing barriers and unlocking student potential.

At the heart of the CIS model is a collaborative approach—schools, businesses, and community agencies working in unison to provide targeted support. Each site undergoes a comprehensive needs assessment, ensuring that every intervention is tailored to the specific challenges faced by students and schools.

HOW CIS SUPPORTS STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

CIS site coordinators and partners deliver three tiers of strategic support designed to foster a culture of success:

- Tier I: School-wide initiatives that promote a positive school climate and address systemic challenges.
- Tier II: Group-based interventions offering targeted support for students receiving case management services.
- Tier III: Intensive, one-on-one services designed to meet the specific needs of individual students.

Site coordinators continuously monitor student progress, adjusting interventions to maximize impact and drive meaningful change.

Communities In Schools®

By investing in CIS, JPS is not just reimagining education—it's redefining what's possible for our scholars. With dedicated community partnerships, data-driven support, and a relentless commitment to student success, we are building brighter futures, one student at a time.



COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

- Galloway Elementary
- Johnson Elementary
- Walton Elementary
- Lanier Jr./Sr. High

CURRENT FEATURES

- Clothes Closets
- Food Pantries
- Personal Hygiene Supplies
- Health Clinics
- Metro Booming Academy (Lanier)

FUTURE GOALS

- Increased Parental Involvement
- SEL Spaces for Students and Teachers
- Community Gardens
- Mentorships

As we work together in our communities, we seek to fulfill these **five conditions:**

CONDITION #1: The school has a core instructional program with qualified teachers, a challenging curriculum, and high standards and expectations for scholars

CONDITION#2: Students are motivated and engaged in learning — both in school and in community settings, during and after school.

CONDITION#3: The basic physical, mental, and emotional health needs of young people and their families are recognized and addressed.

CONDITION#4: There is mutual respect and effective collaboration among families, school staff, and community.

CONDITION#5: Community engagement, together with school efforts, promotes a school climate that is safe, supportive and respectful and connects students to the broader community.

JPS & COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Jackson Community Schools are public schools that provide services and support that fit each neighborhood's needs, created, and run by the people who know our children best — all working together.

Jackson's shared vision for Community Schools is to create a community where people feel safe, whole, valued, and WORK TOGETHER for the well-being of Jackson.

We ensure that students are provided with the support they need both inside and outside of the classroom. With collaboration support of the NEA Foundation and Phi Harden Foundation, we are assuring that every scholar has access to these supports which include academic assistance, attendance, basic needs, behavioral interventions/modifications, civic engagement, college and career preparation, enrichment/motivation, family engagement, life/social skills, physical health, and professional mental health.



COMMITMENT #3: JPS JOY

JPSD CADETS SOAR TO NEW HEIGHTS WITH TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES



Each year, Jackson Public Schools District (JPSD) cadets embark on life-changing journeys that build leadership skills and ignite their academic passions. Through a variety of enriching programs, these future leaders are equipped to excel in their chosen paths and make a lasting impact on their communities.

LANIER HIGH SCHOOL JROTC POSTS COLORS FOR NEW ORLEANS PELICANS HOME GAME

On March 28, 2024, Lanier High School JROTC traveled to New Orleans to post the colors for a New Orleans Pelicans home basketball game versus the Bucks.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING AT CAMP SHELBY

Forty to fifty cadets participated in the JROTC Cadet Leadership Challenge during a one-week residential camp at Camp Shelby, MS. This immersive experience focused on leadership development, teamwork, and personal growth, setting cadets on the path to becoming dynamic leaders.

STEM EXPLORATION AT MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITIES

Mississippi State University hosted 60 cadets for an exciting STEM Camp, providing hands-on opportunities to explore the latest advancements in these critical fields.

Another 60 cadets attended a Health-Based STEM Camp at William Carey University, delving into health sciences and discovering career opportunities in medical and healthcare industries.

AVIATION DREAMS AT THE NATIONAL FLIGHT ACADEMY

This year, 78 cadets reached new heights by attending the prestigious National Flight Academy in Pensacola, Florida, from May 22-27. During this one-week residential camp, cadets engaged in STEM-focused aviation training, experiencing the thrill of flight simulation and real-world problem-solving in cutting-edge STEM environments.

A FULLY FUNDED OPPORTUNITY FOR EXCELLENCE

Valued at $1,500 per student, this remarkable experience was fully funded by the U.S. Army, ensuring no cadet missed out on this transformative opportunity. From aviation to engineering, these scholars gained invaluable exposure to STEM fields, inspiring them to dream big and lead boldly.

HONORING LEADERSHIP, SERVICE, AND EXCELLENCE

The 2024 JROTC Gala, hosted in the heart of downtown Jackson, MS, was a dazzling celebration of leadership, discipline, and achievement. Under the guidance of Colonel Fredrick Brown, Retired, U.S. Army, and a team of senior Army instructors, this annual event continued to showcase the transformative power of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) in shaping the lives of students, families, and the community.

The evening's formal program was a tribute to the proud legacy of JROTC, spotlighting the cadets' dedication to service, discipline, and academic excellence. Special guest Mississippi State Auditor Shad White delivered a compel-







"JPSD cadets are soaring higher, achieving more, and leading stronger—because at JPSD, the sky's not the limit; it's just the beginning!"

ling keynote address, highlighting the enduring values of service, teamwork, and perseverance as cornerstones of future leadership.

CELEBRATING CADET ACHIEVEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A highlight of the evening was the recognition of outstanding cadet achievements, from academic success to community service milestones. The gala also celebrated the life-changing opportunities JROTC provides, including the presentation of military scholarships to deserving cadets. These scholarships pave the way for higher education and career success, reinforcing JROTC's mission of creating pathways for achievement and growth.

The night concluded with a festive dinner and dancing, blending the rich traditions of military culture with an atmosphere of camaraderie and celebration. Families, cadets, instructors, and community leaders joined together to honor the incredible work of the JROTC program and its positive impact on the community.

The 2024 JROTC Gala was more than just an event—it was a powerful reminder of the vital role JROTC plays in preparing young people to become exemplary leaders and engaged citizens. This cherished tradition continues to be a cornerstone of the school year, exemplifying the value, dedication, and impact of JROTC for students and stakeholders alike.

EMPOWERING FUTURE LEADERS

JPSD's commitment to providing these incredible opportunities reflects our dedication to nurturing leadership and academic excellence. Through these unique programs, our cadets are not just participants—they're pioneers shaping the future.

COMMITMENT #3: JPS JOY

BEST OF THE BEST 2023



ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

Dr. Sara Harper
Principal, McWillie Elementary

Born in Sioux City, Iowa, Dr. Sara Harper relocated to Jackson, Mississippi in 1996. Following her graduation from Millsaps College in 2000, she embarked on her teaching career within the Jackson Public School District, where she has dedicated 24 years of service. Dr. Harper earned her master's degree in counseling from Jackson State University and later achieved her Doctor of Education Leadership from Mississippi College.

She serves as the principal of McWillie Elementary and principal mentor for the Division I Elementary Team, is on the MDE Principal Advisory Council, and was teacher of the year at both Lee and McWillie Elementary.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Alesia White
Van Winkle Elementary

Ms. White imparts knowledge to pre-kindergarten students at Van Winkle Elementary and holds pivotal roles as Student and Family Engagement coordinator, team leader, and mentor for novice teachers at her school. She began her career at the Center for Child Development at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Ms. White holds a master's degree in Early Childhood Education from Jackson State University and a bachelor's degree in Child and Family Studies. She is actively pursuing National Board Certification in Early Childhood.

Her additional noteworthy achievements include contributing to the establishment of Jackson Public Schools' first all-pre-kindergarten school, receiving the Rock Star Award for 2021-2022 and 2023-2024, and being honored with the 2023 Ask for More Jackson Outstanding Educator Award.

#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION



PARENT OF THE YEAR

Celestial Gordon-Griffin
John Hopkins Elementary

Celestial Gordon-Griffin is married to Arlyn Griffin, and together they have a blended family of four (Ariel Hunt, Taj Sanders, Aniyah Griffin, and Arlyn Devon Griffin). A graduate of Callaway High School and Tougaloo College, she is currently pursuing a master's degree in political science at Tougaloo. She serves as the Program Director for the Bennie G. Thompson Delta Leadership Program at Tougaloo College.

An advocate for teachers and education, Mrs. Gordon-Griffin has always been active in the role as a support parent to the schools which her children attended. She works tirelessly in her community from teaching and advocating for homeownership for black and brown individuals, to holding voter registration drives and inspiring the next generation of voters.



DISTRICT LEADER OF THE YEAR

Dr. Wanda Clark
Office of Teaching and Learning

Dr. Wanda L. Clark currently holds the position of Director of Instructional Support Services in the Office of Teaching and Learning. Originally from Tchula, Mississippi, she earned her bachelor's degree from Jackson State University and further pursued her education, obtaining a master's degree from Belhaven University. Additionally, Dr. Clark holds specialist and doctorate degrees in Educational Leadership from Mississippi College. With over 23 years of experience, she takes pride in her role as an educator.



SUPPORT STAFF OF THE YEAR

Ella Pepper
Facilities Operations Custodian Supervisor

A native of Bolton, Mississippi, Ms. Pepper pursued Business Technology at Hinds Community College after graduating from Raymond High School.

Her connection with JPS dates back to 2010 when her children attended Hardy Middle School. Following a basketball game cleanup with the late Mr. Fred Sutton, then head custodian, she felt inspired to join JPS. Ms. Pepper's journey evolved from head custodian at Cardozo Middle School to custodian foreman (January 2013) and custodian supervisor (July 2023) due to her unwavering commitment, hard work, and collaborative skills with school leaders.

#WeAreJPS

COMMITMENT #4: ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

We are committed to cultivating a district-wide culture of accountability and excellence rooted in our Mission, Vision, Core Values, and strategic Commitments. By upholding high professional standards, leveraging systems and data, prioritizing professional development, and fostering intentional partnerships, we aim to support scholars and families in accessing resources and delivering exceptional educational experiences.

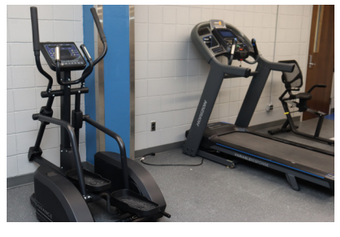
JPS IMPROVES ACADEMIC LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WITH ESSER FUNDS

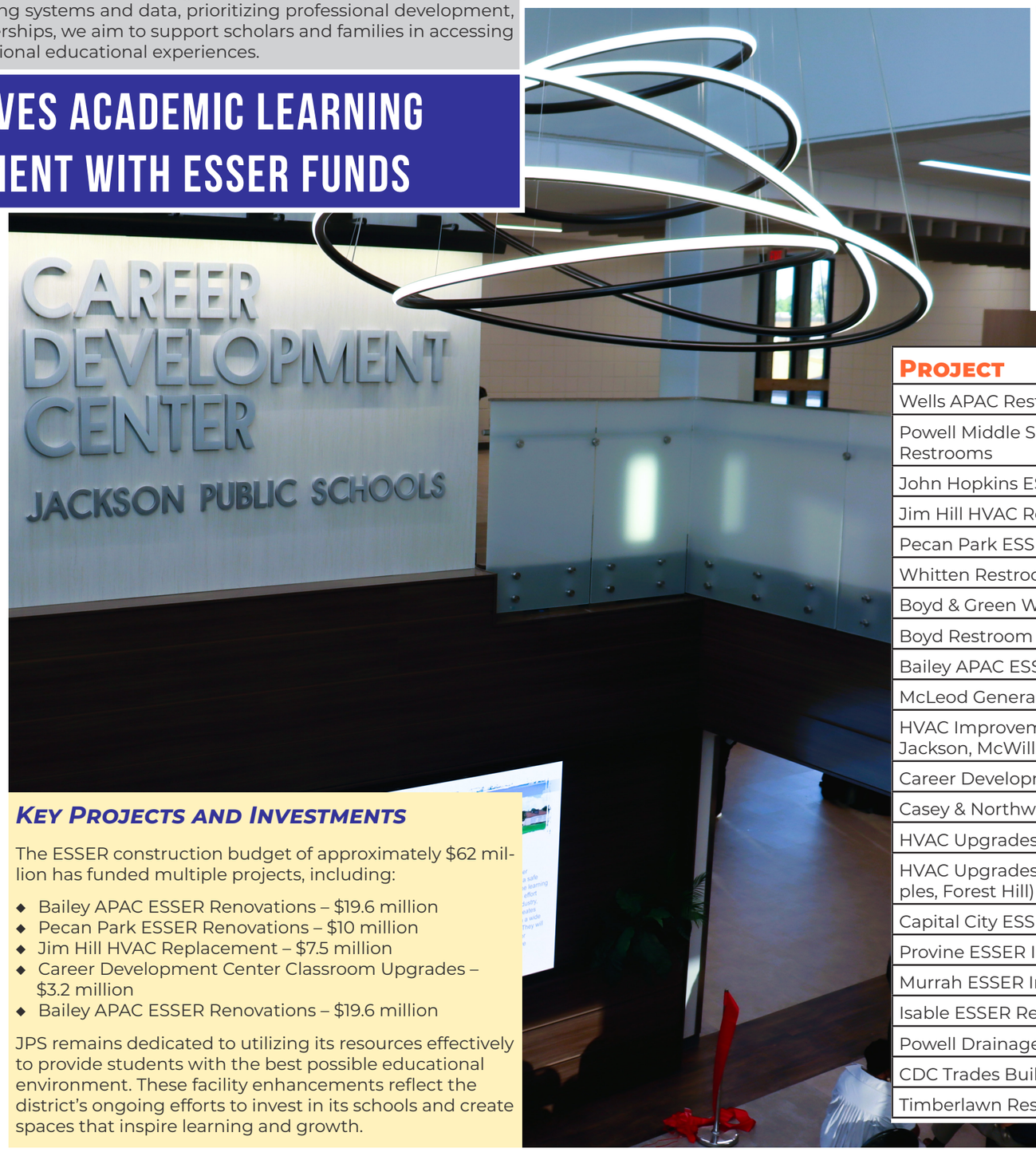
Jackson Public Schools (JPS) has made significant strides in enhancing its facilities through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) and American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding. These funds, part of the CARES Act, were allocated to help school districts nationwide prevent, prepare for, and mitigate the effects of COVID-19.

JPS leveraged over $66 million from ESSER/ARP to modernize aging infrastructure, improve air quality, and create more welcoming learning environments for students and staff.

Through these funds, JPS has successfully completed various facility upgrades across the district, addressing essential needs such as HVAC improvements, restroom renovations, drainage solutions, and classroom enhancements.

BY ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION AND INVESTING IN FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS THAT CREATE SAFE, MODERN, AND ENGAGING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS, JPS REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE CORE VALUE "EQUITY."





KEY PROJECTS AND INVESTMENTS

The ESSER construction budget of approximately $62 million has funded multiple projects, including:

- Bailey APAC ESSER Renovations – $19.6 million
- Pecan Park ESSER Renovations – $10 million
- Jim Hill HVAC Replacement – $7.5 million
- Career Development Center Classroom Upgrades – $3.2 million
- Bailey APAC ESSER Renovations – $19.6 million

JPS remains dedicated to utilizing its resources effectively to provide students with the best possible educational environment. These facility enhancements reflect the district's ongoing efforts to invest in its schools and create spaces that inspire learning and growth.



PROJECT	COST
Wells APAC Restroom Renovations	$413,000.00
Powell Middle School Window Replacements & PE Restrooms	$1,361,000.00
John Hopkins ESSER Renovations	$1,751,181.00
Jim Hill HVAC Replacement	$7,557,062.49
Pecan Park ESSER Renovations	$10,036,020.28
Whitten Restroom Renovation	$930,855.81
Boyd & Green Window Replacements	$1,070,830.00
Boyd Restroom Renovations	$275,000.00
Bailey APAC ESSER Renovations	$19,593,979.67
McLeod General Improvements	$907,800.00
HVAC Improvements (Callaway, Kirksey, North Jackson, McWillie)	$1,958,680.00
Career Development Center Classroom Upgrades	$3,214,000.00
Casey & Northwest Restroom and HVAC Upgrades	$843,204.33
HVAC Upgrades (Casey, Galloway, Spann, Whitten)	$724,500.00
HVAC Upgrades (Bates-Cardozo, Blackburn, Peeples, Forest Hill)	$1,468,578.76
Capital City ESSER Improvements	$1,182,594.00
Provine ESSER Improvements	$2,272,795.44
Murrah ESSER Improvements	$3,128,471.07
Isable ESSER Restroom & HVAC Upgrades	$613,500.00
Powell Drainage Improvements	$1,122,000.00
CDC Trades Building Plumbing Upgrades	$1,064,800.00
Timberlawn Restroom Improvements	$802,000.00

COMMITMENT #4: ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

COMMUNITY

Jackson leaders and citizens actively contribute their time and resources to the improvement of Jackson's public schools. Over 1,500 men and women from organizations throughout the metro Jackson community invest approximately 19,000 hours of service in the District's schools annually. In return, our scholars and staff give back to the community.

A SNAPSHOT OF KEY JPS COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS IN 2023-2024

AUGUST





Scholars from Dawson Elementary and Capital City Alternative School participated in the City of Jackson - Government's City-wide Day of Action on Monday, August 28. These scholars cleared the debris and trash off of Percy V. Simpson Drive, one of Jackson's worst illegal dumping sites. Now, the street can be used as an alternate route for Dawson's transportation and anyone visiting that community. Thanks to the ***City of Jackson's Solid Waste Division***, ***Fahrenheit Creative Group***, ***Keep Jackson Beautiful***, ***Significant Developments, LLC***, and ***W.K. Kellogg Foundation*** for making the day possible!

SEPTEMBER



The Watch D.O.G.S., which stands for "Dads of Great Students," a program meant to involve more fathers and male figures in students' lives, is back in operation at Jackson Public Schools. "We're dealing with positive people that have positive ideas, and they can give positive leadership and have a positive impact on the scholars and the schools. It helps to change the climate and culture of a school."

Charlie Drape, ***Clarion-Ledger***
September 4, 2023

#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION

UNITY

OCTOBER



Mississippi Smiles, a family and children's dentistry group in Jackson and Gulfport, sponsored a fully equipped S.T.E.M classroom at Spann Elementary through its Caring-4Community outreach program. From robots, to virtual reality headsets, math workbooks, science kits and more, $3000 in supplies were donated. In honor of the unveiling, parents, students and staff enjoyed a Friday Fun Day, all from Mississippi Smiles Dentistry!

NOVEMBER



In partnership with the Community Foundation of Mississippi's Education Foundation Trust Fund, the ***Junior League of Jackson*** awarded $100,000 to fund grants to JPS teachers. The recipients were announced at a celebration held in early November at Forest Hill High School.

The Junior League of Jackson's Public School Mini-Grants initiative funds K-12 teacher projects that enhance, enrich, and support the JPS educational curriculum. A total of $100,000 was awarded for the 2023-2024 school year, funding 21 grants. Award amounts ranged from $430 to $10,000.

#WeAreJPS

COMMITMENT #4: ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

COMMUNITY

DECEMBER





The Advanced Academics and Innovative Strategies Department hosted a canned food drive for a local food pantry in December 2023. A total of 30 boxes of canned goods were collected for Stewpot to add to its food pantry.

JANUARY

JPS hosted a Day of Service for the Homeless Monday, January 15, 2024, at Poindexter Park. Blessing bags were distributed, and hot meals were served. Donation boxes were available at all JPS schools and offices the week of Jan. 8-11.



FEBRUARY





JPS held a S.T.E.A.M. Expo on Saturday, February 17, 2024, at the Jackson Convention Center. Hundreds of people showed their support at the third annual S.T.E.A.M. Expo and dozens of scholars were awarded for projects that showcased their creativity and problem-solving skills. Sponsors, vendors, and exhibitors included ***The University of Mississippi Medical Center, the Kirkland Group, MPB, Wurm Works, Mississippi Code Academies, Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance, Mississippi Book Festival, Mississippi DHS Federal Credit Union, Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks,*** and the ***City of Jackson.***

MARCH



On March 22, JPS second-grade scholars from across the district attended the Touch A Truck event at Trustmark Park in Pearl. JPS scholars had the opportunity to explore, climb, and touch trucks, emergency response vehicles, and other heavy machinery. They also met the people who protect, serve, and build our community. The annual event is sponsored by the ***Junior League of Jackson***.

APRIL





FedEx and ***Operation Warm*** partnered with Raines Elementary to donate 190 pairs of shoes and socks to JPS scholars.

MAY



Blackburn Middle School scholars, in partnership with ***JSU***, sold their community garden harvest at their annual Farmer's Market in May. Blackburn students spent months growing and preparing the produce. ***Soul City Solar*** and the ***United Way*** each donated $10,000 to support the garden.

COMMITMENT #5: STRONG FINISH

Scholars thrive when they can connect what they do in school to their hopes and dreams for life after high school. Jackson Public Schools is committed to putting every scholar on a pathway to post-secondary success, ensuring that they graduate college-ready and career-minded. The district endorses the state's post-secondary attainment goal, Ascent to 55%, which supports efforts to increase the number of Mississippians with a degree, credential, or industry certification earned beyond high school. Through strategic initiatives, we will help all scholars identify and pursue pathways that align with their goals and interests, help them earn valuable credentials, and prepare them for success in education, employment, or enlistment.

JPS LAUNCHES STRONG FINISH TO EMPOWER GRADUATES FOR LIFELONG SUCCESS

At Jackson Public Schools (JPS), we're not just preparing scholars for graduation day—we're equipping them for the adventures that follow. With the launch of **Strong Finish**, the fifth priority in our bold five-year plan, JPS is focused on ensuring every graduate is ready to thrive in college, careers, and beyond.

This transformative initiative aligns seamlessly with Mississippi's *Ascent to 55%* goal, which aims to see 55% of working-age adults hold a postsecondary degree or credential by 2030. At JPS, we're committed to doing our part by paving the way for our scholars to achieve their dreams.

AMBITIOUS GOALS FOR THE CLASS OF 2029

Our **Strong Finish** initiative is driven by measurable, transformative goals designed to propel our graduates toward success:

- 25% of seniors will complete a Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway, more than doubling today's rate.
- 45% of seniors will earn college credit through advanced coursework, also more than doubling the current rate.
- 55% of seniors will enroll in college within six months of graduation, representing a 20% increase.

These targets aren't just numbers—they're a game-changer. By reaching our college enrollment goal, JPS graduates stand to collectively boost their lifetime earnings by over $500 million, illustrating the undeniable value of post-secondary education. Scholars who earn two-year or four-year degrees enjoy significantly higher earnings than those with only a high school diploma.

COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS

At the heart of **Strong Finish** is a commitment to collaboration. We're engaging families and scholars as partners in this journey, while also forging powerful alliances with colleges, nonprofits, employers, and workforce organizations. Together, we're creating a network of opportunities and support to ensure every scholar has the resources they need to succeed.

A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR EVERY SCHOLAR

With **Strong Finish**, JPS is charting a course for a future where our graduates don't just meet the challenges of tomorrow—they lead the way. By focusing on college and career readiness, we're empowering scholars to unlock their full potential, contribute to their communities, and achieve lasting success.

At Jackson Public Schools, we're building strong foundations for bright futures—because every scholar deserves a **Strong Finish.**



#1DISTRICT1DIRECTION



JPS SENIOR COLLEGE FAIR
SEPTEMBER, 2023





2029 DISTRICT GOALS

Metric	Baseline	2029 Target
CTE Completers Overall % of Graduates Completing a CTE Pathway	12.2%	25.0%
Advanced Coursework Credit % of Graduates Earning College Credit via Advanced Coursework	21.4%	45.0%
Seamless Enrollment - Overall % of Graduates Enrolling in College within 6 Months	46.0%	55.0%
Seamless Enrollment - 4-year % of Graduates Enrolling in 4-Year College within 6 Months	20.5%	26.1%
Seamless Enrollment - 2-year % of Graduates Enrolling in 2-Year College within 6 Months	25.5%	28.9%

#WeAreJPS

COMMITMENT #5: STRONG FINISH

JPS CLASS OF 2024 RECEIVES $43M IN TOTAL SCHOLARSHIP OFFERS

The Jackson Public Schools' graduating Class of 2024 received $43,659,224 in scholarship offers. We graduated 1,147 graduates from seven high schools, including 278 scholars who received an ***Academic Endorsement.***

Each of those 278 scholars has demonstrated exceptional academic performance by maintaining a 2.5 GPA or higher. They have also successfully completed one Advanced Placement course and exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course.

Seventy scholars earned the more academically rigorous diploma endorsement, called the ***Distinguished Academic Endorsement.*** It means each scholar earned the following:

- Earned 28 credits
- Scored at least 18 on the ACT English section
- Scored at least 22 on the ACT Math section
- Achieved at least a 3.0 grade point average
- Successfully completed one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course, and exam, or one dual credit course
- Earned at least a B in the advanced course





The Class of 2024 had two ***Gates Scholarship Recipients***, Jerry Palmer and Camilah Cousin.

Students who earn an academic or distinguished academic diploma endorsement from a public high school will be accepted into any of the state's public universities.

Twenty-one scholars have earned the prestigious ***Career and Technical Education Endorsement (CTE)***. This means that each of these graduates earned 26 credits, including four credits from the CTE program, but has also completed a dual credit course and a work-based learning experience or earned a national credit.

Four scholars were ***Biliteracy Seal Recipients,*** which awards scholars with proficiency in one or more world languages, and 12 seniors scored 30 or higher on the ACT Test.

Lastly, twenty-two JPS scholars received their high school diplomas and graduated with their associate degrees as a part of the ***JPS-Tougaloo Early College High School.***



Keisa Currie-Kimball, Forest Hill High School, is a ***2024 Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship*** recipient (one of only two awardees from Mississippi). Each student will receive up to $40,000 in paid tuition to attend the college of their choice and a paid internship offer at Amazon after their freshman year of college to gain hands-on, practical work experience with mentorship from Amazon leaders.

2024 VALEDICTORIANS AND SALUTATORIANS



Joey Anthony
Valedictorian
Callaway High School



Janiya Sapp
Salutatorian
Callaway High School



Kahilyn Boyd
Valedictorian
Forest Hill High School



Jerry Palmer, Jr.
Salutatorian
Forest Hill High School



Anyah Ellis
Valedictorian
Jim Hill High School



Charles Williams
Salutatorian
Jim Hill High School



Manaya Satcher
Valedictorian
Lanier High School



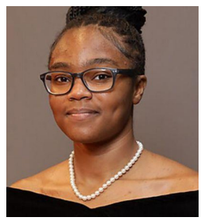
Jelesa Ervin
Salutatorian
Lanier High School



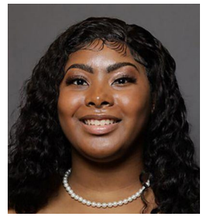
Karly Thomas
Valedictorian
Murrah High School



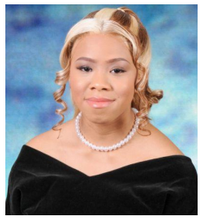
Shelby Hadley
Salutatorian
Murrah High School



Ta'Tianna Hubbard
Valedictorian
Provine High School



Makayla Luckett
Salutatorian
Provine High School



Takarra Champ
Valedictorian
Wingfield High School



JohnAnna Esters
Salutatorian
Wingfield High School

A bittersweet moment as Wingfield High School retires its banner at the close of its last graduation ceremony.



JACKSON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Transforming lives through
excellent education



Education Resources, LLC
Maximizing Student Achievement