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“Please observe SCHOOL ZONES SAFETY.”



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VOLUME 78 NUMBER 46

SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

August 13 - 19, 2026

National Black Church Initiative and ACHDC Issue Statement on Childhood Vaccine Policy Changes

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2026 — The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI), a coalition of 150,000 African American and Latino faith communities comprising 27.7 million members, and the American Clinical Health Disparities Commission (ACHDC) are expressing serious concerns about President Trump's vaccine order and its potential impact on the health of Americans. NBCI and ACHDC question the scientific basis for the order and believe it could create unnecessary confusion surrounding childhood immunizations. The order includes changes affecting childhood immunizations and references a

Continue **Vaccine** Page 4

The American Guild of Musical Artists and Dallas Black Dance Theatre Announce First Collective Bargaining Agreement

With the agreement ratified by both organizations, AGMA has lifted its Do Not Work Order against DBDT

DALLAS - The American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA) and Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) are proud to announce the ratification of the company's first collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

In a written statement, the Dancers on the AGMA Negotiating Committee said: "We understand the significance of this moment and the path that brought us here. We're proud to have

Continue **Dance** Page 2

Poll: One in Four Young Black Men Uncommitted to Voting in 2026



Photo Credit:
Black Press USA Wire

By **Chris Kringle**
Source: Black Press
USA Wire

More than one in four young Black men in six battleground states say they are uncertain about or unlikely to vote in the 2026 midterm

elections, even as 92% of them say voting is important, according to a new survey released in May.

The poll was commissioned by Black Men Vote, a nonprofit focused on mobilizing Black male voters, and conducted by HIT

Strategies, a Washington-based research firm. It surveyed more than 1,600 registered Black men ages 18 to 45 in Georgia, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina, using text-to-web surveys and online

panels, with a margin of error of plus or minus 2.49 percentage points. The fielding dates for the survey were not published in the coverage reviewed for this story.

Continue **Men** Page 4

HBCU Love: Forbes Ranks PVAMU Among America's Elite Public Hbcus

By **Texas Metro News**
Source: Black Press USA Wire



Photo Credit: **Texas Metro News / Black Press USA Wire**

PRAIRIE VIEW, Texas — Prairie View A&M University has been ranked among the nation's top three public Historically Black Colleges and Universities on Forbes' inaugural "Top HBCUs" list. This places PVAMU among an elite group of 20 institutions (10 private and 10 public) recognized for setting graduates up for long-term success.

The timing could not be

more fitting. The recognition arrives as the University celebrates its Sesquicentennial, marking 150 years since its founding in 1876 as the oldest public HBCU in Texas and the second-oldest public university in the state. Throughout the year, PVAMU will host a series of signature events honoring the depth, significance, and enduring legacy of the institution, and this national

recognition adds another milestone to that historic celebration.

A Ranking Built on Outcomes

Forbes' new ranking, developed using the same methodology as its 2026 America's Top 500 Colleges list, evaluates schools on student outcomes and return on investment, including graduation rates, retention, earnings potential, student debt load, and

outcomes for Pell Grant recipients. The list also draws on the Forbes American Leaders List, which tracks graduates who have gone on to hold high office, win prestigious honors, or otherwise distinguish themselves nationally. Ranked alongside North Carolina A&T State University and Florida A&M University, Prairie View A&M stands among the nation's most respected public

HBCUs, a testament to the strength and consistency of the University's academic offerings and graduate outcomes.

"Being recognized by Forbes as one of the nation's top HBCUs is an exciting milestone for PVAMU," said Joy D. Thomas, Ed.D., interim assistant vice president for Enrollment Management

Continue **HBCU** Page 5

Paxton, Talarico tap contrary versions of God and Christianity in appeal to Texas voters

By **Ellie Ashby**, The Texas Tribune



Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate and state Rep. James Talarico preaches at Central Presbyterian Church in downtown Austin on Dec.14, 2025. Photo Credit: .
Bob Daemmrich for The Texas Tribune

Republican Ken Paxton and Democrat James Talarico portray their U.S. Senate campaigns as a fight for the soul of America — one in which God plays an active yet vastly different role.

Talarico, believing God is on the side of the oppressed and the marginalized, focuses his message to voters on equity and protecting personal freedom.

Paxton sees God as on his side — a force safeguarding his ability to protect Texas

Continue **Voters** Page 2



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EDITORIAL PAGE

Standards Of Excellence Will Always Define Historically Black Colleges and Universities

By James B. Ewers Jr., Ed.



Dr. James Ewers

Like many of you, I went to an HBCU (Historically Black College and University) back in the day. Those were some unforgettable times in my life. I could not have scripted my experience any better than how it played out. Humbly, I say that it was a real-life dream.

The excitement I had leading up to my arrival on campus is hard to explain. Receiving mail from my HBCU was just the greatest. I probably read each letter ten times because I wanted to make sure I had every detail in correct order.

One of the letters I received said to arrive on campus early for Freshmen Orientation. In that same letter was a list of what to bring. It included a shirt, a tie and a suit. Of course, there were some other items on the

list as well. There were times when we had to wear our dress-up clothes, and at other times we could be more casual.

The times were different so wearing a suit and tie wasn't a big deal during my college days. That was simply an unspoken expectation.

Tuskegee University, an HBCU in Alabama, recently made national news about imposing a dress code. There has been a flood of opinions about it. Words like "culture" and phrases like "the times are different" have been included in attitudes toward the dress code.

Let me be emphatically clear about one thing. I don't pretend to know what goes on in the mind of a 17- or 18-year-old student going to an HBCU. I just don't have an idea and wouldn't know where to begin.

Here is what I do know. Being groomed and looking appropriate are timeless. They don't have a beginning or an ending.

The durags and bonnets

are prohibited in classrooms, in the cafeteria, and at official university events, according to Tuskegee University officials. Virginia Union University, an HBCU in Richmond, Virginia, has a similar policy.

My interpretation of the policy is that these clothing items are permissible when you wear them in residence halls. In my opinion, HBCUs prepare you for the future. That was my experience and the experience of other graduates.

Some students and influencers say that you can wear slippers and bonnets to class at PWIs (Predominantly White Institutions). Let us not ever forget that HBCUs in many ways were founded because African Americans could not attend PWIs.

Pride is a word often associated with HBCUs. It is how you carry yourself and who you represent. That still matters today.

While some may disagree, my pride didn't allow me to drop my guard. I say that without hesitation. Dur-

ing my career in higher education, I was a role model. I couldn't weave in and out of professionalism.

I began learning those lessons as an undergraduate at Johnson C. Smith University, an HBCU in Charlotte, North Carolina. Encouragement, motivation and teachable moments were all given to me there. The faculty, staff and administration understood they were preparing the next generation of leaders.

One expression that I use is: students don't want to know how much you know until they know how much you care. The Johnson C. Smith University community cared about us. It was more than book learning. It was also life learning.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities occupy an important place in the higher education system. Its mission was born out of necessity. Its goal was to provide an education for minds eager to learn. That goal has not changed today.

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Continued **Dance** Page 1

negotiated a first contract that provides meaningful protections for today's dancers while strengthening the company for those who will come after us."

Founded in 1976 by Ann Williams, Dallas Black Dance Theatre is the oldest continuously operating professional dance company in Dallas and a nationally recognized institution celebrating the artistry and contributions of Black artists in dance. The agreement, ratified by the AGMA Board of Governors on August 10, lays a foundation for a stronger, more sustainable future for DBDT artists and the organization as a whole.

"This agreement starts the next chapter in the history of Dallas Black Dance Theatre," said Richard A. Freeman, Jr., Artistic Director of DBDT and a former DBDT dancer. "I know firsthand what this company means to the artists who have dedicated themselves to its mission and legacy. As we approach our 50th anniversary season, it

is important that we continue supporting our dancers as they thrive, both artistically and professionally."

The agreement establishes, for the first time, guaranteed minimum work weeks for the dancers and a minimum number of dancer positions each season, along with a seniority-based wage scale that includes significant improvements in minimum weekly salaries and built-in increases over the life of the agreement. It also codifies existing health insurance and retirement contribution benefits and strengthens physical therapy, sick and personal leave, and parental leave, while creating a joint labor-management committee and establishing robust protections against harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.

The journey to this first contract spanned more than two years. In 2024, a labor dispute between AGMA and DBDT drew national attention in the performing arts. The dispute resulted in a settlement for the original

dancers involved, including nearly \$600,000 in compensation. For AGMA, that resolution was important, but not the end of the work. The Union remained committed to ensuring that future generations of DBDT dancers would have the protections and benefits that come with a collective bargaining agreement.

In collaboration with DBDT, AGMA worked with the current dancers to organize, form a negotiating committee, and bargain for their first contract.

"A great deal happened to make this moment possible," said Griff Braun, AGMA National Organizing Director. "We have never forgotten the former DBDT dancers who organized their workplace and stood together during an extraordinarily difficult chapter in the company's history. Their efforts helped make this agreement possible. I have been equally inspired by the commitment, professionalism, and solidarity of the current DBDT dancers, who carried that work forward at the bargaining table. This

first contract makes DBDT a safer, more supportive, and more sustainable workplace for artists today and for generations to come."

The agreement comes as DBDT prepares for its 50th anniversary season with a renewed commitment to artistic excellence and organizational stability.

"Our dancers are at the heart of Dallas Black Dance Theatre, and their talent, dedication and artistry are essential to everything we do," said Kristie Patton Foster, Executive Director of DBDT. "As we prepare to celebrate our 50th anniversary season, I look forward to working alongside our dancers, staff, board and supporters as we build an exciting future."

AGMA and DBDT recognize the many artists, advocates, community members, and supporters whose efforts contributed to this historic moment. Together, both DBDT and AGMA look forward to a new chapter of collaboration and continued growth for Dallas Black Dance Theatre.

Continued **Voters** Page 1

ruption charges.

"I don't take credit for it, it's really by the grace of God," Paxton said.

In Texas — where two-thirds of the adult population identifies as Christian and 45% say religion is "very important" in their life — the candidates are asking voters to choose between two dramatically different views of Christianity. Paxton's version insists conservative Christian

love God and abuse the immigrant. You can't love God and bully the outcast. You can't love God and oppress the poor."

"We spend so much time looking for God out there that we miss God in the person sitting right next to us in that neighbor who bears the divine image. In the face of a neighbor, we glimpse the face of God," he said.

Continue **Voters** Page 3

RELIGIOUS/NEWS

Christ, The Majestic Lamb

Revelation 5:1-14



Rev. Johnny Calvin Smith

Before the terrible judgments of the tribulation period (Revelation 6:1-19:21), the Apostle John witnessed Christ, the only One absolutely worthy to open the sealed book and to unfold the future judgments to be poured out on the earth. The awesome focus of chapter 5 is Christ Himself, the Redeemed Lamb. All heaven is depicted as worshipping Him, for He is absolutely worthy to open the seals to unfold what will happen on earth! As we read this marvelous chapter, let us continue to extol His name and truly magnify the awesome power of our Redeeming Lamb!

As you read this spectacular scene of heaven’s worship of the Lamb, your worship of Christ should be enhanced, for Christ is deserving of our total worship and adoration. As the majestic scene opens in chapter 5, let us observe the following outline: I. The Worthiness of the Lamb, Revelation 5:1-5; II. The Worship of the Lamb, Revelation 5:6-14.

The Worthiness of the Lamb –

Revelation 5:1-5

Immediately, John turns our attention to the scroll he saw in the Father’s right hand. A search was made to determine if someone was worthy to open the sealed scroll. The scrolls of John’s day were made of parchment (pieces of papyrus) that were sewn end to end and rolled up. Some scrolls were long, as many as thirty feet. The scroll John saw had writing on both sides, denoting a complete message. Nothing more was to be added (Revelation 22: 18-19). All that one needs to know regarding the future was sufficiently supplied in the scroll! From ancient times, the secrecy and security of the scroll’s message were sealed with a bit of clay or wax. The seal was a stamp that could be broken only by the addressee. When this seal was broken, it would reveal the terrible judgments of the great tribulation period (Revelation 6:1-19:21). Christ is the only One who could open this scroll, proving that He has the right to

judge (St. John 5:21-22). The Greek word for book (Revelation 5:1), or scroll, is the word from which we get our word “Bible” (biblion).

In verse 2, a strong angel emerged and spoke with a loud voice, saying: “Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?” The One who had the right to open the scroll would not only reveal what was written, but also show His right to loosen the seals. From verses 3-5, in the search, it was revealed that no man in heaven, on earth, or under the earth could open the book and look inside. The Apostle John began to weep because no one could open the sealed book! He wept because God’s prophetic program regarding the hereafter could not be revealed (Revelation 5:4). One of the elders in heaven came forward and consoled John, telling him not to weep. The elder informed John that Jesus was able to open the scroll. The One able to open the scroll was identified as “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” and “the Root of

David” (Revelation 5:5). Christ was worthy to open this scroll because He conquered death and sin. Christ is pictured here as both the Lion and the Lamb. As the Lamb, Christ came to earth to die for sin at His first coming; however, as the Lion, He will appear at His second coming to rule with power and authority.

The Worship of the Lamb – Revelation 5:6-14

In verses 6-7, John draws our attention to the Lamb standing before the throne with marks of having been slain. He is depicted as having seven horns and seven eyes, representing the seven spirits of God. The seven horns speak of the Lamb’s strength, and the seven eyes speak of the fullness of the Spirit of God. The Lamb, standing in the midst of the throne, took the scroll from God the Father (Revelation 5:7). In taking the scroll (Revelation 5:7-8), Christ has the right to judge sinful mankind, for God the Father “hath committed all judgment unto the Son” (St. John

5:22). As Christ took the seven sealed scroll, the twenty-four elders and four creatures bowed in worship. Each elder had a harp and a golden bowl filled with incense (v. 8). This incense is identified as the prayers of the saints. Both praise and prayer united in one great celebration of the Lamb who is worthy of praise! The elders and the creatures sang a new song in worship of Jesus Christ. The focus is on Christ, who opened the seals. He is worthy to be praised because of the great redemption He has wrought for all mankind! In verses 11-12, the elders were joined by the angels in worshipping the Lamb. Then in verses 13-14, every creature in heaven, and on earth and under the earth and on the sea and all that is in them joined in worship and praise to God. In total praise to God, the four creatures “said Amen” and the twenty-four elders fell prostrate in worship (v. 14).

“May God Bless!”

CONTINUED VOTERS PAGE 2

In Texas — where two-thirds of the adult population identifies as Christian and 45% say religion is “very important” in their life — the candidates are asking voters to choose between two dramatically different views of Christianity. Paxton’s version insists conservative Christian values — such as protecting the unborn and preserving the nation’s Judeo-Christian heritage — must prevail. Talarico’s Christianity celebrates pluralism, affirms LGBTQ+ individuals and believes God transcends all partisan divisions.

“Scripture says you can’t love God and hate other people,” Talarico, a seminarian, said in a sermon posted on TikTok in December 2025. “You can’t love God and abuse the immigrant. You can’t love God and bully the outcast. You can’t love God and oppress the poor.”

“We spend so much time looking for God out there that we miss God in the person sitting right next to us, in that neighbor who bears the divine image. In the face of a neighbor, we glimpse the face of God,” he said.

Talarico has made the New Testament command to love thy neighbor a cen-

terpiece of his campaign. That focus has also given Paxton ammunition to portray his opponent as out of touch with Texas values and Scripture.

“So, what are the differences between me and my opponent?” Paxton said in a July campaign rally in McAllen in a now viral X clip. “I’m sure you know some of them. One of them is family.”

“Actually, let me talk about faith first,” he said. Paxton spent the next minute critiquing Talarico’s faith, stating the Democratic nominee had said that God is nonbinary and that supporting the oil and gas industry is un-Christian.

Talarico has dismissed the criticism, saying his statements were taken out of context, but the Republican continues to assail his

opponent’s faith, implying and outright stating that Talarico cannot be considered a Christian.

Talarico’s views, Paxton said on Patrick’s podcast, are “antithetical to historical Christian views” and “adopted from liberal theology that do not reflect what Scripture says.”

The message is a

Continue **Voters** Page 5

~ THEME: BACK TO SCHOOL
(Solution will appear in August 20 edition)

ACROSS	DOWN
1. Eye affliction	1. Dueler's blow
5. Mowgli to Raksha in "The Jungle Book"	2. Unit of pressure
8. Cured pork product, pl.	3. Jellystone Park denizen
12. *Every lap you run in gym class completes one	4. Amerigo to America
13. Ripped	5. *Plagiarize, technically speaking
14. Throw up	6. Heep of "David Copperfield"
15. Mythological ship	7. *School signaling device
16. Agitate	8. *Unwelcome load
17. Like worthless promise	9. Current unit, pl.
18. *"Go to the ____'s office"	10. Catcher's catcher
20. Hatchling's home	11. Chester White's home
21. Wasted on the young?	13. Three in one
22. "Amazing!"	14. Animal toxin
23. * ____ Core, academic standards	19. Poultry houses
26. *"Rock N'Roll High School" band	22. "It ____ a dark and stormy night..."
30. Be obliged	23. Too many in the kitchen?
31. Orange ____ tea, pl.	24. Baby owl
34. Of low density	25. Free-for-all
35. Earthenware pots	26. Tear
37. Farm layer	27. Lacking guile
38. Bagpipes sound, in Scotland	28. Baseball fielding mistake
39. Vessel's "spine"	29. "She ____ sea shells..."
40. "Mary, Mary quite contrary" place	32. * ____ Academy, online study aid
42. Radio knob, abbr.	33. " ____ the land of the free..."
43. Blended family family member	36. *Reading building blocks
45. Trotters	38. Stall call
47. Owned	40. *Character in Greek Mythology reading assignment
48. San Diego baseballer	41. Firstborn
50. Castle defense	44. Nymph chaser
52. *a.k.a. lunch room	46. Diminutive
56. " ____ little cubby all stuffed with fluff"	48. Like nature worshipping, e.g.
57. Knight's breastplate	49. Flamb
58. Bit of smoke	50. Dante's Beatrice, e.g.
59. Willow twig	51. Passing mention
60. Pub arrow	52. Relinquish
61. Popular street-lining trees	53. Small brook
62. Post-deductions amount	54. Doctrines
63. Opposite of WSW	55. Part of church
64. Somebody ____	56. *Unit in measurement and weight math lessons

Statepoint Crossword Puzzle
Theme: BACK TO SCHOOL

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
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City of Dallas Announces Milestone for the Community Park at Fair Park

DALLAS – The City of Dallas is proud to announce significant progress on the long-awaited Community Park at Fair Park, a transformative project that will bring approximately 10.5 acres of new green space, recreational amenities, and community-focused programming to South Dallas.

Today, the Dallas City Council authorized a tax increment financing (TIF) development agreement with Fair Park First, a non-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing Fair Park. The TIF development agreement will provide up to \$3 million in gap funding from the Deep Ellum TIF District to support the planned Community Park at Fair Park. The funding will help the project commence construction without further delay, prevent cost escalation associated with delays, maintain alignment with project timelines and stakeholder commitments, and leverage existing public and private investment.

Pursuant to the Fair Park Development and Fundraising Agreement between Fair Park First and the City of Dallas Park and Recrea-

tion Department that was authorized by City Council on February 25, 2026, and executed on April 23, 2026, the TIF district funding will be disbursed to the Dallas Foundation, which is acting as the financial steward on behalf of Fair Park First. This arrangement reinforces transparent financial management and long-term accountability while safeguarding the public’s contribution to the project.

City Council Member Adam Bazaldua, who represents Council District 7, shared his enthusiasm for the vote, stating:

“The Community Park at Fair Park is more than a capital project — it’s a commitment that delivers on a promise to the families and neighborhoods that have waited far too long for this meaningful investment. This park will create new opportunities, strengthen community pride, and build a healthier future for South Dallas. I appreciate my fellow Council Members, City staff, Fair Park First, the Dallas Foundation, and the philanthropic community for working together to

make this long anticipated vision a reality.”

The estimated total project cost is \$40.6 million. Fair Park First has already raised approximately \$33.1 million to fund the design, development, and construction of the Community Park. The funds raised comprise investments from a cross-section of federal, state, and philanthropic partners (including grants and private donations) and demonstrate a strong, shared commitment to delivering the park to the community. Fair Park First is confident it can secure the remaining funds through philanthropic sources.

“The Deep Ellum TIF District funding helps close a critical gap in the Community Park budget, ensuring we can deliver long-promised green space, connectivity, and amenities for the families who live, work, and play in this historic area,” said Dallas City Manager Kimberly Bizzor Tolbert.

“This is a powerful example of how Dallas can leverage innovative financing tools and strong pub-

lic-private partnerships to reinvest in our neighborhoods, honor our commitments, and build a more vibrant city for everyone.”

The Community Park at Fair Park is the signature project of the Fair Park Master Plan. It will serve as a civic anchor with shaded gathering spaces, playgrounds, walking trails, a market grove, fitness hub, native landscaping, community pavilion, and stage.

“The Community Park at Fair Park complements the new Fair Park Revitalization Strategy,” said John Jenkins, Director of the Park and Recreation Department. My leadership team and partner organizations are steadfast in pursuing new programming initiatives, including recurring community markets and expanded event recruitment, as part of a broader strategy to make Fair Park a more active destination year-round.

Construction on the Community Park at Fair Park is anticipated to begin later this year. Completion is slated for December 2028.



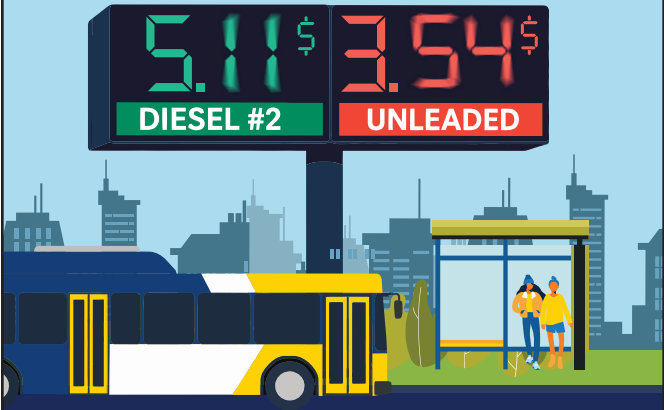
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