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Jackson to meet with Jena families today

Louisiana Gannett News Service

The Rev. Jesse Jackson will meet at 3 p.m. today with families of the "Jena Six," ministers and community officials at Good Pine Middle School in Jena, according to a press release from the Rainbow Push Coalition.

"There has to be a choice between the Christian spirit and political muscle," said Jackson in the press release. "There is a tug-of-war going on between adults: parents, lawyers, district attorneys, etc."

John Jenkins, father of Carwin Jones, also confirmed Jackson would be in Jena today.

Jones is one of six black students, who have become known as the "Jena Six," to be arrested and charged with attempted murder in connection with a December incident at Jena High School in which white student Justin Barker was left unconscious, bleeding and suffering from facial injuries.

Charges of attempted murder against Jones and Theo Shaw were reduced to aggravated second-degree battery and conspiracy to commit the same on Tuesday.

A jury trial for Jones is set for 9 a.m. on Jan. 28, while no trial date was set for Shaw.

The first defendant to go to trial, Mychal Bell, was convicted in June of aggravated second-degree battery and conspiracy to commit the same.

Also on Tuesday, Judge J.P. Mauffray Jr. with the 28th Judicial District Court threw out the charge of conspiracy to commit aggravated second-degree battery, saying the adult court should never have had jurisdiction for that charge but retained the other charge of aggravated second-degree battery.

The judge also denied all motions for a post-verdict acquittal.

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