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## Ala. seeks waiver on school reports

Numbers measure progress on NCLB

By **Brian Lyman**  
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The state Department of Education is seeking a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education so that it can implement a new program — a program that could bring an end to the state's enrollment in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reporting.

AYP numbers, which measure the achievement of school districts in meeting No Child Left Behind (NCLB) benchmarks, are due out for the state Thursday. If Washington approves Alabama's waiver — as it has with 33 other states — next week's AYP report will be the last, according to Sherrill Parris, ALSDE's deputy superintendent for teaching and learning.

The state already plans to roll out an alternative program called Plan 2020. Schools will begin implementing math standards in the program for the 2012-13 school year. English and language arts standards will follow in the 2013-14 year. Officials said they wanted the training to be more hands-on.

"I don't think Plan 2020 is a progression from NCLB," Harris said. "It's an entirely different vision for preparing our students in the world." Plan 2020 will endeavor to prepare all K-12 students to either enter an occupation or to take courses at two- or four-year colleges, without remedial course requirements. Students' progress would be determined by a number of factors, including

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Gabi Douglas won the women's gymnastics individual all-around gold medal. THOMAS COEX/AFP-GETTY IMAGES

## Douglas keeps her focus on gold

Gymnast's 2nd top medal for individual all-around

By **Mark Emmert**  
Gannett News Service

LONDON — With gold medal in hand, Gabby Douglas could finally let her coach down Thursday.

Yes, she was stealing glances at the scoreboard throughout her electrifying, history-making run toward the individual all-around gymnastics title at the London Olympics.

Can you blame her?

Every time she looked up, she found confirmation that she was the gymnast to beat on the world's biggest stage at North Greenwich Arena. And there was to be no turning back.

"I did not allow her to watch the scores. She followed the directions really well. I kept my eye on her every single minute, she did not look up," Liang Chow, who has trained Douglas for two years at his West Des Moines, Iowa, gym, had said earlier.

"I told her, all she needs to do is connect with me."

But Douglas, at the tail end of 90 minutes of media interviews afterward, had a slight surprise for her coach, seated just to her right. She was well aware of what the scores were.

"Chow and Martha (Karolyi) were telling me to focus. But I wanted to

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### RESTAURANT BUSINESS



Martha Hawkins hired Shin Jeong as general manager of her Martha's Place restaurant, which she said allows her to focus on her passion of cooking. THOMAS PEARSON/CONTRIBUTED

## PERFECT PAIRING

### Martha's Place finds recipe for success

By **Brad Harper**  
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At the new Martha's Place in east Montgomery, everyone brings something to the table — just not all of them literally.

A lot has changed about the business since its Sayre Street location closed after decades as a mainstay of downtown dining: there's more space, more parking and a new group of employees. But the recently reopened restaurant may have found its missing ingredient in Shin Jeong, who left his job at a Hyundai supplier to become the restaurant's general manager.

It's a job change that Jeong described as "a 180," but one that he has come to savor.

"You couldn't find a person who's better with numbers, and who loves what he does," owner Martha Hawkins said. "It's just a gift that he has to be able to work with numbers."

But he didn't want the job at first.

Jeong came to America nine years ago and, frustrated with being unable to speak the language, he enrolled in college in Arkansas, where he met his wife. He wound up in Alabama organizing schedules and deadlines for a Hyundai supplier, where the newlywed grew weary of the long hours.

A church friend pointed him toward the opportunity at the restaurant, but he wasn't interested.

"I didn't actually have any passion for restaurants or cooking," he said. "It's a different thing from what (Hawkins) does, and she has a passion about it. My passion is running the business, getting it operating, communicating with others and how to manage those things."

It wasn't until Jeong learned more about Hawkins and her work as an author and soul food maven that he changed his mind.

That decision played a key role in the new restaurant's success, said Jerry Kyser, who owns the location in Somerset shopping center on Atlanta High-

way.

"(Jeong) handles the bookkeeping and she does her thing — which is her best thing — her cooking and her personality and her following," Kyser said. "Restaurants are pretty detailed, and you have to stay on top of your game all the way around. It's been a win-win for everybody so far."

Hawkins said that in the past she "tried to do all of this stuff" by herself, but Jeong's work at the restaurant has allowed her to spend more time with her real passion.

"Cooking is an art, so I'm trying to teach that art to the people I have working for me — that it's all about loving what you do," she said. "If you don't love it, that'll show up in the food when you taste it."

Many of her regulars are retirees who live nearby and who used to have lunch at her downtown restaurant. Now

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Has tipping gotten out of hand?



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