

Thank you for taking the time to read my statement about my experience as a student and a former employee at Minneapolis Public schools. My name is LesLee Jackson my story is no different from those before me.

Born and raised in Minneapolis, I attended several schools. My first recall was attending Monroe elementary school in 1964, whereas the only Black child in my class pretty much tells how my education was and the story of my life in Minneapolis. After the 94 highway construction, the school was forcing families to move, my family moved to the Northside of Minneapolis, when I enrolled at John Hay and completed, then placed at Nokomis Jr High for the school system's desegregation program; readjusting to unfamiliar faces, I felt lost. I had a teacher in my sewing class who tore the line shirt from the seams and told me it was wrong to scold me in front of classmates; she alienated me from the other class members. I asked my aunt to help me, who made all my cousin's clothes for help. They wrote notes back and forth until my aunt came to the school where once the teacher saw my aunt was white, her attitude towards me changed. I dropped the class I was 12.

That was my first experience of dealing with the real world of racism, unbeknown to me at the time.

Recently I graduated from the U of Minnesota, where I experiences discrimination, and the word nigger was used daily by professor staff and the students on the St Paul campus. I reported to the EOAA all the racism I endured daily and refused any knowledge of what was happening or the results; I came across some of the reports as no findings. I had a mental breakdown from the racism, reaching out for mental help to deal with what was happening to me using the school clinic; I felt that was a hopeless cause and asked what I did to these people to do and say things to you? I even went to the human rights who told me if I do not graduate from the university, we will get involved. I had to contact the board of regents to make it happen. I found the professors gave me lower grades to pass me because I was supposed to work in a group. I could not participate from assigned groups in the classroom because of the racism with no professors' support, while they stood by watching the abuse: from the students yelling at me in my face, saying nigger, sweeping their pencil shaving on me to coughing in my face in the class where I was the only Black student there. Here I was, a 59-year old disabled black woman treated unspeakably. I worked as a security guard, where I experience racism from my coworkers to the students I was assigned to ensure safety.

I sought a lawyer to sue; nobody wanted to go against the University of Minnesota.

Last year I was employed at the Minneapolis Public schools Jenny Lind in North Minneapolis; there, I was yelled at by the assistant principal, "I was not wanted there nor anything that I have to offer" in the hallway until I was close to my leaving the building. I was working as an afterschool aide. I created hands-on teaching the children about air monitors and rain gauge and connecting with the State of Minnesota pollution control and the National weather bureau radar system. Placing them there to monitor the air quality, the school has a high asthma rate in the school system. Because of what I was doing, I received a certification from the American Lung Association in Minnesota. The school has triggers to increase asthma attacks. Not only had the woman scream in my face and told me I would never work at MPS again by the supervisor of the afterschool program who did not want to hear,

regardless of the verbal abuse from the assistant principal, but she also refused to listen and the HR as well. I was bumped so hard by the social worker while walking down the hall it knocked me off balance. The same woman with my supervisor laughed about the children calling each other nigger. When I asked for a parent number to report the child's behavior, I was refused and told the child needed to be protected. The child punch and another so hard the child fell to the ground crying, and the staff stated her concern was the, not the injured child. I tried to report what I witness to the EOAA; the man there told me that was not an issue, only what happened to me.

The Minneapolis school system's violence and racism are unbelievable. A full investigation into the truth of how Black educators are treated in the school systems in Minnesota needs done as well as reports made to the EOAA

Thank you again for your time

LesLee Jackson