

Dane County Criminal Justice Council

Personal Statement of Barbie Jackson, Co-chair MOSES Racial Justice for All Children Task Force
February 25, 2021

Hello. Again, I apologize for the delay in my comments - I'm afraid I confused the agenda order with the CJC-Racial Disparities agenda on Tuesday.

I am Barbie Jackson, Co-chair of MOSES Racial Justice for All Children Task Force, speaking as an individual about considerations for a Community Justice Center.

Last month I spoke to the Racial Disparities Subcommittee to strongly support inclusion of youth considerations in the center concept and design. The earliest possible delivery of services to our youth is essential to their successful lives and success in our community.

In the Community Conversations report, a significant number of the focus groups advocated for the Center to include root causes within its purview. An example of this advocacy provided by the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute stated:

It was suggested that the following services be considered: Affordable Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health Service, Child Care, Social Services, [etc.]

Another example of this advocacy provided by Families Back to the Table, Inc., stated that:

Addressing the origin of the problems will produce better outcomes than ignoring the origins. We know that systemic racism exists and [we] must . . . dismantle it with practices, policies, and training.

I was also glad to hear today's speakers speak to the importance of prevention and community support.

In addition to the necessary full attention to racial justice issues and the engagement of impacted communities, particularly our communities of color, it is essential that significant attention be given to ameliorate conditions that contribute to the root causes in the pipeline to the criminal justice system. This is critical to the success of the proposed Center.

The CJC has done well to engage diverse community representatives in consideration of how to proceed. MOSES is "committed to seeking justice by raising the voices of those who are most negatively impacted by structural racism and often not heard. We value the voices of those who are currently and previously incarcerated individuals, their families, people of color, people living in poverty, and those burdened with physical, emotional, or mental health issues."

As the CJC pursues the potential development of a Community Justice Center, on behalf of MOSES I applaud this beginning to community engagement in this process, and encourage continued engagement and incorporation of community recommendations into your plans.

Finally, DA Ozanne, I'm happy to hear you once again state your strong support for prevention in the home and with our families and children.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.