



FFLIC

Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children

CLOSING PRISONS | REFORMING SCHOOLS | BUILDING COMMUNITIES | FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE



About Us

Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC) is a grassroots, state-wide membership-based inter-generational organization working to transform the systems that fuel incarceration and abolish the school-to-prison pipeline. As youth, mothers and fathers, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles and allies we seek to use leadership development, organizing, and advocacy to build strong, powerful families and communities and to fight for justice for our children and our communities.

Our Work

For 17 years, FFLIC has been holding decision makers accountable and ensuring youth can thrive by advocating for systemic policy reforms at schools all the way to the State Capitol. Focusing on juvenile justice reform and education justice, we are tackling the problem of school pushout and the school-to-prison pipeline through developing the leadership of young people through programs like Black Man Rising Movement (ages 13-24) and Black Girls Rising Movement (ages 10-17) and developing the leadership of parents in our Parent Leadership Advocacy Network (PLAN). This multigenerational, multi-strategy approach ensures we are building up our entire communities to disrupt the school to prison pipeline.



2017 - 2018 Annual Report

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Act 1225: Then & Now
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ACT 1225

STOPPING THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

THEN, NOW and MOVING FORWARD

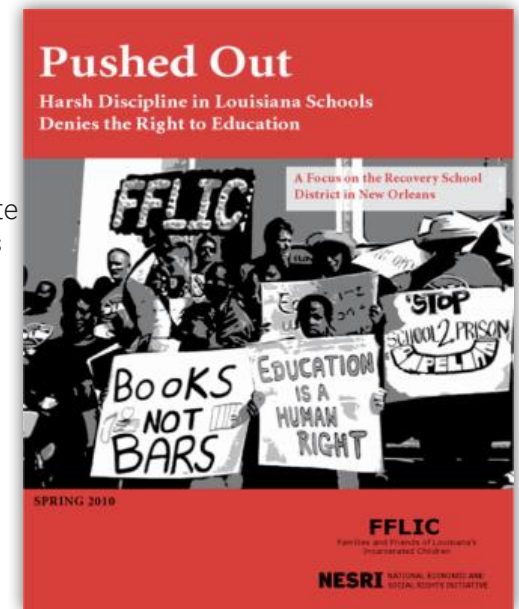
2003 - FFLIC launched the "Close Tallulah Now!" Campaign demanding the death of the brutal Tallulah Correctional Center for Youth (TCCY). As part of the campaign, FFLIC continued to assert pressure on the Louisiana legislature to bring about reform to overhaul the juvenile justice system and in May 2003, the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2003 - Act 1225¹ was passed bringing about sweeping reforms that included the closure of TCCY and required the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to develop a "Model Master Plan" to develop guidelines for revising school zero tolerance policies to end referrals to the juvenile justice system, improving classroom management using positive behavior supports and other effective disciplinary tools and report to the Juvenile Justice Reform Act Implementation Commission (JJRAIC) – by March 2004. JJRAIC was enacted after the passing of Act 1225 and they have been responsible for the oversight of reform efforts in the state. Since 2003 FFLIC's work has been vital in ensuring that the historical context of Act 1225 is presented at tables to keep lawmakers, coalitions, organizations, and new groups and individuals on the road to reform.



The signing of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2003 - Act 1225

2009 - FFLIC and NESRI produced a report: "Pushed Out: Harsh Discipline in Louisiana Schools Denies the Right to Education"² which reported, in Louisiana during the 2009-2010 school year 30% of the in-school suspensions were for willful disobedience. 21% of the out-of school suspensions were for willful disobedience³; among other disturbing statistics. Which led to educating lawmakers and former Senator Sharon Weston-Broome began the fight to end suspensions for willful disobedience.

2010 – FFLIC worked with Senator Sharon Weston-Broome to pass Act 136⁴ to provide relative to the model master plan as per Act 1225 for improving behavior and discipline within schools; to require certain classroom management training be provided to certain school personnel. Senate Concurrent Resolution 101 (SCR 101)⁵ was also authored to urge and request BESE to establish a task force to review statutory provisions relative to student discipline and make recommendations for revisions that will result in student discipline laws that are comprehensive, fair, consistent, and designed to promote a conducive learning environment. This task force worked on developing laws that would modify zero tolerance policies as per Act 1225 and the task force developed legislation that lead to Senate Bill 67 (SB 67).



2011 - FFLIC led the above stated task force that submitted a written report containing findings and recommendations, including a proposed revision of the current status on student discipline which lead the push for SB 67 to be amended and reenact Revised Statute 17:416 relative to the discipline of students; to provide for the discipline of certain public school students upon removal from a classroom; to provide for implementation of certain disciplinary measures; to require city, parish, and other local public school boards to adopt certain rules relative to suspensions; to require such school boards to publish student discipline policies and other specified information on their websites; to provide relative to in-school and out-of-school suspensions for certain violations; to provide relative to expulsion hearings; to provide for definitions; and to provide for related matters. SB 67⁶ won bi-partisan support but was veted by Governor Bobby Jindal. FFLIC also worked with the National Dignity in Schools Campaign to go to Washington, D.C. to conduct participatory community lead policy

A Failing System Reminiscent of Tallulah



"Do not put the fate of your children into anyone else's hands and trust them to fight like you will fight." - Assate, FFLIC member and parent of a child in the system

¹ Act 1225 - <http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=819419> pg. 13

² http://www.fflic.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Pushed_Out_Report.pdf

³ Louisiana Department of Education (2010). Discipline Actions and Ethnicity by Reason Code.

⁴ Act 136 - <http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=715479>

⁵ SCR 101 – Senator Duplessis <http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=712734>

⁶ SB 67 - <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=758787>

recommendations resulting in a National Resolution to end school pushouts, influencing the Federal Guidelines⁷ on school climate, which became part of the BESE response to SCR 134 in 2015. We also worked on a national model school discipline code⁸, with Dignity in Schools that we are trying to get individual schools to implement and provided input on the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) re-authorization and My Brother's Keeper Initiatives.

2014 – FFLIC educated Senator Weston-Broome to develop SCR 134⁹ to urge and request BESE to examine and consider the status of school suspensions and expulsions, as well as plans to revise current school discipline policies in response to the "Supportive School Discipline Initiative" launched by the United States departments of Education and Justice. We also worked on Senate Resolution 174 (SR 174) to urge and request BESE to review and consider adopting the United States Department of Education's "Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline" as a master plan for supporting student behavior and discipline¹⁰.

2015 – FFLIC continued to educate Senator Weston-Broome on zero tolerance policies negatively impacting youth in the state. Senator Weston-Broome authored legislation that led to the passing of Act 248¹¹ relative to discipline of students; to prohibit the suspension or expulsion of students in grades prekindergarten through five from school or from riding a school bus for uniform violations; to provide for measures to address unacceptable behavior; and to provide for related matters. Several other Senate Resolutions relative to discipline of students were

enrolled including: SR 130¹² to urge and request BESE and the state Department of Education (DOE) to study the effectiveness of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports program in Louisiana public schools; SR 167¹³ directs public elementary school governing authorities to report to DOE regarding alternative discipline strategies utilized prior to suspending or expelling students in grades Pre-K through five out of school with no response.

2016 – FFLIC educated Representative Joseph Bouie, Jr. on zero tolerance policies negatively impacting youth in the state and Rep. Bouie, Jr. subsequently authored and put forth House Bill 372 (HB 372)¹⁴ which unfortunately didn't matriculate through the House Education Committee. Act 522¹⁵ created an Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline (ACSBD). The purpose of the ACSBD is to provide advice and guidance to the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state Department of Education regarding best practices in providing support to public school governing authorities in the adoption and implementation of each school's master plan for student behavior and discipline as provided in R.S. § 17:252. Unfortunately, FFLIC was not included on this council and for the last two years the council has been working on amending the 2011 legislation discussed earlier that was vetoed by then Governor Jindal.



⁷ US Department of Education-<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/files/discipline-faq-english.pdf>
⁸ DSC Model Code - http://www.ffclic.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/DSC_Model_Code.pdf
⁹ SCR 134 - <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=912610> it's response: http://www.louisianapartner-ship.org/resources/Documents/AF_6.1_SCR_134_Response2014.pdf
¹⁰ SR 174 - <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=909980>
¹¹ Act 248 - <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=960304>

¹² SR 130- <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=954722>, Response: http://www.louisianapartner-ship.org/resources/Documents/AF_7.2_Response_to_SR%20130_2015_final.pdf
¹³ SR 167 - <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=954549>
¹⁴ HB 372 - <https://legiscan.com/LA/text/HB372/id/1357629/Louisiana-2016-HB372-Introduced.pdf>
¹⁵ Act 522 - https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/advisory-council/advisory-council-on-student-behavior-discipline_act-522---2016-annual-report.pdf?sfvrsn=3

NOW

At our annual membership meeting in September 2017 our families from across the state began laying the ground work for our 2018 campaign and strategies needed in their communities to change the climate and policies in the state of Louisiana from ones that oppresses our youth to ones that uplift and provide equity and justice for our children and families. 2018 marks 15 years since Act 1225 was passed. As we met, the resounding question in the room was “What has changed since the closing of Tallulah?” “How are our children doing?” Over the past 17 years the common denominator that FFLIC has identified in working with its families whose children are in prison is that more than 90% of them 1) live in poverty; 2) lack quality health care/mental health; and 3) lack quality education opportunities. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation 2016 Kids Count report, Louisiana ranks 49th for children’s health; 47th in education and 49th for economic well-being. Our families realized that even with the many wins FFLIC has achieved over the past 15 years, there is still a lot more work to do in remedying these issues that put children at risk making them more susceptible to incarceration. Our parents discussed the need to have seats on child serving organizations/agencies to guide and keep systems focused on the issue at hand – our children. As result of our annual meeting, in January 2018 FFLIC launched the “Let Kids Be Kids” campaign establishing a 3-point platform demanding that Louisiana’s leaders begin to address the crises of poverty, mental health and education as they continue to intersect and rob our children of the opportunity to reach their full potential. The platform makes it easier for our youth and parents to tell their story in a more holistic and succinct manner when sitting at tables.

In our efforts to bring about state-wide policy reform to positively impact the over 70,000 students across the state of Louisiana, during the 2018 Louisiana Legislative Session, FFLIC educated various legislators within FFLIC’s membership base and/or chapter areas on our work to amend the state student discipline law to follow the mandate of Act 1225 to include positive behavioral supports and restorative justice practices as alternatives to suspensions and expulsions for willful disobedience. Senator Wesley Bishop re-authored the 2011 and 2016 legislation restructuring the language to bring it in line with what the ACSBD had worked on and also adding charter schools to the bill. Senator Bishop sensitive to family’s plight brought forth legislation to support our issues by way of SB 465. During FFLIC’s Day at the Capitol on April 19, 2018, FFLIC and our families testified about how zero tolerance policies has put their children in contact with the juvenile justice system. The ACSBD, after purportedly spending 150 hours developing more comprehensive legislation, were unprepared to submit the amendments for the 2018 legislative session. Members of the ACSBD opposed Senator Bishop’s legislation and requested additional time to finalize their recommendations for legislation.

Unfortunately, the Senate Committee ruled to deferred the legislation another year per the ACSBD’s request. The Senate Committee struck all of Senator Bishop’s requested amendments but Senator Bishop advocated for FFLIC to be added to the ACSBD and the Senate Committee approved. This is a significant win for youth as having FFLIC’s state-wide family and youth voice as well as historical context at the table will keep the

council on track with reforms that will remove zero tolerance policies and push for more restorative practices that many members of the council are not in favor of.

During the legislative session, FFLIC also educated Representative Joseph Bouie on the continued lack of implementation and oversight by the JJRAIC. Representative Bouie re-authored the juvenile justice reform legislation through House Bill 726 (HB726) to add FFLIC as a representative for families and children on the JJRAIC. A seat for FFLIC on the JJRAIC will allow us to directly push for full implementation of Act 1225 as by doing so there could be significant reduction in incarceration rates, suspensions, expulsions, pushouts, and school arrests. HB726 was unanimously approved by the House and Senate committees and on May 15, 2018 Governor John Bel Edwards signed HB726 which is now referred to as “Act 179”¹⁶. Our newly appointed seats on the JJRAIC, ACSBD, coupled with our current seats on the New Orleans Children Youth and Planning Board and the Louisiana Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board has created an exciting and unique opportunity to work more collaboratively with our foundation partners as well as community partners.

MOVING FORWARD

FFLIC has been on the forefront of holistic reforms for over 16 years building power and connecting dots that other people don’t yet have access to. With various seats at decision making tables, FFLIC has positioned itself to be in a position of power to gather needed information, push for various legislation and hold systems accountable.

FFLIC with the support of the Power Coalition is working to build an Act 1225 site map in order to keep the original intent of the legislation as well as get current information on any of the revised statutes. A quick view of the map is shown on the following page.

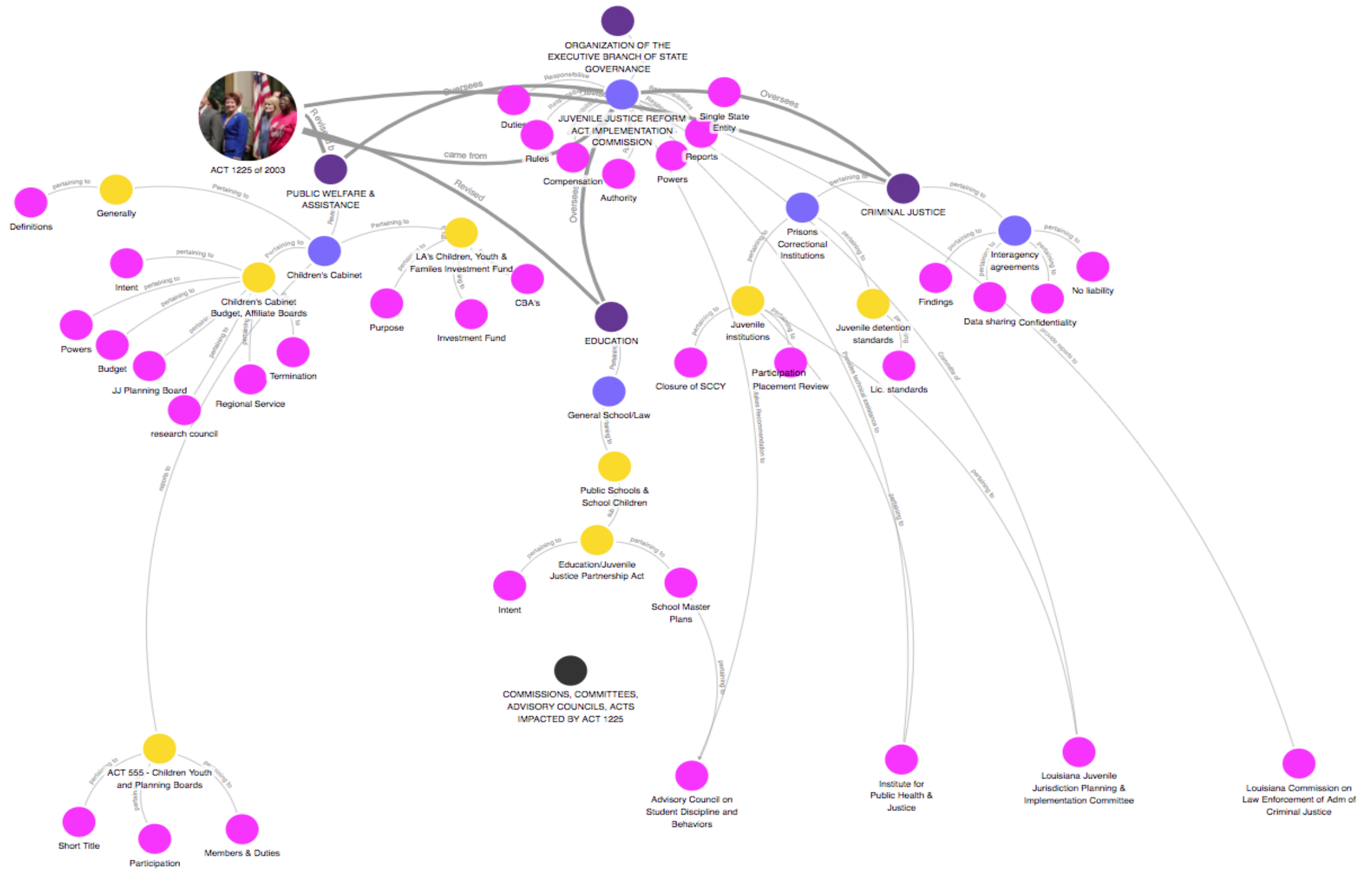
This interactive map can be found on FFLIC’s website where you can click on the links to track the history of the Act 1225 legislation. We will use the map to continue to educate our members, staff, the JJRAIC and legislators moving forward in order to stay on the road to reform.

We are also working to consolidate historical reform activities as well as shed light on the amount of funding that has been expended on reforms, yet our children are still suffering. According to a report released by the International Group Save the Children, “Louisiana is a state where childhood is the most threatened in the country.”¹⁷

¹⁶ Act 179 - <http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1098000>

¹⁷ International Group Save the Children - <https://www.savethechildren.org/us/about-us/resource-library/end-of-childhood>

Juvenile Justice Reform of 2003 Act 1225 Mapping



In 2019 FFLIC will release a report that shares parent and children experiences and recommendations for community accountability for the issues that keep Louisiana ranking last in the country in areas of poverty, education, and mental health, keeping children at risk of the prison industrial complex. The report, which will include a 3-point platform based on stories collected over the last 16 years, will be used to educate policymakers on child-centered approaches, including alternatives to suspensions, and to create more accountable schools. To address the immediate needs of our families in crisis, we are also seeking funding to create a Toolkit for advocating for children in schools and host educational advocacy clinics across New Orleans. The report, toolkit, and clinics will build on FFLIC's value of families as the experts on their lives and work toward our overall mission of divesting resources from the juvenile justice system and investing back into the things our communities need.



The goal of our report is to target suspensions for willful disobedience as one of the most egregious examples of the ways oppressive school policies are used arbitrarily and discriminatorily against Black and Brown students. A recent example of this is FFLIC worked with a mom whose son had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and was suspended from school for a uniform violation. The student had an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and a paraprofessional was attending classes with him to ensure his special needs were being met. However, the school decided to pull the para from this young man (black) to assist other students (white) who were deemed as needing more assistance. As a result, the school would place this young man in a school closet when the teacher felt

he was acting out or disrupting class. No child should ever be locked in a closet as a way to address behavioral issues. Our report will highlight many of the other failings of our school system as privatized charter models are being lifted up by the Trump Administration



and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and states are considering arming teachers and beefing up school security which will only further push Black and Brown youth out of schools.

The goal of the toolkit and clinics is to provide additional support to the organization by going directly into the community to train parents on the tools needed to successfully advocate for their children and increasing FFLIC's capacity to provide peer to peer advocacy for parents who are experiencing school pushout.



This is an extremely exciting time for FFLIC and as we take this journey to ensure our children receive every opportunity to succeed, we are asking our community members, allies and lawmakers to join with FFLIC to keep Louisiana on the road to reform.

*Never doubt that a small group of
thoughtful, committed citizens
can change the world.*

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

-Margaret Mead

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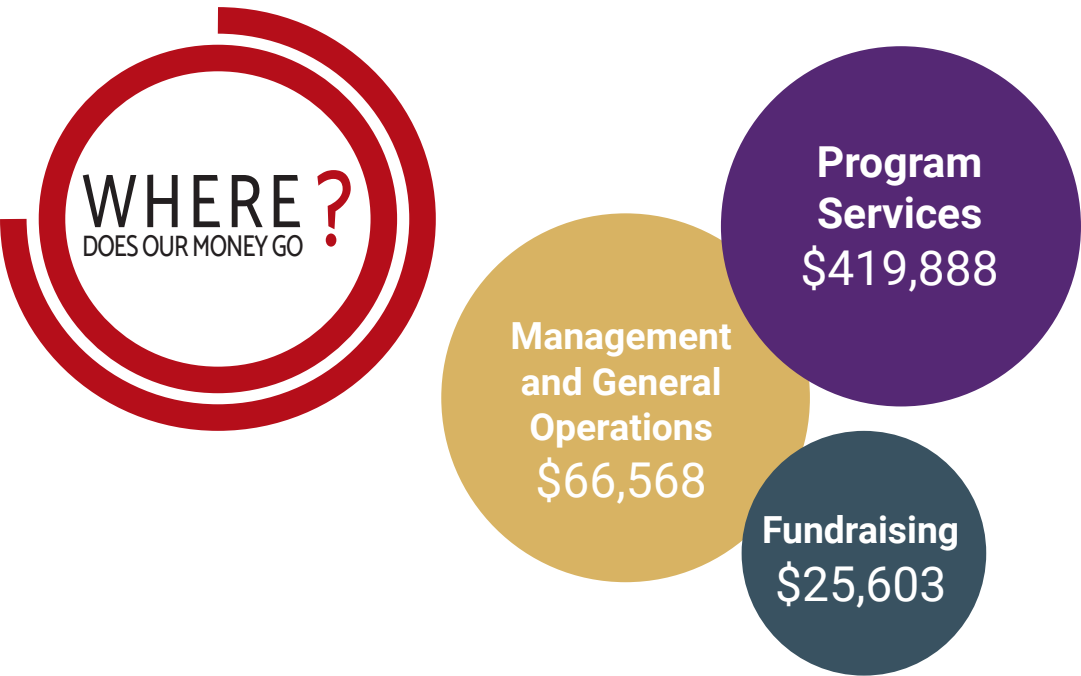
Our 2018 Board of Directors

We want to thank our dedicated board members for the time, talent and expertise they have given to ensure FFLIC is financially stable and able to continue to develop our leaders and fight for our communities.

- James Bell, Esq., Board Chair
William Rodriguez, M.S., J.D., Treasurer
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Our Finances 2017*

**Note that 2017 financials are currently under audit and the totals listed below may adjust slightly.*





BLACK MAN RISING



MOVEMENT

