



FFLIC

8 TIPS FOR DEALING WITH SCHOOLS



A big part of working for your child is knowing when and how to push back on the school. But there are some key tools to use that can make you more effective.

1) Know your rights! By knowing your rights and what should happen, even when schools don't understand the rules or play by the rules, you will have an advantage.

2) Gather information! Keep all important documents the school gives you, such as permission slips, attendance, suspension notices, and any emails and online correspondence that teachers and administrators send you. Put them in a safe place until the end of the school year.

3) Keep records! Make sure you keep a record of all meetings and interactions. Keep a journal to take notes and write dates of events. Print out all emails that the schools sends, and keep all school letters and correspondences in a folder.

4) Stay informed! Know where you can get school updates and seek out information on updated policies within your school and the school system. Ask your child for updates on a situation or about the school in general.

5) Be assertive, but keep your cool! Asking for what you want and deserve is your right. But even if someone deserves to be yelled at, they won't give you what you want if you're screaming at them. Before going in, get a clear mind. It's natural to get angry, but it can also be harmful to our cause.

6) Listen carefully! There is a lot of good information that can be collected at a meeting with a school administrator or while talking to your child about their situation. Taking notes while you're having a conversation is a great way to remember what they said and it gives you a tool to build your case. Send a follow up email with your notes to the person you met with. If taking written notes doesn't work for you, turn on your cell phone recorder to listen to later and save the recording for future use with other documentation/notes you have gathered.

7) Don't assume anything! Don't be afraid to ask questions! It's okay to not know something or to get it wrong. Ask for clarification or to have something explained or repeated as many times as you need. These systems want to keep us in the dark, so we have to fight against that by asking, asking, and asking some more.

8) Collaborate! Even though you may not agree with an action by the school or system, you can look at it with the intention of improving or changing it. You can cooperate without agreeing. Remember: you are educating the school about your child, and you want them on your side.



Need help advocating for your child?

Call or Email 504-708-8376 or fflic@fflic.org