



# FFLIC INSTITUTIONS



Understanding the system and working with the school or with the system is usually the first line of defense. We can work with different parts of the school (such as teachers, counselors, and administrators) to get information and be a force or presence. While it may feel like the school is the enemy, it's important that we try to work with them to get the outcomes we want. Schools, and all the people within it, have a great impact on our children, so it's our job to know how they should be working to support your child's future, and to hold them to it.

## **Beyond the school**

Advocating within the institution goes beyond the school, because we know this system is larger than just your child's school. The city, the state, and the nation all have a hand in creating and upholding the practices that let our children get locked up. So it's critical that we use our power to advocate within these systems too, and one of the tools we have is voting.

## ***What you might need:***

- Knowledge/information about the issues, system, and your rights
- Voting registration
- Your policymakers
- Advocacy organizations
- Outside resources
- An advocate or lawyer

## **Voting officials in/out of our institutions**

We must look to our elected officials for accountability in government. All of them are responsible on some level to the people who voted for them. Are they doing what they said they would? We elect people to represent our goals and vision for our communities, and we should stay informed on where they stand on the issues that concern us. Voting allows us to have a say in who is speaking on our behalf, and it is a critical part of advocacy.

We don't always get to have the people we want representing us, but we always have the tools to communicate to the elected official how we would like them to act. You can call or email any of your representatives, from Orleans Parish School Board members to the Governor. Remember, they work for the people, or they should anyway, and it's up to us to make sure they do their job.

Do you notice a pattern? We are the ones that hold institutions accountable and make sure they are acting in our best interests. Remember, they want our votes so they are more likely to act in our favor if they know what their voters want to see happen in their community. Look up your local, state, and federal representatives. You can do so easily on <http://myreps.datamade.us>.

**Need help advocating for your child?**

**Call or Email 504-708-8376 or [fflic@fflic.org](mailto:fflic@fflic.org)**