



FFLIC

HOW CAN FFLIC SUPPORT MY ADVOCACY?



If you are having an issue with your school, FFLIC wants to help. We can help you figure out the rules of the game so that you can win the game. Ideally, our schools would also want to address a child's challenges from a more holistic view, but currently that is not happening. It's probably better to assume that schools are not working for your child, and begin your work there. Although this may seem defensive or pessimistic, we have to remember that if we don't fight for our child, no one else will. This is why we begin with a **"Whole Child Check-In."**

Common scenarios

Additionally, FFLIC sees some common scenarios that directly relate to the education system's inability and/or unwillingness to let kids be kids. For that reason, we have focused on helping parents deal with the school system in specific situations that are directly related to the mental health, education, and poverty challenges they face every day.

In our toolkit we address three main topics:

- 1) Discipline
- 2) Fees
- 3) Other Critical Information

Additionally, we recommend reading: FFLIC's **"8 Tips For Dealing with Schools."**



Whole Child Check-In

Any time a challenge with the school arises, FFLIC recommends doing a "Whole Child Check-In." This helps us identify the types of support the child needs in order to overcome these challenges at school. The purpose of this assessment is to look for the aspects of a situation that may be creating the challenge. This exercise can be done in the spirit of finding a solution, not placing blame or feeling like you as a parent are doing something wrong. The checklist asks you to think about the child's health and relationship with the school, you as a parent and other loved ones, their environment, and themselves.



Need help advocating for your child?

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



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Discipline

Discipline issues are common. Sometimes these are caused by a child's misbehavior, and other times by the school system's inability or unwillingness to let kids be kids. Many times, it is a combination of both. This is why a Whole Child Check-In is recommended in order to assess all of the things that can contribute to discipline issues. Additionally, we offer guidance with the following discipline issues:

- What are my rights in the case of suspension and expulsion?
- Infographic: I was informed my child will be suspended or expelled.
- Infographic: How do I challenge a suspension or expulsion?
- Infographic: The school contacted me about a behavior issue with my child and/or my child's discipline case has been referred to FINS and/or Municipal Court.
- Infographic: My child's case was referred to FINS and/or Municipal Court because of truancy, absence, or tardy.

Fees

When we think about public education, we think it should be free, right? Unfortunately though, that really isn't the case in the New Orleans charter school system. Schools charge a number of fees ranging from a few hundred to a couple thousand dollars. Charter schools often ask parents to pay for school uniforms, supplies, extra-curricular activities, accelerated learning, and before-and-after-school programs.

But even though schools can legally charge fees for some things, they aren't supposed to charge for the education itself. Additionally, in most cases, there must be a waiver available. If you are a parent struggling to pay fees, it is important to know what a school can and can't charge for, and what your rights are in regards to asking for a waiver. We offer guidance with the following:

- Infographic: I'm having trouble paying school fees.

Other critical information

It is important for you and the school to share information about your child. You both have a responsibility to communicate with each other about the child's educational progress and needs. Additionally, sometimes the school is not aware of the parent's right to access records—such as those related to attendance, grades, and behavior issues—and/or their responsibilities to provide those records within timeframes set by law. Other times, the school fails to provide a parent/guardian with critical information. For example, if a nurse offers your child medical treatment or medication, the school should let you know. It is important for you to know the school's and your own responsibilities.

- Infographic: I want access to my child's school records.
- Infographic: The school failed to notify me....