



THANKFUL

PREPARED WITH KNOWLEDGE & CONFIDENT TO ADVOCATE

I will begin by saying I am truly thankful for Ms. Laura and the knowledge and confidence she gave me. I contacted Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans a few hours before my children's Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) and left a voicemail. I expected to hear back from someone, but not as promptly as I did. Ms. Laura returned my call quickly.

Both of my children were suspended. I received no notification from the school stating that they were suspended. I only knew something once they informed me that they were suspended. I did not know what to do or where to go. The school principal stated that a hearing meeting would occur and I would be notified. They notified me of the hearing through an old email address, not the one I provided to them three years ago and the one they have used to communicate with me for the last three years. So, I asked for another hearing meeting and was turned down. My children's rights were being violated due to them not providing them the opportunity for their hearing. The school district had already made their decision to send them both to an alternative school.

Ms. Laura stayed on the phone with me, preparing me for the MDR meeting I was getting ready to have in a couple of hours. She explained the setup of the meeting and the questions that would be asked per the disciplinary action. We talked about it, and she pointed out many things I did not realize.

I was still nervous I even asked her if she could come with me to the meeting, and she could not. She said, "*No, you're going to go to the meeting by yourself, and you're going to do wonderfully.*" Those words gave me the confidence I needed, and with everything she taught me, I felt like I knew exactly what I needed to know and do. Once I saw the meeting play out and the familiar questions asked, I knew I was prepared to advocate for my children.

When it was all over, I got justice for my child. I felt so good as a parent that I was able to help my child with the knowledge Ms. Laura gave me. I couldn't have done it without her. In addition, with the knowledge she gave me, I am now more confident to advocate for my children; what a good feeling.

I am Tatyana Frazier, a parent and an advocate for my children, and I wanted to share my story with you. Know that there are people like Ms. Laura who care. Before I spoke with her, I felt alone. Now I know I am not alone. With the knowledge she gave me, I will be more than okay!

Tatyana Frazier