

Dear Windward Families,

We are writing to bring your attention to a change in The Windward School's policy that will impact families working with attorneys to pursue tuition reimbursement in New York City. We also wanted to make you aware of our latest effort to help you with the process.

As our primary focus is educating our students and keeping our teachers in the classroom, participation from our CSE Office in the impartial hearing process has historically been considered on a case-by-case basis. Over the last few years, requests for Windward to participate in impartial hearings have steadily increased well beyond the resources of our CSE liaisons. After careful consideration, we have decided that in lieu of having Windward employees testify directly in these cases, we can more effectively support our families in their reimbursement lawsuits by providing detailed affidavits to describe how the Windward program addresses your children's needs. Whereas in the past, CSE liaisons might have provided direct testimony, please be clear that paragraph five of the Enrollment Contract states the following:

"...it is the School's policy not to make available School administrators, teachers or staff members to testify or prepare testimony relating to tuition reimbursement proceedings initiated by or against any local authority, including but not limited to the NY State Bd of Education. We agree that the School has no obligation to provide related materials to the State, and has no obligation to testify at related hearings conducted by the NY State Bd of Ed or other similar state or local entities."

So, to reiterate, beginning September 2022, the CSE liaisons will no longer be providing live, direct testimony. Our providing affidavits in support of Windward students will still be considered on a case-by-case basis, and families will still be expected to request from the Head of School that Windward participate in this way. In the event that our CSE liaisons submit an affidavit, they will be available to verify the affidavit on the record and respond to any cross-examination questions that relate to the testimony shared in the affidavit.

Further, to better assist you with what we know can be a burdensome reimbursement process, our information technology department is working to create a more streamlined approach for families to have direct access the documents that attorneys need – including enrollment contracts, tuition statements, student schedules, updated attendance reports, and other necessary documentation about a student's program at Windward. Families can access the CSE page on the myWindward Family Portal [here](#) in order to fill out any release forms and to stay informed about updates to the CSE process. It is our hope that giving parents direct access to documentation through the

myWindward Family Portal will expedite the CSE funding or reimbursement process.

These updates can be communicated with your attorneys as they work on filing your cases for the coming year.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Jamie Williamson  
Head of School