

Manchester-Essex Regional School District Admissions and Residency Policy

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All children of school age who reside in the member communities are entitled to attend the public schools. Certain non-resident children may be admitted under School Committee policies relating to School Choice. Students who are in foster care or qualify under McKinney Vento will be admitted in accordance with state regulations.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Children admitted as residents must actually reside in the town of Manchester or Essex. The residence of a minor child is presumed to be the legal, primary residence of the parent(s) or guardian(s) who have physical custody of the child.

“Residence” is the primary place where a person dwells permanently, not temporarily, and is the place that is the center of his or her domestic, social, and civic life. Home ownership or apartment rentals within the communities are not sufficient to establish residency unless these dwellings satisfy residency requirements for the individual attending the District. **Temporary or part-time residence in Manchester or Essex, solely for the purpose of attending the Manchester-Essex Regional School District, shall not be considered residency.**

In determining residency, Manchester-Essex Regional School District reserves its right to request a variety of documentation and to conduct investigation into where a student actually resides. Because residency can, and does, change for students and their families during the course of the academic year, MERSD may continue to verify residency after the commencement of classes. Also, MERSD may act upon anonymous tips it receives to conduct a residency verification investigation.

INVESTIGATION AND ENFORCEMENT

The School Committee has approved extensive residency investigation and enforcement strategies, including:

- Use of a residency investigator to pursue cases of suspected residency fraud;
- Random residency audits and spot-checks;
- Establishment of a protocol for families, staff, and students to report possible residency violations.

Any family under investigation may be required to present additional proofs of residency beyond those outlined above.

PENALTIES FOR POLICY VIOLATION

Families found to be in violation of the residency policy will face strict penalties, including:

- The child's immediate dismissal from school;
- Per diem fines for the educational and related services accessed as a nonresident, which are based on the number of days the student attended school and the average per pupil cost to the district; and,
- Possible legal action.

APPEALS

A student aggrieved by a dismissal due to failing to reside in MERSD may appeal this determination through the Superintendent of Schools, whose decision shall be final. The request to appeal must be made within 10 days of the dismissal notice. A student may be allowed to remain in school until the administrative appeal is completed.

SOURCE: MERSD

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [15:1G](#); [76:1](#); [76:5](#); [76:15](#); [76:15A](#)

603 CMR [26:01](#); [26:02](#); [26:03](#)

CROSS REFS: [JLCA](#), Physical Examination of Students

[JLCB](#), Inoculations of Students

JFBB, School Choice

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