

RESIDENTIAL REQUIREMENT FOR SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP

I. Definition of “Residency”

In order to attend the Cohasset Public Schools, a student must actually reside in the Town of Cohasset. The residence of a minor child is presumed to be the legal residence of the parent(s) or guardian(s) who have physical custody of the child. Any person eighteen (18) years of age or older may establish a residence separate and apart from his or her parents or guardians for school attendance purposes. In the event the residence dispute involves an 18-year-old student, all notices will be delivered to the student because at age 18 the student ceases to be a minor. “Residence” is the place where a person dwells permanently, not temporarily, and is the place that is the center of his or her domestic, social, and civil life.

Temporary residence in the Town of Cohasset, solely for the purpose of attending a Cohasset public school, shall not be considered residency. In determining residence, Cohasset Public Schools reserves its right to request a variety of documentation and to conduct an 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, Cohasset Public Schools may continue to verify residence after the commencement of classes. Also, Cohasset Public Schools may act upon anonymous and/or identified tips it receives to conduct a residency verification investigation.

A determination that a student is ineligible to attend Cohasset Public Schools due to a failure to reside in the Town of Cohasset will result in dismissal from Cohasset Public Schools.

A student who moves out of the district after October 1st of their senior year may be permitted to finish the school year in Cohasset. Parents will be responsible for providing transportation if transport is needed.

II. Verification of Cohasset Residency

Before any student is enrolled in a Cohasset public school, his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must provide three proofs of residency in the Town of Cohasset. All applicants must submit at least one document from each of the following three columns:

Column A	Column B	Column C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortgage Statement • Deed • Purchase and Sale Agreement • Property Tax Bill • Lease and record of most recent rent payment. You must submit both of these documents. 	<p><i>A utility bill or utility work order dated within the past 60 days, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas bill • Oil bill • Electric bill • Cable bill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid MA driver’s license • State Issued ID Card • Valid passport

Any parent or guardian who cannot provide one document from each of the three columns above due to unusual or extenuating circumstances should speak to the Director of Student Services. In addition to this documentation, the student’s parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign and submit a legal affidavit verifying residency of the parent(s) or guardian(s) in Cohasset.

If the student and his or her parent(s), or the student without his or her parent(s), is living with another adult in Cohasset, such as a grandparent, aunt or uncle, the Cohasset adult must provide three proofs of residency as outlined above. The Cohasset adult also must sign and submit a legal affidavit verifying his or her residency in Cohasset. Further, the Cohasset adult must sign and submit a legal affidavit certifying the residency of the student in Cohasset. Finally, the parent(s) must sign and submit the Transfer of Parental Educational Rights Form.

If the student is living with a legal guardian or foster parent, the legal guardian or foster parent must submit a copy of the guardianship decree or evidence from DSS naming him/her as foster parent, as applicable.

If the student's parent(s) reside in another city or town, the parent(s) must specify who the School District should contact in cases of emergency and other issues.

III. Notification

Families will be notified by the Cohasset Public Schools concerning residency requirements, verification procedures and consequences of falsifying residency through a variety of means, including but not limited to:

- Notice in the Cohasset Student-Parent Handbook and/or other publications;
- Letters to Parents;
- Notices to local newspapers, and other media outlets;
- Signage and notices in Cohasset Public Schools' Administrative Offices; and
- Postings on Cohasset Public Schools web sites.

IV. Enforcement

Any family and/or student suspected of living outside of Cohasset while attending Cohasset Public Schools shall be subject to investigation.

The Cohasset Public Schools shall retain the services of an investigative agency and/or enlist the assistance of the Cohasset Police Department, including, but not limited to the School Resource Officer, to pursue tips and conduct proactive investigations of residency declarations suspected to be fraudulent.

A residency investigation shall be conducted on families suspected of living outside the Town of Cohasset, including, but not limited to:

- Families who submit **incomplete, suspicious or contradictory proofs of address;**
- Families reported to be in violation of the residency policy through **anonymous and/or identified tips, and**
- Families whose **correspondence from Cohasset Public Schools is returned** by postal authorities to a school or central office because of invalid address. This correspondence may include student assignment notices, final report cards, and notices of school-based activities.

V. Penalties

Any student found to be in violation of this residency policy shall be dismissed immediately from the Cohasset Public Schools.

In addition to dismissal from school, the Cohasset Public Schools reserves the right to impose **additional penalties** on families in violation of this policy, including but not limited to:

- legal action;
- a fine based on the cost of educational services received during the period of non-residency, not to exceed the average per pupil expense in such school; and
- the withholding of Cohasset Public Schools-administered scholarships and prizes

Any exceptions to this policy will be at the discretion of the superintendent of the Cohasset Public Schools.

Reference: MGL Chapter 76, Section 5

Updated: March 13, 2018