

August 14, 2026

Dear MPS Community,

I am writing to share additional information and context regarding the recent *Boston Globe* articles about residency policy and practices in the Milton Public Schools.

The Milton Public Schools are deeply committed to implementing all of our policies fairly, consistently, and without discrimination. We do not target families for residency or any other matter based on the school their children attend, race, ethnicity, language, ability, or any other characteristic.

When I began my tenure as Interim Superintendent in June 2025, the School Committee asked me to strengthen systems and processes to ensure more consistent implementation of district policies, including our residency policy. One important goal of this work is to promote equity and consistency across the district.

As part of that effort, I made the decision to become personally involved in many residency cases. This has allowed me to better understand the process, monitor its implementation, and help ensure that cases are handled fairly and consistently. I receive regular updates from the district's residency coordinator, review cases that have been identified for further follow-up, and offer to speak or meet personally with any family at risk of removal for failure to establish residency.

Our current residency policy, updated by the School Committee in January 2025, outlines a fair and comprehensive process for identifying and investigating potentially inaccurate claims of Milton residency. [The full policy is available here.](#)

All families are required to establish Milton residency at several points: when a student enters kindergarten or the district at another entry point, and again before the transition years of grades three, six, and nine. Families must submit required documentation and sign an affidavit affirming that they currently reside at the address provided.

When a residency re-establishment submission is incomplete or contains information that requires clarification, the district follows up with the family. Depending on the circumstances, that follow-up may include a more thorough residency investigation. These procedures apply to all families, regardless of the school their children attend, race, ethnicity, or any other characteristic.

Home visits are one component that may be used when additional information is needed. Our school resource officers, who are employed by the Milton Police Department, are trained to conduct these visits professionally and respectfully. When appropriate, visits are conducted in plain clothes and unmarked vehicles and are generally scheduled with the family in advance. A home visit can provide families with an additional opportunity to demonstrate that they reside at

the address they have provided, particularly in circumstances where conventional documentation is difficult to obtain. For example, a landlord may be unwilling or unable to provide an affidavit confirming that a family rents a particular unit.

Residency is a complex and longstanding issue in Milton and many other communities. While a very small number of families may misrepresent their address in order to attend school in our district, the vast majority of cases are not fraudulent but rather involve ambiguity with respect to custody, shared housing, temporary relocation, or other circumstances that make residency re-establishment more challenging. We recognize that these situations can be stressful for families, and we strive to approach every case with care, empathy, and respect.

The School Committee and I have considered that there may be any number of factors that contribute to overrepresentation of some groups in residency investigations and removals. We reject any assertion that “racial profiling” is the only possible explanation for the disparities. At the same time, we recognize the concerns raised about disparities in residency investigations and removals and we are committed to understanding those disparities rather than making assumptions about their causes. We will continue to enhance our data collection and monitoring to gain a deeper understanding of the issues involved, both internal and external, and make adjustments to our procedures as needed. Our goal is to ensure that our residency process is not only consistent with district policy, but also fair, transparent, and equitable for every family.

This Wednesday, August 19 at 7pm, is the first School Committee meeting of the new school year and a residency overview and discussion will be on the agenda. I invite you to attend in person (at the old Fire Station building behind Town Hall) or watch the meeting on [Zoom, linked here](#) or [Milton Access TV](#) to gain more insight into our residency policy and practice.

We will continue to review and improve our processes whenever possible. Above all, we remain committed to ensuring that every child who is eligible to attend Milton Public Schools has equitable access to the outstanding public education our schools provide.

Respectfully,

John P. Phelan
Interim Superintendent
Milton Public Schools