

§ 115C-238.73. Criminal history record checks.

(a) As used in this section:

- (1) "Criminal history" means a county, state, or federal criminal history of conviction of a crime, whether a misdemeanor or a felony, that indicates an individual (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel or (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as school personnel. These crimes include the following North Carolina crimes contained in any of the following Articles of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes: Article 5A, Endangering Executive and Legislative, and Court Officers; Article 6, Homicide; Article 7B, Rape and Other Sex Offenses; Article 8, Assaults; Article 10, Kidnapping and Abduction; Article 13, Malicious Injury or Damage by Use of Explosive or Incendiary Device or Material; Article 14, Burglary and Other Housebreakings; Article 15, Arson and Other Burnings; Article 16, Larceny; Article 17, Robbery; Article 18, Embezzlement; Article 19, False Pretense and Cheats; Article 19A, Obtaining Property or Services by False or Fraudulent Use of Credit Device or Other Means; Article 20, Frauds; Article 21, Forgery; Article 26, Offenses Against Public Morality and Decency; Article 26A, Adult Establishments; Article 27, Prostitution; Article 28, Perjury; Article 29, Bribery; Article 31, Misconduct in Public Office; Article 35, Offenses Against the Public Peace; Article 36A, Riots and Civil Disorders; Article 39, Protection of Minors; and Article 60, Computer-Related Crime. These crimes also include possession or sale of drugs in violation of the North Carolina Controlled Substances Act, Article 5 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes, and alcohol-related offenses such as sale to underage persons in violation of G.S. 18B-302 or driving while impaired in violation of G.S. 20-138.1 through G.S. 20-138.5. In addition to the North Carolina crimes listed in this subdivision, such crimes also include similar crimes under federal law or under the laws of other states.
- (2) "School personnel" means any of the following:
 - a. Member of the board of directors.
 - b. Employee of the regional school.
 - c. Independent contractor or employee of an independent contractor of the regional school if the independent contractor carries out duties customarily performed by school personnel, whether paid with federal, State, local, or other funds, who has significant access to students or who has responsibility for the fiscal management of the regional school.

(b) The board of directors shall adopt a policy on whether and under what circumstances school personnel shall be required to be checked for a criminal history. The board of directors shall apply its policy uniformly in requiring school personnel to be checked for a criminal history. The board of directors may grant conditional approval of an application while the board of directors is checking a person's criminal history and making a decision based on the results of the check.

The board of directors shall not require school personnel to pay for the criminal history record check authorized under this section.

(c) The board of directors shall require the person to be checked by the State Bureau of Investigation (i) to be fingerprinted and to provide any additional information required by the State Bureau of Investigation to a person designated by the board of directors or to the local sheriff or the municipal police, whichever is more convenient for the person, and (ii) to sign a

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form consenting to the check of the criminal record and to the use of fingerprints and other identifying information required by the repositories. The board of directors shall consider refusal to consent when making employment decisions and decisions with regard to independent contractors. The fingerprints of the individual shall be used by the State Bureau of Investigation for a search of the State criminal history record file, and the State Bureau of Investigation shall forward a set of fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a national criminal history record check. The State Bureau of Investigation shall provide to the board of directors the criminal history from the State and National Repositories of Criminal Histories of any school personnel for which the board of directors requires a criminal history record check.

The board of directors shall not require school personnel to pay for the fingerprints authorized under this section.

(d) The board of directors shall review the criminal history it receives on an individual. The board of directors shall determine whether the results of the review indicate that the individual (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel or (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as school personnel and shall use the information when making employment decisions and decisions with regard to independent contractors. The board of directors shall make written findings with regard to how it used the information when making employment decisions and decisions with regard to independent contractors. The board of directors may delegate any of the duties in this subsection to the principal.

(e) The board of directors, or the principal if designated by the board of directors, shall provide to the State Board of Education the criminal history it receives on a person who is certificated, certified, or licensed by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall review the criminal history and determine whether the person's certificate or license should be revoked in accordance with State laws and rules regarding revocation.

(f) All the information received by the board of directors through the checking of the criminal history or by the State Board of Education in accordance with this section is privileged information and is not a public record but is for the exclusive use of the board of directors or the State Board of Education. The board of directors or the State Board of Education may destroy the information after it is used for the purposes authorized by this section after one calendar year.

(g) There shall be no liability for negligence on the part of the board of directors, or its employees, or the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, or any of their members or employees, individually or collectively, arising from any act taken or omission by any of them in carrying out the provisions of this section. The immunity established by this subsection shall not extend to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing that would otherwise be actionable. The immunity established by this subsection shall be deemed to have been waived to the extent of indemnification by insurance, indemnification under Articles 31A and 31B of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, and to the extent sovereign immunity is waived under the Tort Claims Act, as set forth in Article 31 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.

(h) Any applicant for employment who willfully furnishes, supplies, or otherwise gives false information on an employment application that is the basis for a criminal history record check under this section shall be guilty of a Class A1 misdemeanor.

(i) The board of directors may adopt a policy providing for uniform periodic checks of criminal history of employees. Boards of directors shall not require employees to pay for the criminal history check authorized under this subsection. A board of directors shall indicate, upon inquiry by any other local board of education, charter school, or regional school in the State as to the reason for an employee's resignation or dismissal. If a teacher's criminal history is relevant to a teacher's resignation, the board of directors shall report to the State Board of Education the

reason for an employee's resignation. (2011-241, s. 1; 2014-100, s. 17.1(o); 2015-181, s. 47; 2016-126, 4th Ex. Sess., s. 19; 2017-189, s. 4(b); 2023-134, s. 19F.4(kkk).)