



Background Check Policy

The purpose of this policy is to protect the safety, health and security of Bridgewater Academy (the "School") students, employees, and property.

The School will comply with the provisions of South Carolina Administrative Code 59-25-115(B) regarding employee background checks. In order to protect the health and safety of all students and protect the property of the School, the School requires (a) all potential employees, (b) all Board Members, and (b) any volunteers who will be given significant unsupervised access to a student in connection with the volunteer's assignment to submit to a criminal background check as a condition for employment or appointment. In addition, where reasonable cause exists, the School may require an existing employee or volunteer to submit to a criminal background check.

Board Member Background Checks

In order to be eligible to interview for a position on the Board of Directors, an individual must first complete a background check. Thereafter, Board Members must submit to a background check each time their term on the Board is renewed. The School will pay the cost of the background check for sitting Board Members. The Board will consider whether any convictions revealed on the background check should disqualify a Board Member or applicant for a Board position.

Individuals Subject to Background Checks

The School requires a criminal background check on each new employee who is licensed by the South Carolina Department of Education as required in connection with SCDOE's licensure requirements. Additionally, the School requires a criminal background check on each new non-SCDOE-licensed employee and each volunteer who will be given significant unsupervised access to a student in connection with the volunteer's assignment. Such employees and volunteers must submit to a new background check at least every two (2) years. Where reasonable cause exists, the School may require an existing employee or volunteer to submit to a criminal background check more often.

Conducting the Background Check

The applicant, volunteer, or employee shall receive written notice that the background check has been requested. The background check will include, but not be limited to a fingerprint check conducted by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and a national criminal records check supported by fingerprints and conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Payment for Background Check

Applicants for employment, including substitutes, shall be required to pay the designated costs of background checks. The School shall pay the cost of the background check for anyone presently employed or serving as a volunteer for the School.

Opportunity to Respond to Background Check

Only those convictions which are job-related for the employee, applicant, or volunteer will be considered by the School. If a person is denied employment or is dismissed from employment because of information obtained through a criminal background check, the person shall receive written notice of the reasons for denial or dismissal and shall have an opportunity to respond to the reasons.

(b) A school district or charter school shall resolve any request for a review of a denial of or dismissal from employment through administrative procedures established by the school district or charter school.

Confidentiality

Information about background check results is confidential and may only be disclosed as provided in applicable law.