Criminal History Background Checks

Policy

Effective November 1, 2009, all students enrolled in any School of Education initial teacher education program (TEP) course, or pre-TEP course, are required to have a valid expanded criminal history check on file, prior to participation in any field experience that includes direct or indirect contact with P-12 students.

Explanatory Notes

Indiana Code 20-26-5-10 mandates all school corporations to adopt and administer a policy requiring expanded criminal history checks for all corporation employees, effective July 1, 2009. This requirement does not extend to university students who enter P-12 buildings as a course required field experience. Nonetheless, the majority of central Indiana school corporations have adopted policies that require all university students to provide criminal background checks (either limited or expanded) as a condition of placement in any school in the corporation.

All pre-TEP and TEP courses will require some degree of involvement in a P-12 school. Pre-TEP and TEP students therefore must obtain an expanded criminal history check prior to or during the first course that requires a field placement. To facilitate this requirement, the School of Education has entered into an agreement with CertifiedBackground.com, a private background check service which allows students to purchase their own criminal history check, which then can be readily accessed by the School, students and P-12 schools in a secure virtual environment. All TEP students are required to have an expanded criminal history check on file with this service.

The expanded criminal history checks available through CertifiedBackground.com are in compliance with the definition of “expanded criminal history check” included in the Indiana Code. Specifically, the background check will include a search of all Indiana county records in which the subject of the search has resided, a search of records maintained by counties and other governmental agencies in other states in which the subject has resided, and a check of the national sex offender registry maintained by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Students will receive from CertifiedBackground.com a badge which verifies compliance with the expanded criminal history check, and which can be presented to P-12 school personnel who wish to review the check. (The badge will include information for accessing the check online.) The School of Education will continue its practice of monitoring all criminal history checks provided by students, and will inform P-12 school personnel of any checks which reveal criminal activities and records. If a cooperating school corporation rejects a student for any field placement, the student will be required to meet with the Associate Dean of Education. At that time, the Associate Dean may refer the case to the Teacher Education Admission and Retention Committee (TEAR) where a recommendation on the case will be forwarded by the Associate Dean to the Dean of Education. Students are required to see the Associate Dean of Education if any violations occur after the initial expanded criminal background check is completed. Failure to comply with this requirement may lead to expulsion from the Teacher Education Program.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with School of Education faculty and advisors immediately if they have any questions or concerns about this policy.

Adopted November 2009; Revised September 2010