

Private School Vouchers Raise Child Safety Concerns

Advocates seek requirement for criminal background checks and mandatory child abuse reporter training.

RALEIGH, NC, UNITED STATES, June 5, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Public schools require all faculty and staff to have criminal background checks and mandatory reporter training; private schools do not. As noted by Bobby J.

Dixon, M. Ed., Director of Non-Public Education at the NC Department of Administration, "It is not in our statute to require criminal background checks of private school employees. It is the decision of each private school whether they conduct such checks." This puts child safety at risk.



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*Bobby J. Dixon, Director of
Non-Public Education*

“The heart of our advocacy for public schools is to ensure the best outcomes for all children,” said Lynn Edmonds, Outreach and Engagement Director at Public Schools First NC. “Public schools perform better in all metrics, including child safety. We want to see that same care for children reflected in all schools - public or private - and that means criminal background checks must be required of staff at private schools as well.”

Advocates seek a change in legislation on North Carolina’s voucher programs (Opportunity Scholarship and ESA+).

The new legislation must require private schools that accept voucher funds to certify that all faculty, staff, and unpaid workers have criminal background checks and mandatory reporter training. Currently, only the person with the “highest decision-making responsibility” must pass a criminal background check in order for their institution to receive tax-funded tuition voucher payments.

“It is a heartbreaking truth that religious institutions have a long and current history of being unsafe for children, and 9 in 10 NC schools that receive vouchers have a religious affiliation.

There's a reason child abuse liability insurance exists for religious institutions," notes Clyde Edgerton, hall of fame writer, educator, artist, musician and pilot, in a recent post for Public Schools First NC.

Public Schools First NC and other advocates urge the public to contact their [House](#) and [Senate](#) lawmakers and support changing legislation to require that all private schools—which receive tens of millions of taxpayer dollars each year—have all faculty and staff pass a criminal back check and complete the free NC mandatory reporter training.

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