

Watson College of Education Criminal Background Check Field Placements Agreement

Teacher Candidate Name: _____

Student ID#: 850_____

Major: _____

The State of North Carolina and Local Education Agencies (LEA) currently require background checks of teacher education candidates. When placed in a LEA, UNCW and the Watson College of Education are attesting that you have cleared the background check process. For this reason, results of the background check are taken very seriously. In some cases, individuals are not permitted to enter the field, and as such are not able to complete the field requirements required of their program.

This document explains the WCE policies pertaining to the criminal background check and subsequent convictions. Procedures for the review of background check results are as follows:

1. WCE Associate Dean for Teacher Education and Outreach notifies teacher candidates to complete a formal background check through designated company.
2. Background checks are reviewed by the Watson College of Education Associate Dean for Teacher Education and Outreach.
3. Any student with a criminal conviction, plea that is acknowledgment of responsibility or a pending criminal action on the criminal background check will
 - submit in writing to the Watson College of Education Associate Dean for Teacher Education and Outreach the circumstances of the incident(s) rendering the result listed on the criminal background check.
 - attend a hearing conducted by a Watson College of Education Review Committee. The Review Committee renders the decision as to whether or not a teacher candidate can be placed in the LEA, subject to approval by the LEA.
 - be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the *UNCW Code of Student Life*, should there be any discrepancies in the UNCW application and the background check information, in accordance with failing “to provide accurate and complete information on the undergraduate or graduate application to the university” (*UNCW Code of Student Life*, Section B- Offenses.)
4. If at any time the background information changes status, it is the teacher candidate’s responsibility to fully disclose such information to the Associate Dean for Teacher Education and Outreach at the Watson College of Education. Failure to disclose change in status will result in dismissal from the field and/or Watson College of Education.

In addition, there are additional factors teacher candidates should consider that are beyond the control of the Watson College of Education.

1. LEAs may deny field placement at any time for alleged or convicted criminal activity. The teacher candidate incurs the financial, academic, or additional consequences associated with dismissal from the field.
2. Field experience placements may be delayed or suspended for teacher candidates with unresolved court decisions (pending status).
3. Upon completion of the teacher education program, any teacher candidate seeking NC licensure who shows criminal activity may be called before a State Board of Education review committee. The committee is not affiliated with UNCW and has complete authority to approve, deny, or suspend judgment pending an interview with the licensure candidate. Licensure authority rests solely with the State Board of Education.
4. Employment decisions rest solely with individual school systems. Even if licensure is granted, it is still possible the background history can present obstacles in obtaining employment. Hiring decisions are outside the purview of the Watson College of Education.

Please read this document carefully. The Teacher Candidate Signature indicates

1. You have been informed about the possible situations in which field placement, licensure, and employment may be affected because of criminal charges or allegations.
2. You understand and acknowledge that progress toward the degree, teacher licensure, and employment may be negatively impacted by a criminal background history.

Teacher Candidate Signature _____

Date _____