

PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, APPOINTMENT AND BACKGROUND CHECKS

[B20]

I. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the Thetford Academy hiring process.

II. DEFINITIONS

Criminal Record:

The term “criminal record” as used in this policy shall have the same meaning as defined in 16 V.S.A. § 252(1).

Unsupervised:

The term “unsupervised” as used in this policy shall have the same meaning as defined in 16 V.S.A. § 252(4).

Abuse Registry:

The term “abuse registry” as used in this policy shall include the Vermont Child Protection Registry maintained by the Vermont Department for Children and Families and the Vulnerable Adult Abuse Registry maintained by the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living.

Employ or Employment:

The terms “employ” or “employment” as used in this policy shall, as the context requires, apply to individuals who have, or are being considered for, full-time, part-time or temporary employment at Thetford Academy, including student teachers and those contractors and employees of contractors who may have unsupervised contact with students.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of Thetford Academy to select for employment only persons who have the skills and other characteristics and qualifications necessary to fulfill job requirements while complying with the provisions of state law regarding the recruitment, selection and employment of Thetford Academy employees and contractors.

Persons subject to criminal record checks and abuse registry checks under this policy include all those recommended for full-time, part-time or temporary employment at Thetford Academy, including student teachers. Those contractors and employees of contractors who may have unsupervised contact with students also are subject by law to criminal record and abuse registry checks prior to or in the course of employment.

The Head of School (or his/her designee) may request a name and date of birth or fingerprint-supported check of the criminal record of any current employee who has previously undergone a check at any time during the course of the individual's employment in the capacity for which the original check was required.

Thetford Academy shall ensure that adults employed by Thetford Academy receive orientation, information or instruction on the prevention, identification and reporting of child abuse as required by state law. Thetford Academy also shall provide opportunities for parents, guardians, and other interested persons to receive the same information.

IV. COMPONENTS OF POLICY

A. Recruitment

1. Thetford Academy is committed to securing the services of the best personnel available. The Academy requires professional licensure for all faculty members. A new teacher may be hired without licensure at the discretion of the Head of School, contingent on licensure subsequently being obtained as specified in the Board policy on Professional Licensure {B42}.
2. Thetford Academy is committed to non-discrimination. Thetford Academy is an equal opportunity employer and shall not discriminate in recruiting, hiring, training, promotion, transfer, discharge, compensation or any other term or condition of employment on the basis of race, gender, color, age, creed, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or disability, place of birth, ancestry, political affiliation, or any other reason set forth in state or federal non-discrimination requirements, if the employee can perform the essential functions of the job, with a reasonable accommodation if necessary.
3. Thetford Academy shall attempt to provide an educational experience enhanced by the professional contributions of a diversity of individuals.
4. All personnel shall be recruited by Thetford Academy's administrative staff under the immediate direction of the Head of School (or his/her designee).
5. Thetford Academy shall at a minimum advertise for positions internally to current employees. If Thetford Academy does not hire for a position internally, the school shall advertise the position on the school's website, in local listservs and/or newspapers, and/or on national hiring websites.
6. For the Head of School hiring process, a multi-disciplinary team consisting of representatives from various parts of the TA community shall be involved in the search. Final candidates shall be brought to the Board for a decision.

B. Selection

1. It is the policy of Thetford Academy to select employees solely on the basis of professional qualifications and characteristics, and critical job requirements. Employees shall be selected in a manner that does not unlawfully discriminate. The Head of School (or his/her designee) shall require that all applicants, as a condition of employment consideration, cooperate fully with background investigations, supplying references so that Thetford Academy can contact previous employers. If the Head of School (or his/her designee) is prepared to recommend an applicant for employment, the applicant shall be expected to provide fingerprints, releases and other information necessary to conduct criminal record background investigations. The costs of such checks shall be borne by Thetford Academy. All offers of employment shall be conditional upon completion of the background investigation and a finding that the information provided by the applicant during the pre-employment process was accurate, complete and truthful.
2. The Head of School (or his/her designee) shall request a criminal record check through the Vermont Criminal Information Center (VCIC) on any candidate he or she intends to appoint or is prepared to recommend for appointment. Requests shall be made for fingerprint-supported criminal records from the FBI as well as criminal records from the state of Vermont and any state in which the Head of School (or his/her designee) knows the applicant has resided or been employed. The Head of School (or his/her designee) shall maintain such records in accordance with state law.
3. The Head of School (or his/her designee) shall also request information through any available abuse registry to determine whether there are any substantiated abuse/neglect charges or sex offense convictions against an applicant before appointing or nominating a candidate for employment. The Head of School (or his/her designee) shall maintain such records in accordance with state law.
4. Employment conditioned on the completion of a background check may be terminated if it is determined that the employee failed to respond truthfully to questions about criminal activity or prior employment. In this event, the Head of School (or his/her designee) shall forward the information received from VCIC to the person about whom the request was made and inform the person of their rights to challenge the accuracy of the record and to determine the disposition of the record under 16 V.S.A. §§255(f), (g).
5. Providing a safe learning environment for students is a primary consideration in Thetford Academy employment decisions. Thetford Academy shall base such decisions on all relevant information, qualifications, and circumstances. Unfavorable background check information is not an automatic bar to employment, nor is a background check with no unfavorable information a guarantee of employment. However, no person convicted of a sexual offense requiring registration on the Vermont comprehensive sex offender registry shall be employed by Thetford Academy.

6. The Head of School (or his/her designee) shall determine application components, and shall review applications according to pre-established criteria.

C. Appointment

1. The final selection of an employee shall be made by the Head of School (in consultation with the interview team). The Head of School shall make the employment offer to the individual candidate, and both the Head of School and the individual candidate shall sign an employment agreement. The employment agreement shall go to the Board President for his/her signature.
2. Contracts of employment or other notifications of employment are conditional pending receipt of criminal records check information and evaluation of that information.
3. All offers of employment may be withdrawn based on the criminal records check report or upon a finding that the information provided by the applicant during the pre-employment process was inaccurate, incomplete or untruthful.

ADOPTED: October 11, 2018