

HB 219 -- Background Checks for School Employees

Sponsor: Kelly (24)

This bill requires the background check for school bus drivers employed by a company under contract with a school district to be made under Section 43.540, RSMo, and to conform to certain federal requirements. The bill also clarifies that a school employee who holds a teaching certificate must complete a criminal background check; and if he or she has received clearance on a background check within a year preceding his or her employment, the requirement will be considered as completed. A criminal background check will include a search of any publicly available information in an electronic format through a public index or single case display. The number of sets of fingerprints required is reduced from two to one set; and anyone employed after July 1, 2012, who is required to undergo a background check must also register with the Family Care Safety Registry.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must facilitate an annual check of employed persons with active teaching certificates against the criminal history records in the central repository, the Sexual Offender Registry, and the Child Abuse Central Registry. The department must also help school districts submit personnel information for noncertificated personnel. The State Highway Patrol must furnish ongoing electronic updates to criminal history background checks for those whom the department has previously submitted information, which will satisfy the annual check requirement. A school district may, at its expense, require a new criminal background check and fingerprint collection for a newly hired employee.

The department is added to the list of agencies that must collaborate on record checks through the Family Care Safety Registry and that may use the registry information to carry out its duties in regard to school personnel.