



TOWN OF EXETER, RI

TOWN COUNCIL

Diane Bampton Allen, President
Raymond A. Morrissey, Jr., Vice President
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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
TOWN OF EXETER**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-03

**IN SUPPORT OF RHODE ISLAND HOUSE BILL 7356 and SENATE BILL 2216
"SCHOOL EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECKS"**

WHEREAS: The Town of Exeter recognizes the importance of maintaining the highest standards of safety and care within all schools, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to learn in a secure and nurturing environment; and

WHEREAS: The Town Council acknowledges that protecting students from potential harm, abuse, or misconduct is a paramount responsibility of every educational institution, whether public, charter, or non-public; and

WHEREAS: Rhode Island House Bill 7356 and Senate Bill 2216, entitled "School Employee Background Checks," proposes an act relating to education that codifies a comprehensive system of criminal and employment background checks for all school employees, consistent with §16.21.9 of the General Laws; and

WHEREAS: The proposed legislation requires all school districts, charter schools, non-public schools, and contracted service providers to obtain detailed employment histories, conduct rigorous reviews of all prior educational and child-related employment, and verify disclosures regarding any prior investigations, disciplinary actions, or misconduct allegations; and

WHEREAS: These bills strengthen Rhode Island's statutory framework by ensuring that all school employment decisions are informed by complete and verified information, reducing the potential for individuals with a history of abuse, inappropriate conduct, or false credentials to gain employment in positions involving regular contact with children; and

WHEREAS: The General Assembly's proposed act complements existing laws under §16-2-18.1 by enhancing the depth and reliability of criminal background checks and requiring timely employer cooperation in providing prior employment information; and

WHEREAS: House Bill 7356 and Senate Bill 2216 also introduce accountability measures that include civil penalties for applicants who willfully falsify or omit information and establish clear duties for both in-state and out-of-state employers to respond promptly, ensuring that hiring entities have the accurate, verified information needed to make safe decisions; and

WHEREAS: The Town Council of the Town of Exeter supports legislation that promotes transparency, integrity, and accountability in education, and aligns directly with the Town's long-standing commitment to student welfare and the protection of youth in our community;

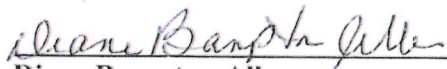
WHEREAS: The Council further recognizes that the enactment of House Bill 7356 and Senate Bill 2216 would not only enhance public trust in Rhode Island's school systems but also provide parents, educators, and residents with greater confidence in the safety of local educational institutions.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Town Council of the Town of Exeter hereby expresses its strong and unequivocal support for Rhode Island House Bill 7356 and Senate Bill 2216, "School Employee Background Checks"; and

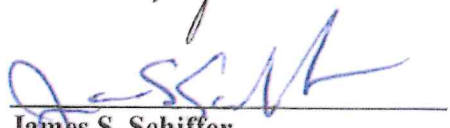
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Exeter Town Council urges the Rhode Island General Assembly and the Governor to enact this bill into law promptly upon passage, recognizing it as a necessary and proactive measure to safeguard children throughout the State of Rhode Island; and

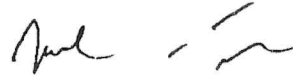
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk is directed to forward a copy of this resolution to Rhode Island Governor Daniel McKee, the President of the Rhode Island State Senate, the Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives, the State Senator and Representatives of the Town of Exeter, and all City and Town Councils, and the Superintendent and School Committee of the Exeter-West Greenwich School District.

Approved by vote of the Exeter Town Council on this 9th day of March, 2026.

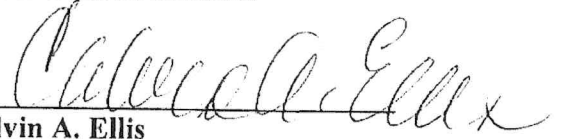

Diane Bampton Allen
Town Council President


Raymond A. Morrissey, Jr.
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James S. Schiffer
Town Council Member

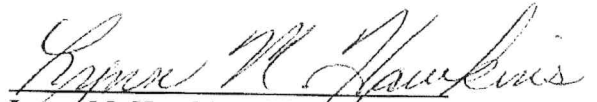


Joseph M. Turner
Town Council Member



Calvin A. Ellis
Town Council Member

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereby set my hand and the Official Seal of the Town of Exeter
this 7th day of March, 2026.



Lynn M. Hawkins, CMC
Exeter Town Clerk