Church School Partnerships and Safe Sanctuaries FAQs

Are church-school partnerships (i.e., in-class or after-school tutoring) considered a Conference event or local church event?
Local churches partnering with schools is a local church activity and does not require Conference Safe Sanctuary certification. It is no different than a local church Vacation Bible School or after-school ministry. It will require whatever the local church policy says. Churches need to follow their own policy.

Should we require Safe Sanctuaries certification for volunteers for our church school partnership?
Partnering with your local school, especially with relationship-building activities like tutoring, place adults in proximity to children, youth and vulnerable adults. Great care and training should be conducted anytime the church works with children, youth or vulnerable adults. We believe Safe Sanctuaries is one way to equip adults to work with these populations. Additionally, Mandatory Reporting training is also highly recommended given Missouri’s clear statutes about mandated reporters.

Our public school requires their own training and background screening. Can we use that instead of Safe Sanctuaries certification?
Schools will often have their own expectations and requirements for volunteers working in their facilities. Local churches should welcome those standards for our community and given our experience of providing “safe sanctuary” to children, youth and vulnerable adults, understand the importance of these standards. It is likely that the school will not see local church Safe Sanctuaries certification as meeting their standards (they have to follow their policy as well). The local church needs to follow their own Safe Sanctuaries policy. If involvement with children, youth and vulnerable adults requires Safe Sanctuaries certification, a local school’s certification would not meet those requirements.

Will the Conference release background screens to our school partners?
We are not able to release the contents of background checks to any other entity. We can provide verification that an individual has certification and meets our criteria for that certification.