

1 Great Falls Public Schools

2
3 **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

7535

4
5 Electronic Signatures

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7 “Electronic signature” means an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically
8 associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.
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10 Electronic signatures or digital signatures can take many forms and can be created using many
11 different types of technology. For the purpose of this policy an electronic signature means any
12 electronic identifier intended by the person using it to have the same force and effect as a manual
13 signature.

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15 District Use of Electronic Signatures

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17 When not practical or possible to have an approved individual physically sign a document, and not
18 otherwise prohibited by applicable laws, electronic signatures may satisfy the requirement of a
19 written signature when transacting business with and/or for the District and/or with
20 parents/guardians when the authenticity and reliability of such electronic signature(s) meets the
21 provisions of this policy. In such instances, the electronic signature shall have the full force and
22 effect of a manual signature.
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24 In order to qualify for acceptance of an electronic signature the following additional requirements
25 are applicable:

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- 27 1. The electronic signature identifies the individual signing the document by his/her
28 name and title;
 - 29 2. The identity of the individual signing the document with an electronic signature is
30 capable of being validated through the use of an audit trail;
 - 31 3. The electronic signature, as well as the documents to which it is affixed, cannot be
32 altered once the electronic signature is affixed. If the document needs to be altered,
33 a new electronic signature must be obtained; and
 - 34 4. The electronic signature conforms to all other provisions of this policy.
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36 The District shall maintain District electronically signed records in a manner consistent with the
37 District’s document retention policies yet also capable of accurate and complete reproduction of
38 the electronic records and signatures in their original form. Such retention should include a process
39 whereby the District can verify the attribution of a signature to a specific individual, detect changes
40 or errors in the information contained in the record submitted electronically and protect and prevent
41 access and/or manipulation or access/use by an unauthorized person.
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43 The District shall maintain a hardcopy of the actual signature of any District employee authorized
44 to provide an electronic signature in connection with school board business.
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46 Abuse of the electronic signature protocols by any District employee serves as grounds for
47 disciplinary action up to and including employment termination.

1 Parent/Student Use of Electronic Signatures

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3 With regard to documentation received by the District with an electronic signature from a
4 parent/legal guardian, so long as the following provisions are met, the District may receive and
5 accept such electronic signature as an original document:

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7 1. Such communication with signature, of its face, appears to be authentic and unique
8 to the person using such signature;

9 2. The District is unaware of any specific individualized reason to believe that the
10 signature has been forged;

11 3. The District is unaware of any specific reason to believe the document has been
12 altered subsequent to the electronic signature; and

13 4. The signature is capable of verification.

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15 The District's Superintendent or designee may, at his or her discretion, request that an original of
16 the electronic communication, signed manually by hand, be forwarded to the District in a timely
17 manner.

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19 District personnel may periodically audit the authenticity of such signature via a security procedure
20 including such acts as making follow-up inquiry to the individual/entity who has submitted such
21 electronic signature.

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23 Should it be discovered that a student has falsified a parent's electronic signature on an official
24 District document, the student may be subjected to discipline and the Administrators of the District
25 are authorized, at their discretion, to thereafter only accept manual signatures associated with any
26 submitted school document.

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28 Legal Reference:

29 30-18-102(9), MCA Definitions

30 30-18-106(4), MCA Legal recognition of electronic records, electronic signatures, and electronic
31 contracts

32 42.8.106, ARM Electronic submission of documents and electronic signatures

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34 Policy History:

35 Adopted on: January 14, 2019

36 Revised on: