Board Policy 1260: Authorization of Signatures and Electronic Signatures

Status: ADOPTED

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For the conduct of the business of the District, the Board may grant authority to specific staff to sign certain documents on behalf of the District.

The Chair, Superintendent, Business Manager, and Clerk are authorized to use a facsimile signature plate or stamp or other electronic signature as addressed herein.

Invoices

Staff employed by the District, in the following designated positions, are authorized to approve invoices for the District:

Superintendent
Business Manager

Checks

The school principal is designated as the custodian of each school building activity fund. The treasurer or the assistant treasurer must sign all checks issued by the District. The Chair or Vice Chair must countersign all such checks.

Contracts for Goods, Services, and Leases

The Superintendent is authorized to sign on behalf of the Board contracts, leases, and/or contracts for goods and services for amounts under $25,000 without prior approval of the Board. The types of goods and services contracted for must be preapproved by the Board.

Personnel Contracts

The Board Chair and clerk are authorized to sign personnel contracts and agreements of employment on behalf of the Board by facsimile signature or via electronic signature.

Negotiated Agreements

Negotiated agreements shall be signed for the District by the Board Chair and the clerk.

Electronic Signatures

Electronic signatures or digital signatures can take many forms and can be created using many different types of technology. For the purpose of this policy an electronic signature means any electronic identifier intended by the person using it to have the same force and effect as a manual signature.

District Use of Electronic Signatures

When not practical or possible to have an approved individual physically sign a document, and not otherwise prohibited by applicable laws, electronic signatures may satisfy the requirement of a written signature when transacting business with and/or for the District and/or with parents/guardians when the authenticity and reliability of such electronic signature(s) meets the provisions of this policy. In such instances, the electronic signature shall have the full force and effect of a manual signature.

In order to qualify for acceptance of an electronic signature the following additional requirements are applicable:

1. The electronic signature identifies the individual signing the document by his or her name and title;
2. The identity of the individual signing the document with an electronic signature is capable of being validated through the use of an audit trail;
3. The electronic signature, as well as the documents to which it is affixed, cannot be altered once the electronic signature is affixed. If the document needs to be altered, a new electronic signature must be obtained; and
4. The electronic signature conforms to all other provisions of this policy.

The District shall maintain District electronically signed records in a manner consistent with the District's document retention policies yet also capable of accurate and complete reproduction of the electronic records and signatures in their original form. Such retention should include a process whereby the District can verify the attribution of a signature to a specific individual, detect changes or errors in the information contained in the record submitted electronically and protect and prevent access and/or manipulation or access/use by an unauthorized person.

The District shall maintain a hardcopy of the actual signature of any District employee authorized to provide an electronic signature in connection with school board business.

Abuse of the electronic signature protocols by any District employee serves as grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Parent/Student Use of Electronic Signatures

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

1. Such communication with signature, on its face, appears to be authentic and unique to the person using such signature;
2. The District is unaware of any specific reason to believe that the signature has been forged;

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

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

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

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

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Legal References	**Description**
IC § 33-701	**Fiscal Year – Payment and Accounting of Funds**

Other References	**Description**
ISBA Policy Services	**https://www.idsba.org/member-services/policy/**