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Policy on Accepting Digital Signatures

Purpose: To establish guidelines for the acceptance of digital signatures in order to ensure the authenticity and integrity of electronically signed documents.

Scope: This policy applies to all students, parents, staff, and external parties who submit electronically signed documents to the College.

Policy:

1. **Definition of Digital Signature:** A digital signature is an electronic form of a signature that can be used to authenticate the identity of the signer and ensure that the original content of the document has not been altered.
2. **Acceptance Criteria:** The school will accept digital signatures on documents provided that the following criteria are met:
 - The signer must send the document from an email address that is known to the College or has been verified by the College.
 - The signer must include the last four digits of their social security number along with the digital signature to validate their identity.
3. **Verification Process:** The College will verify the authenticity of the digital signature and the last four digits of the social security number through the following steps:
 - Confirm that the email address from which the document was received appears on file for the individual.
 - Verify that the last four digits of the social security number match the records on file for the signer.
 - Ensure that the document does not appear to have been altered since the digital signature was applied.
4. **Record Keeping:** All electronically signed documents will be stored securely in the College's records system. The College will maintain a record of the verification process for each digitally signed document.
5. **Compliance:** Failure to comply with this policy may result in the rejection of the electronically signed document. The College reserves the right to request additional information or documentation to verify the identity of the signer.

Effective Date: This policy is effective as of October 1, 2023.

Review and Revision: This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to ensure continued compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

Review/Revision Date: 12/23, 12/24