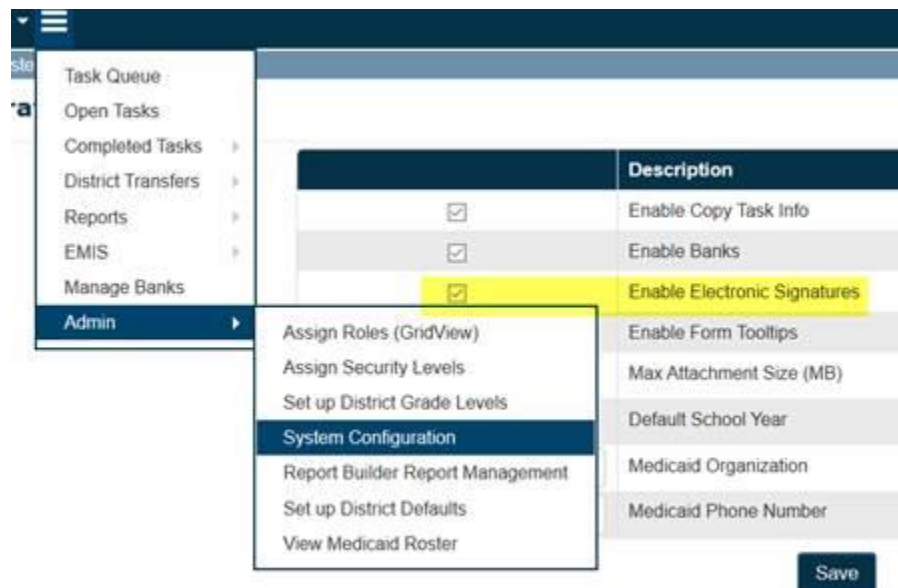Many of you may have received the "Ed Upate" on Wednesday from ODE that acknowledges that providing services closest to the manners prescribed within IEPs may pose some challenges during Ohio's current school-building closures. In that email, they provided a link to a document designed to help districts navigate these challenges. You can find that document here.

It states that "participation and required signatures can be documented via email attachment, standard mail, scanned signature, photograph of the signature or any other electronic means." With that in mind, I wanted to remind everyone that SpecialService (both versions) and Samegoal IEPAnywhere have functionality built in to allow for electronic signatures. For those districts who choose to enable this feature, it would allow you collect signatures on the document(s) from internal staff who have accounts without the added effort or complications associated with sending pictures or attachments back and forth.

Below are screen shots outlining how software administrators in the district can turn this feature on in their respective applications. Note that in some districts, we may also need to update the roles in SpS of staff to give them the ability to sign. We can work through that on a district by district basis should you opt to use electronic signatures.

Classic SpecialServices

SpecialServices (New Version)

IEP Anywhere

<< settings   District Information

Basics   **Details**

Administrative Options

Validation
Validate document at completion: ☐ Allow override by non-administrative users

Electronic signatures
E-signatures: ☐ Disable   Make sure this box is unchecked.

The features above don't provide a way for districts to obtain signatures from outside parties (i.e. parents) but hopefully this lessens the burden. As mentioned above, you can still receive signatures via email attachment, photo, standard mail, etc. Some districts may even be exploring using third party applications like DocuSign for signatures.

We realize that there are more challenges than signatures and that districts are finding creative ways to adapt to the current situation. Your district may already have plans and tools in place but if you have questions about utilizing electronic signatures in your Special Education software or if you'd like to obtain information about gaining access to WebEx or Zoom so that you can host meetings remotely I would encourage you to reach out to HCC. We'd love to help where we can.