



Midland ISD Creates Family-Friendly Enrollment and Reduces Administrative Burden with Avela

CASE STUDY

29k Students

40 Schools

20% English Learners

BACKGROUND

Midland Independent School District (TX) serves roughly 29,000 students across 40 schools, with about 20% of students in English Learner programs. After several years on a custom-built "Apply Midland" system, new district leadership sought a simpler, modern platform to support choice programs, transfers, and magnets, while aligning with the state's Systems of Great Schools (SGS) work.

"We needed something that would grow with us and with the times... seeing updates come out all the time has been a breath of fresh air."

– Geta Mitchell, Director of Student Services, Midland ISD

PROBLEM

A legacy system that didn't keep up with families' needs

The legacy custom system was difficult for families and staff, expensive to change, and stagnated without ongoing improvements. Families struggled to log in, got stuck mid-application, created duplicates, and voiced frustrations publicly. Admin workflows were brittle: the district had to shut the system down to run lotteries or clean duplicates, and bulk offers weren't possible, forcing one-by-one actions at scale. As a result, many traditional campuses stopped using the tool altogether.

"It made it harder for us to learn, harder for campuses to use, and definitely harder for parents... we had lots of complaints online and even emails to the superintendent."

— Geta Mitchell, Director of Student Services, Midland ISD

SOLUTION

A modern, flexible platform with rapid updates and simple UX

After a rigorous and public Request For Proposal process, Midland ISD selected Avela's enrollment platform for its simplicity, frequent product updates, and track record with peer districts. The district kicked off in mid-May 2025, executed a soft launch in September (filling current-year open seats and collecting early 26-27 applications at select schools), with the major magnet/high-demand launch in November. Early configuration emphasized:

- Editable applications (district staff can adjust questions and logic without costly custom work).
- Campus-level verifications (e.g., staff-child and sibling checks) to reduce central back-and-forth.
- Tags to streamline operations and communication (e.g., marking displaced students this year for end-of-year outreach).
- Account imports for existing families and rapid implementation of a centralized "Intent to Return" form for specialized programs

RESULTS

Early wins & what's next

Although most families engage during the November and March windows, Midland is already seeing operational improvements and expects tangible family-experience gains this cycle:

Early Wins

- No more system shutdowns just to run lotteries or de-dupe.
- Bulk actions (vs. one-by-one offers) enable faster, clearer outcomes (“every parent gets a yes or a no” at the end of the window).
- Higher campus adoption: schools can verify key data themselves (e.g., siblings and staff-child priorities), reducing central office email loops.
- Operational tagging: displaced-student tags make year-end communications and transitions straightforward.

“My favorite part is that we can change the application to make it do what we want it to do without a big ordeal.” — Mitchell

What's Next

- Unified parent experience across application and enrollment, so families log in once for applications, offers, and registration.
- Lightweight satisfaction signals during application windows (and monitoring community feedback channels) to validate the improved experience.
- Exploration of AI-assisted verification (document checks, eligibility triage) to reduce manual investigative work over time.

CONCLUSION

Midland ISD's partnership with Avela marks a major step forward in creating a simpler, more responsive, and family-friendly enrollment experience. By replacing a rigid legacy system with a flexible, continuously improving platform, the district has already reduced administrative pain points and improved transparency for families. As Midland continues expanding unified enrollment and exploring innovations like AI-assisted verification, its progress illustrates how thoughtful technology can strengthen choice, equity, and efficiency in public education.

To learn more about how Avela supports K12 public schools, visit avela.org.



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