



## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Midland Independent School District  
615 W. Missouri Ave., Midland, TX 79701  
432-240-1000 • midlandisd.net

As I reflect on my first year back in Midland ISD, I am proud of all that has been accomplished. Returning to Midland represented the opportunity to provide stability and consistency for our district. I am grateful to the Board for giving me this opportunity. I truly believe this is a unique time in Midland where we can do something great for our entire community! While I am proud of what we have accomplished since January, I also recognize the work ahead of us and the need for continuous improvement to become a premier district.

### **Organizing for Success**

One of the first steps we took was to reorganize our Central Office to best support our campuses, leaders, teachers, and ultimately our students. We created a *Teaching and Learning* division that included a department for *Talent Acquisition and Development*. Recognizing that teachers have the single biggest impact on student outcomes, *Teaching and Learning* and *Talent* are working to provide quality instruction through the use of rigorous instructional materials as well as professional learning.

After teachers, the second largest indicator of student outcomes is leadership. Campus leaders are essential to creating a climate where student learning is prioritized, high expectations are established, and opportunities to meet the needs of all students are provided. Therefore, we established a *Leadership* department and reallocated positions to implement the role of principal supervisors. Our principal supervisors are led by our Deputy Superintendent and MHS alumnus, Roberto Cedillo. Each principal supervisor oversees approximately ten campuses.

### **Bond Planning**

In November 2022, a couple of months before I returned to Midland, the Long-Range Planning Committee presented a list of priorities to the Board. These priorities came after an unsuccessful bond in 2019 and about 18 months of reviewing facility needs, projected growth, and the need for grade reconfiguration. In February 2023, we brought this group back together; however, we wanted to increase its size to ensure we had representation from all areas: students, parents, teachers, campus leaders, district leaders, higher education, businesses, and the community. After learning about the work of the Long-Range Planning Committee, This group recommended moving into bond planning.

The Bond Planning Committee met at least once a month from February through August and ultimately recommended the single proposition \$1.4 billion package that was approved by 56% of voters November 7.

Grade reconfiguration is one of the most important components of the bond. We will reorganize our campuses into Pre-K through 5th grade elementary schools, 6th-8th grade true middle schools, and 9th-12th grade high schools. When Legacy High School moves to its new location and Midland Freshman students move to the new Midland High, these two campuses will become the fifth and sixth middle schools for the



## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Midland Independent School District  
615 W. Missouri Ave., Midland, TX 79701  
432-240-1000 • midlandisd.net

district. Sixth graders moving to middle schools will free up space for growth at elementary schools and for much-needed seats for Pre-K.

In addition to this work, every campus will be impacted by Bond 2023. The impacts include mechanical, electrical and plumbing upgrades, interior and exterior improvements, site improvements, and accessibility and code improvements. In addition, because safety and security is certainly a priority in this bond, each campus will receive upgrades to items such as intercoms, intrusion alarms, access control, and cameras, and any campus currently without a secured entrance vestibule will receive one. The dollars allocated for safety and security will equip our campuses with the most secure learning environment for our 28,731 students.

On behalf of the students and staff, I want to thank you for your support. This will truly transform how we educate students.

### **Listen & Learn**

From February through May, I met with every campus and department, as well as parents, businesses, and community members as part of the *Listen and Learn* process. As we heard about areas for improvement around the district, we made adjustments to provide campuses with the support needed to improve the learning environment. These meetings will continue each year, and as of today have been held at 24 of our 39 campuses this school year.

### **Thinking Strategically**

While our team began making adjustments throughout the spring in order to plan for systemic and transformational improvements, the information gathered through *Listen and Learn* also provided data to revisit our Strategic Plan. In May and June, more than 100 stakeholders formed our Strategic Plan Committee. The plan was finalized in August and unveiled in September.

The Strategic Plan focuses on three pillars: *Student Experience*, *Grow & Develop Staff*, and *Engage & Act*. This work is already underway. Each project within the Strategic Plan has a project owner who reports to the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee. Goals within the strategic plan are developed by project owners who present updates at these meetings. Meeting regularly and providing feedback to project owners holds us accountable and keeps us committed to the work that is tied to the plan. Administration will provide quarterly updates to the Board of Trustees beginning in January. The plan is filled with ambitious, yet achievable, goals. MISD strives to become one of the best districts in the state, and this plan is focused around the belief that we will meet or exceed state averages on Strategic Plan metrics by 2026 and be among the top quartile of comparison districts by 2033.



## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Midland Independent School District  
615 W. Missouri Ave., Midland, TX 79701  
432-240-1000 • midlandisd.net

### **New Ideas**

One change we have made in terms of the curriculum is in our approach to teaching English-Language Arts. Literacy is a critical and foundational element in every student's education. Reading and English EOC scores across the district have been below state average at all grade levels, and we knew a change was necessary.

This urgency led our *Teaching and Learning* division to move our instruction to a phonics-based curriculum, which has already been implemented district-wide in K-2 classes with additional resources provided for grades 3-6. We are excited about the steps we are taking toward improving student performance.

### **Campus Culture**

Another victory we can celebrate is the successes that we have found surrounding campus culture and climate. In years past, we had found that many of the disciplinary measures already in place were not being followed. We did not have to create any new policies - we just started enforcing the ones that were already there. This started with establishing high expectations and supporting our teachers and leaders in the enforcement of our Student Code of Conduct.

### **The Journey Ahead**

No one person can do this work alone, and I am thankful for the outstanding Team of Eight, made up of the Board of Trustees, along with the Cabinet, who support these efforts every day! The work we have to do cannot be accomplished overnight, and our team recognizes that. We also accept the responsibility of continuous improvement and commitment to the work. The Lone Star Governance goals and our Strategic Plan guide our work. I am looking forward to year two and appreciate the opportunity to lead Midland ISD. Thank you for your continued commitment to MISD, and thank you for your ongoing support!

Sincerely,

Stephanie D. Howard, Ed.D.  
Midland ISD Superintendent