



## EDUCATION FACT SHEET

### OBJECTIVE

By 2025: Ensure Midland area schools will become the most improved school districts in Texas, and 70% of students will be college or career ready upon high school graduation (based on Texas Education Agency definition).

### STRATEGIES

1. Ensure adequate capacity within our public schools to accommodate the increasing number of students across our rapidly growing community.
  2. Enhance academic support programs by non-district personnel/volunteers in Midland area public schools to improve student outcomes.
  3. Expand the Educator Pipeline by assisting in the expansion and creation of quality teacher education programs.
  4. Increase opportunities for innovative education funding from diverse sources.
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### WHAT

**Q: What is the most important takeaway for the community regarding the Education objective and strategies?**

A: Education is a fundamental building block for any community. Strong schools attract talent, families, and resources. They also help people find financial and social mobility opportunities. If Midland intends to be a world-class city, it must have a world-class education system to accompany it. While the schools employ education experts who lead the daily efforts, the community also has a role to play in supporting their hard work and bringing resources to the table that help improve outcomes.

**Q: How does Priority Midland define “education”?**

A: The Education Working Group generally refers to “education” as all opportunities for learning from cradle to career. However, the specific initiatives that have been explored include public education opportunities in the following areas: public early childhood education programs (Pre-K Partnerships), K-12 School Districts (Midland ISD, Greenwood ISD and Stanton ISD), Public Charter Schools (IDEA and others), Public Community Colleges (Midland College) and Public Universities (UTPB).

**Q: What is the Texas Education Agency definition of “college or career ready”?**

A: College- and career-ready high school graduates have the skills, knowledge and abilities needed to succeed in life, whether they plan to attend college (two- or four-year, or technical school) or start a job. The College and Career Readiness standards measure the foundational skills needed to succeed in post-secondary education and include a portfolio approach with measures including SAT/ACT Scores, End of Course (EOC) Exam Scores and Grades.

**Q: What are “academic support programs” (strategy #2)?**

A: Academic Supports refer to a broad range of instructional supports, educational services and school resources that can help students accelerate their learning process. Priority Midland’s Education Working Group aims to support strong academic instruction by providing manpower, resources, and connections for schools. In the immediate term, that comes in the form of volunteers who can read with students on grade-level so teachers can focus on those who need stronger supports, and in connecting faith-based and business organizations to schools to help provide resources to students who need them. This strategy will evolve as new needs and resources are identified in partnership with the districts.

**Q: How do you define “educator pipeline” (strategy #3)?**

A: “Educator pipeline” refers to the systems related to educator preparation, recruitment, and retention. The Permian Basin is experiencing a shortage of teachers due to several factors, including, but not limited to, housing affordability, the abundance of high paying jobs outside of the education sector, and the isolated location of West Texas. To address the challenge, the Priority Midland Education Working Group is assisting with the coordination of various parties who can help address the challenges of teacher preparation, quality recruitment, and long-term retention efforts.

**WHY**

**Q: Why was education identified as an area of need for Midland?**

A: Changing demographics, a dynamic economy and explosive growth, a weakened educator pipeline, and other challenges likely all contribute to the difficulty of the schools growing and evolving as quickly as the population has. The more rural districts are currently keeping pace in the academic rankings, but they too may experience the same challenges as soon as the growth expands outward. The key is to be proactive, identify opportunities where the community can assist with improvements, and make sure that the districts can source the best possible expertise to tackle their challenges.

**Q: Why is it critical to get education right for Midland?**

A: Education is one of the most important assets of a successful community, from both a social and economic perspective. When implemented successfully, strong education systems support future generations of engaged citizens, workers, and leaders. Critical thinking skills, social accountability, and financial independence all stem from education. In Midland, a strong education system can attract professionals to the area who desire a strong system for their children, it can help fill the workforce gap for companies looking for employees, and it can be a critical support for families already living in the area.

**MEASUREMENT**

**Q: What is the current percentage of students that are college- or career-ready? What is the state average?**

A: The most recent data available from TEA (2017-18) include the following outcomes for College-, Career- and Military-Ready (CCMR) graduates (a State-defined standard):

- Midland ISD: 50.9%
- Greenwood ISD: 54.7%
- Stanton ISD: 55.6%
- Texas Average: 54.2%

**Q: The Midland ISD website says their “mission is for all students to graduate ready and prepared for college or career.” Why would the goal only be set at 70 percent?**

A: MISD has not lost sight of its mission to graduate all students college- or career-ready. That goal will be met in the long-term by setting incremental goals. The most recent data shows that 50.9 percent of MISD students graduate college-, career- or military-ready (a State-defined standard). The incremental goal is for MISD to reach 70 percent by 2025.

## **POTENTIAL IMPACT**

**Q: What characterizes the current state of Midland’s public education system?**

A: Recently, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) released its accountability scores for districts based on a portfolio of measures. The data lags by one year, but the outlook for Midland-area schools needs improvement based on those measures. Note: All districts are implementing new, high-quality programs that are expected to improve these scores, though the program outcomes are not available yet and are not reflected in the current ratings.

### TEA 2018 Accountability Scores:

- Midland ISD: Grade C
- Greenwood ISD: Grade C
- Stanton ISD: Grade C

**Q: What will characterize the state of Midland’s education system upon achieving the stated objective?**

A: The objective seeks to drastically improve education outcomes in Midland-area schools. If the goal is achieved, then student outcomes will improve at all levels, accountability scores will go up, and more students will be college-, career- and military-ready.

## **HOW**

**Q: How is Priority Midland supporting public school capacity (strategy #1)?**

A: The Priority Midland Education Working Group has identified the following actions for support:

- Coordinate with Priority Midland Quality of Place, Housing, and Infrastructure working groups to consider how public school facilities are planned with the best design, safety, and capacity in mind.
- Assist with the facility planning needs of Midland ISD, Greenwood ISD, and Stanton ISD by providing economic forecast information, infrastructure insights and planning assistance where applicable.

**Q: Who will the academic support programs support primarily (strategy #2)?**

A: Currently, four schools in Midland ISD are engaged, but there is an intent to expand to the surrounding schools and districts as well. Ultimately, the intent is to create a model program so it can be available to any school that needs it as long as there are enough volunteers available to meet the needs.

**Q: How do you envision these academic support programs improving student outcomes (strategy #2)?**

A: The intent is for these supports to allow teachers to focus on the students who need extra attention and help them accelerate their learning. We are evaluating metrics; however, until we grow the scale, the impacts will be difficult to measure.

**Q: Are you modeling this after an existing program that has proven successful (strategy #2)?**

A: There are several programs around the state and nation where volunteer supports have led to improvements in student outcomes including notable programs in Texas' Rio Grande Valley, Huntsville, Alabama, and Seattle, Washington. All of these programs rely on volunteers to relieve teachers so they can focus on the students who need them most.

**Q: How might this impact the overall quality of education (strategy #3)?**

A: One quality teacher can change the academic trajectory of a student. Making sure the Midland area has enough teachers who are highly qualified is an essential element to improving educational outcomes.

**Q: How will innovative education funding from diverse resources be identified (strategy #4)?**

A: This strategy is currently being addressed with the hiring of a fund development specialist by one of the local Foundations. By doing so, new opportunities are being identified and new resources are being sought out for Midland ISD, Greenwood ISD and Midland College.

**WHO**

**Q: Who is leading this effort?**

A: The Education Working Group includes a mix of educators, administrators, financial advisors, funders, private citizens, representatives of the faith-based community, parents, grandparents, and non-parents. This combination has created an opportunity to have robust conversations and find initiatives that meet the needs of the broader community.

**Q: Who will undertake the work required to meet the objective and strategies?**

A: At this time, the Education Working Group includes an extraordinary group of committed volunteers with a strong vision for the future of Midland's education systems. For now, their expertise and passion are moving things forward.

**Q: Is there an opportunity for Midland-area residents to get involved with and support this endeavor?**

A: Yes, the subcommittees are open to having new people join if they are interested in working toward the goals of the team. In addition, there may be volunteer opportunities in schools soon. For more information, please fill out the form on the [prioritymidland.com](http://prioritymidland.com) homepage, and note your interest in Education.

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Additional information on the Strategic Framework can be found at [prioritymidland.com/priorities/](http://prioritymidland.com/priorities/).

**About Priority Midland:** Priority Midland is a community-led initiative designed to bring together Midland-area citizens, taxing entities and other stakeholders into a collaborative forum to provide input into the development of a roadmap for the community, increase overall funding available for projects, and reduce timeframes in which projects are started and completed. The initiative will provide a framework and blueprint to help guide Midland's future growth and development. For more information about Priority Midland, please visit [www.prioritymidland.com](http://www.prioritymidland.com), and follow and connect with the initiative on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).