



# 5 Ways K-12 Online Enrollment Benefits Schools, Staff, and Parents

Improve your enrollment process with an efficient, secure, and convenient online system.



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# Modern Student Enrollment

**School registrars and administrative staff know all too well that student enrollment is a labor-intensive, multistep process.**

Schools generate a multitude of forms requesting demographic data, emergency contact and medical information, signatures for school policies, agreements and permissions, surveys, health history, sports participation information, and more.

Families, sometimes after waiting in long enrollment lines, fill out the large packet of paper forms for each student enrolled in the district. Once those forms are returned to the school, administrators are tasked with deciphering the handwritten information and inputting the data into the district's student information system (SIS).

It's a long process that uses up a lot of paper and resources, taking away your staff's valuable time that could be used for more important student-related priorities, such as building positive relationships with students and families.

Successful K-12 schools and districts are diligent in continually looking at ways to reduce costs and increase efficiency. When looking to improve the enrollment process, start by analyzing your school district's budget.

Does the budget allocate funds for paper-based student enrollment, including reams of paper, printing, mailing costs, and possibly extra staffing? Or, if you have an outdated digital system, do you plan for extra time needed to manage and manually check data?

If the answer is "yes," then replacing these outdated processes with a streamlined, modern online solution will reduce hard costs and improve efficiency, security, and accuracy.

**Here are [five ways](#) schools and districts see cost savings and increased efficiency by switching to a fully online enrollment management system.**

# 1 Save Costs and Time

**A 21st-century online student enrollment system streamlines the archaic processes of a paper-based or outdated digital system.**

Schools typically send families up to 20 pages of forms per student, with many districts sending over 40 pages.

With the rising prices for paper, ink, toner, and postage, the potentially high costs of registration are a big hit to district budgets every year. Plus, many districts often hire temporary support staff during the enrollment season in addition to allotting overtime for administrative teams.

**Evaluating expenses for paper-based student enrollment allows schools to identify where funds are going, providing insight into opportunities to save money.** With online student enrollment software, hard costs for printing, mailing, and more can be eliminated with all forms filled out securely and efficiently on a computer, tablet, or mobile device.

## CUSTOMER RESULTS

### Bedford County Schools, VA

**Saving \$82,000/year**

Factoring in the cost of labor resources, paper, and ink, Bedford's online enrollment solution saves the district an average of \$82,000 per year.

### DeSoto County Schools, MS

**Saving \$260,000/year**

By switching to online enrollment, this district is eliminating 15-page printed packets for 34,000 students, cutting 500,000 sheets per year.



## 2 Make the Process Easier for Staff and Families

No parent looks forward to filling out 20 pages of paperwork, sometimes with repetitive information. And likewise, processing stacks of paperwork and parents' handwriting is no small task for your staff.

But, with a modern online enrollment system, families can access the enrollment system all online, making it more convenient for them to submit applications and required documents from anywhere with an internet connection.

Mobile-responsive, intuitive online forms give families access on any device. You can help remove barriers to registration by ensuring parents can complete the enrollment or annual information update process 100% from their homes with a system that translates all information into their preferred language and allows them to upload documents to the online portal.



## Collecting Payments

It's difficult to process and manage payments received for a school's various fee-based needs, including PTO/PTA organization, yearbook orders, parking, transportation, athletic/sports activities, and boosters. Adding this step to an outdated student enrollment process increases the chance of processing errors.

Offering online payments streamlines the process for both families and staff. Selecting a provider that offers secure, online payments (for both mandatory and optional fees) will allow families to quickly and easily pay for school-related expenses during enrollment. It also cuts down on errors and helps to ensure parental compliance.



## CUSTOMER RESULTS

### Teton County School District 1, WY

#### Save Staff Time

Online enrollment has reduced staff time to process student information by 60%, translating into two weeks' worth of work per school.

### Kildeer Community School District 96, IL

#### Improved Fee Collection

Each year, Kildeer parents had to enroll their students and pay for various fees via paper by filling out and sending back an array of forms and traditional checks. Now, with online enrollment that includes secure fee collection, the district efficiently centralizes enrollment and payment for class and activity fees, PTO membership and events, yearbooks, and other items.

### Westside Community Schools, NE

#### One Convenient Online Location for Parents

Parents with multiple students no longer have to go to each school to drop off required forms. Now, in one convenient online location, parents can securely upload documents.

## 3 Get Better, Timely Information for Staffing and Resourcing

With a paper-based system, processes can be slow. Much of the information you capture may not be updated in your SIS until weeks or even months into the school year. As a result, critical student information may be unreliable during the crucial first weeks of classes.

But when schools have accurate new and returning student enrollment counts before the beginning of the school year, staff can better accommodate student requirements. An online student enrollment solution captures accurate data before school starts, enabling staff to allocate resources to accommodate student learning, medical, and transportation needs.

As an added benefit, families can have confidence in the schools their students attend, knowing the district is well-prepared to educate and care for them—easing parents' anxiety levels and increasing their trust in the district.

### A few examples:

- A district's special services department is alerted if a student registers with specific needs
- The school nurse is promptly notified when a student registers with a medical condition or allergy
- The transportation director is notified when a student is added to a bus route

## CUSTOMER RESULTS

### American School Foundation, Mexico

#### Accurate Info, Increased Admissions

Located in Mexico City, the school boosted its admissions by 1,000 students each year once it moved to a streamlined, online enrollment process. It also boasts accurate information fed into its SIS, which is vital to student safety regarding health/medical and emergency contact data.

### Teton County School District 1, WY

#### Accurate Bussing Lists

The district gets 90% participation from parents during the enrollment process, which means they get nearly all of their students' data before school starts. "Now, before school even starts, parents and students know their buses, lunch codes, all the classes they're in, and everything else needed to start school. Our administrators can make better decisions to meet student needs, staffing needs, and forecasting for budgeting," says Kim Byrne, PowerSchool Administrator.



## 4 Improve Data Accuracy

With an outdated enrollment system, your staff is either transcribing information from handwritten forms or you're pulling data from one digital system to your student information system. Both methods are unreliable and lead to data errors.

With a modern, secure online enrollment system, data is accurate from the beginning and flows directly into your SIS. Automated processes help minimize errors in data entry and document processing, ensuring that student information is accurate and up-to-date.

This accuracy is crucial for compliance and data reporting. With state and federal compliance reporting, clean data can be the difference in whether or not school districts receive funding for budgeting. Inaccurate reports lead to unaccepted and late submissions, which can delay funding.

An online student enrollment solution provides standard formatting of student information, which is essential for correct record-keeping and compliance reporting. For example, there are several ways to write out a street address: "123 Broad Street" could be written as "123 Broad St," "123 BROAD STREET," "123 broad street," etc.

Paper-based student enrollment does not scrub and polish data to meet state requirements, which means administrators spend countless hours formatting student data correctly at the time of input.

An online student enrollment solution increases efficiency by automatically standardizing data through scrub and polish processes so that entries are consistent when entered into the district's student information system.

## CUSTOMER RESULTS

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### Northpointe Christian Schools, MI

#### Accurate Data Essential in Growing School

This private school system has grown by 28% over two years. A system that integrates enrollment with its SIS ensures clean, accurate data. "We know we can trust the data all the way through the system," says their technology director.

### Reed-Custer Community Unit School District 255U, IL

#### Better Data Equals Better State Reporting

The district captures state-required information in PowerSchool Enrollment so they don't have to track down data later for reporting compliance submissions. Plus, PowerSchool Enrollment's polishing data feature ensures the district receives quality, uniform data that flows into the district's SIS.



## 5 Make Students Safer

### Medical Information

If a student has a severe allergic reaction to food on the first day of school, is their medical history and medication information easily accessible? Does the school have the proper instructions to treat that student's condition? Being able to quickly find accurate medical information by the first day of school is vital to making sure students are safe.

Within the online enrollment process, you can ask important health-related questions so that school staff gets the data they need to provide the proper care. Collecting sensitive information through a secure online portal reduces the risk of it ending up in the wrong hands. Paper forms can easily be lost, misplaced, or even copied. An online solution that prioritizes data security with measures like encrypted data and gated access ensures that information gets to where it needs to go without straying.

Once families submit information online, administrative staff can generate reports to send to the school nurse. Nurses receive automatic notifications to sign off on changes made to medical accounts, ensuring they are aware of any updates.

### Up-to-Date Contact Information

In today's school environment—whether for weather-related issues or possible school lockdowns—it's crucial to immediately have quick access to families. School records must reflect accurate contact information for each family, including phone number, email, and street address.

During the online enrollment process, families are prompted to update contact and emergency contact information. This makes families responsible for entering accurate data into the system and eliminates the possibility of human error that administrators face when deciphering someone's handwriting.



## Securely Upload Documents

With paper-based enrollment, school districts can be more at risk of physical security threats. And securing documents can waste time and take up valuable storage space.

In a secure, online enrollment system, documents are filled out, uploaded, and stored digitally and securely so there is no chance for error in reading and transcribing handwriting.

Copies of birth certificates, proof of residence, and immunization records are just a few items schools require from families that can be securely scanned and uploaded. An online system can also ensure accurate data by protecting it with a secure infrastructure, encrypted data transmission and storage, and a transparent privacy policy.



## CUSTOMER RESULTS

### DeSoto County School District, MS

#### Secure Document Scanning & Uploading

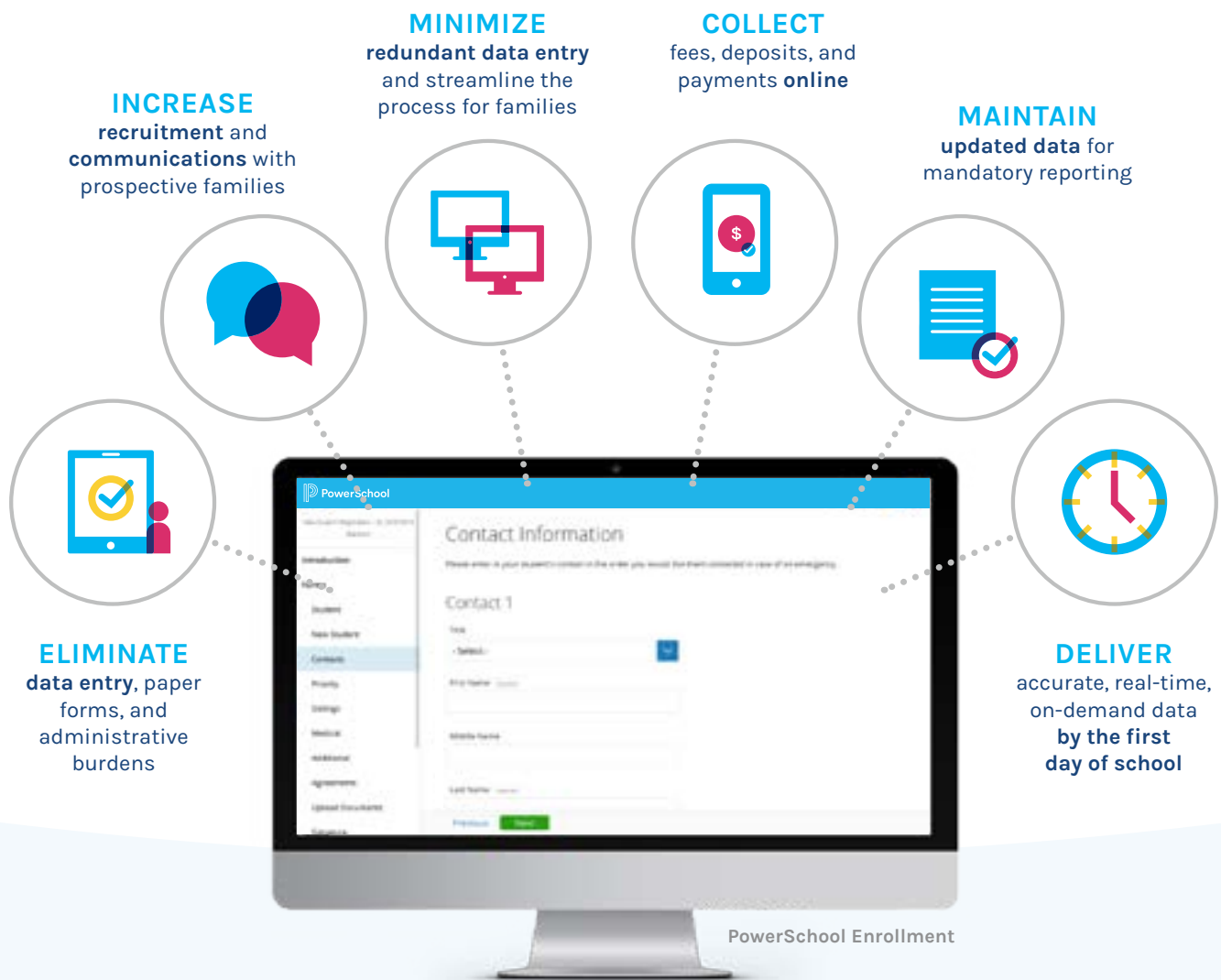
Parents submit all information and scan documents through the district's customized online solution. The district stores these documents for easy access by appropriate staff members. Virtually eliminating all paper documents associated with student enrollment, the district can meet its goal of processing 5,000 new students each year and have their SIS updated with accurate information by the first day of school.

### Iredell-Statesville Schools, NC

#### Eliminating Handwritten Forms

Administrators no longer have to decipher parents' handwriting from 25 forms, including important medical and contact information. The district also collects accurate FERPA data required by the state, tying fields in PowerSchool Enrollment to PowerSchool SIS.

# The Bottom Line: Online Enrollment Benefits Add Up



Schools and districts looking to future-proof their systems for a brighter financial future can start with a new online enrollment management system. 21st-century districts can—and should—cut unnecessary costs and improve districtwide efficiencies while adding convenience, security, and accuracy.

**Your staff and families will appreciate the benefits of a modern, secure online enrollment system.**

# Learn More

Find out why K-12 schools and districts, and charter, private, and independent schools of all sizes are using a **PowerSchool enrollment product** for secure, convenient online enrollment.

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