

Magnolia Independent School District

AI and Smartfields | Case Study

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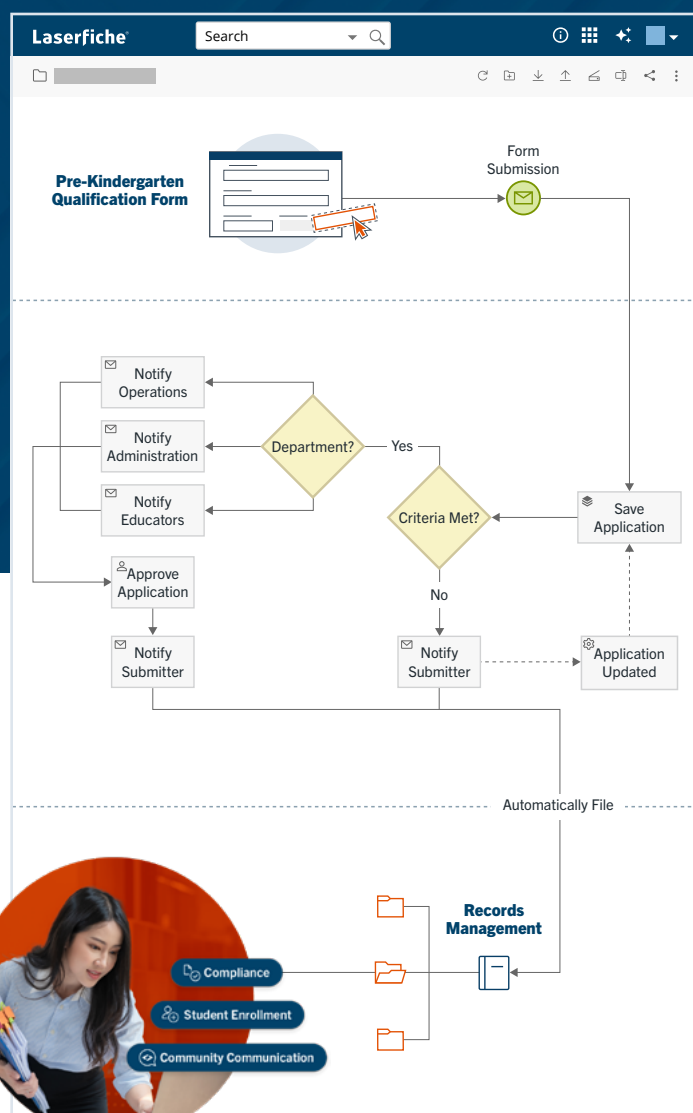


SITUATION:

- Parents applying for Magnolia ISD's pre-kindergarten program often waited up to three months to learn whether their child qualified for enrollment
- A paper-based review process required multiple handoffs and delayed responses to families
- Staff had limited visibility into application status and enrollment projections
- Growing enrollment increased pressure to deliver faster, more responsive services

RESULTS:

- Reduced pre-kindergarten qualification timelines to approximately two days, a 98% improvement
- Eliminated unnecessary review steps and simplified application routing
- Improved visibility for families, staff and district leadership
- Processed hundreds of applications within days of launch while maintaining rapid response times



Helping Families Get Answers Faster

For parents of young children, planning for the school year starts months in advance. They arrange childcare, adjust work schedules and make decisions that affect the family budget.

At Magnolia Independent School District (ISD) in Texas, many families had to make those decisions while waiting to learn whether their child qualified for the district's pre-kindergarten program. Texas requires children to meet specific eligibility requirements for publicly funded pre-kindergarten, making timely enrollment decisions especially important. Yet some parents waited up to three months for an answer.

Located northwest of Houston, Magnolia ISD serves approximately 15,000 students across a fast-growing district. As enrollment increased, district leaders looked for ways to make important services more responsive for families while reducing administrative work for staff. For Brenda Davis, systems administrator, the lengthy qualification process stood out as a prime candidate for transformation.

"We had a paper-heavy workflow with a lot of manual steps and several handoffs that slowed things down," said Davis. "Parents were waiting for answers, and staff didn't always have visibility into the status of their application."



Davis found a solution in the district's Laserfiche document management system. At the time, however, the platform was primarily used to store special education records and other long-term student documents. Having administered Laserfiche at a previous organization, Davis knew it could play a much larger role — especially if the district embraced advanced automation and AI features.

“When people started to see what Laserfiche could do beyond storing documents, the conversation changed,” she said. “We could automate processes, improve visibility and make things easier for both staff and families.”

Accelerating the Path to Enrollment

To transform the pre-kindergarten qualification workflow, Davis redesigned the process using Laserfiche Forms. Parents can now submit pre-qualification information electronically from a computer, tablet or mobile device without going through the entire, cumbersome enrollment process up front. This keeps unqualified applicant data out of the student information system, keeping database records clean. Information is automatically routed to the appropriate reviewers, and families receive prompt feedback if the district needs additional information to move forward.

By mapping the workflow, Davis also discovered that there reviewers were included in the evaluation chain without a clear operational purpose. She eliminated those redundant steps entirely, routing applications only to relevant personnel.

“When I told them they were taken off the process, they were like, ‘Wait, you mean I don’t have to do this anymore? Thank you!’” Davis said.

Up to 98% faster
qualification decisions

The results were immediate. Within days of launching the new process, Magnolia ISD received hundreds of applications while continuing to provide rapid responses to families. District leaders also gained earlier insight into projected enrollment, helping them plan staffing and resources sooner.

“With Laserfiche, we took the pre-kindergarten qualification process from two to three months down to two days,” said Davis. This represents a 98% improvement in the timeline. “Parents know much sooner whether their child qualifies, and our staff has much better visibility into the process.”

For families, the biggest benefit was certainty. Parents no longer had to wait months to make decisions about childcare and other arrangements before the school year began. Families whose children did not initially qualify can immediately contact the district to understand what additional information or documentation is required. In many cases, parents can update their applications and move forward without losing valuable time.



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Brenda Davis

System Administrator, Magnolia Independent School District

Automating Transcripts with Smart Fields

While Laserfiche Forms streamlined pre-K enrollment, Magnolia ISD also adopted Smart Fields — an AI-powered data extraction feature — to revolutionize permanent student records and transcripts.

Processing thousands of high school student transcripts manually to verify graduation statuses was previously a labor-intensive chore for staff. Using Smart Fields, Davis built intelligent prompts directly into the metadata to automate document classification and verification upon upload.

“The big takeaway was for our student transcripts,” explained Davis. “In order to determine whether a student is classified as a graduate or just a withdrawal, I had to know if there was a graduation date or if there was a signature at the bottom of the transcript. So I built a natural-language prompt that says: ‘Look for a signature at the bottom of the page just above title of school official. If there’s a signature there, then change the status to graduate.’”

Smart Fields executes the task automatically, scanning documents, filling key metadata fields, updating incorrect details, and classifying transcripts without requiring staff to open and visually inspect each file.

A Growing Role Across the District

The success of these initiatives demonstrated what was possible when Magnolia ISD applied Laserfiche beyond records storage. Today, the district uses Laserfiche to support a growing number of student and administrative processes, including:

- Attendance note submissions: Parents submit absence notes electronically from a computer or mobile device, making it easier for schools to receive, process and track documentation.
- Permanent student records management: Magnolia ISD stores transcripts, assessments and other permanent student records in Laserfiche, giving staff secure access to information while supporting long-term retention requirements.
- Automated student folder creation: Workflows automatically create student folders when documents are added, eliminating manual setup and ensuring records are organized consistently across the district.
- Records management and security assignment: Laserfiche automatically applies records management policies and security permissions, helping staff maintain compliance while reducing administrative effort.
- HR and employee onboarding initiatives: To improve visibility and reduce paperwork, the district is expanding Laserfiche into HR processes, including employee onboarding, personnel status changes and other document-driven workflows.

Hundreds of applications

processed within days of launch



Magnolia ISD is also piloting new workflows designed to simplify student transitions between campuses. Rather than physically transporting boxes of student records, staff will be able to access information digitally as students move throughout the district.

“In this day and age, staff shouldn’t have to load boxes of student records and drive them to another campus,” said Davis. “By using Laserfiche, the information is wherever it needs to be, whenever administrators need it.”



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System Administrator, Magnolia Independent
School District

Building Momentum with Rapid Results

As more employees experience the benefits of automation, interest in new projects continues to grow. Davis often starts with a Laserfiche Form because it delivers a quick win. Replacing a paper-based process with a digital form makes it easier to collect information, route it to the right people and track progress along the way.

That momentum is helping Laserfiche expand into additional areas of the district, including finance and business operations. What began as a system for storing records has evolved into a platform that helps staff work more efficiently and deliver better service to students and families.

“What excites me most is seeing people come to us with new ideas,” said Davis. “The more they learn what’s possible with Laserfiche, the more opportunities they find to improve the way they work.”

ABOUT LASERFICHE

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Trusted by organizations of all sizes — from startups to Fortune 500 enterprises — Laserfiche empowers teams to boost productivity, foster collaboration, and deliver a superior customer experience at scale. Headquartered in Long Beach, California, Laserfiche operates globally, with offices across North America, Europe, and Asia.



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