My solution to this isn't high-tech, but helps me keep track! I always print the student's schedule and write the request on it. That helps me to keep them in order, as the date is printed on the schedule. I then email the new schedule when it is complete. Schedule change season is not fun!

You probably know this, but Google Forms can be configured to allow anyone to respond (i.e., make a request) even if they don't have a Google account. But you're right that people without Google accounts wouldn't be able to see or change their response. So I could still see this working for you as a way for people to submit requests. When I was a high school counselor we had an email account specifically for schedule changes. Our IT set it up. We could then set an auto-reply that said something like, "Thank you for submitting your schedule change request. It will be considered in the order it was received. During certain times of the year (before school, start of terms) we receive many requests and it can take up to 72 hours for counselors to respond. We ask for your patience and promise to do everything we can to accommodate your request. Thank you in advance." We'd then work on the requests in the order we got them and reply to people when we could. Sometimes we'd have to say something like, "Sorry, but at this time we have no spots available in that course. We are holding this request in our inbox and will come back to it if/when a spot opens. Thank you for your patience." I used to keep a spreadsheet of exactly what students had asked for so I could quickly remember who wanted what.

We allow schedule changes until the last day of school (May 24) and don't honor requests for changes after that date unless there are special circumstances (i.e. failed a class, took or didn't take summer school, etc). We post it all over the place in the spring and it's on our course request sheets and constantly tell the kids and put it on the announcements especially toward the end of the year. We still have some try to make changes, but for the most part we say no.

We have a registration day and students are assigned a time by grade level to come in.

Seniors 9-10 am; Juniors 10-11; Sophomores 1-2; Freshmen 2-3

Changes are made in person during those times. Those I do without fuss and with a smile. The first 3 days of the semester students can make changes. However, at this point the student must take a paper around and get the teacher's permission to enter the class and take the paper home to get a parent signature. This makes it a bit more work for the student and encourages them to make the change on the registration day instead. Our handbook says changes can only be made in the first 3 days of the semester and this is on the daily announcements at the beginning of school. There is no stretching this out for the first couple of weeks of school. The time before school starts is always super crazy.

I was at my current school a year and changed the policy on this because schedule changes at the beginning of the semester were so overwhelming. We are almost done with scheduling for next year. Students have until the counselors are off for summer break (May 30) to make changes freely. After that, they must complete the schedule change request form. If they don't meet the criteria, they aren't changed. We meet with every student individually for at least 20 minutes to schedule their classes. I communicate this multiple times with parents/students through email, announcements, and Facebook posts. I communicated the new policy multiple times at the end of last year. I thought there would be push back this year but there has been none. It was so much less stressful at the beginning of each semester.

I encouraged parents to come/call during our scheduling week for that grade. They could change the schedule online until we finalized when we met with the student at the end of the week. After that, they had to call me. Student or parent could change their schedule at any time until the end of the school year. About two weeks before school got out, I gave out schedules for kids/parents to see. If they saw any problems then they needed to see/call to make changes. We had diffferent policies at different times but sometimes this was the FINAL schedule. Sometimes they had a couple days at the beginning of the fall semester to change. At the beginning of the school year, kids received a new copy of their schedule. If we were allowing changes, ANY change after that first day schedule parents were made aware of and they had to sign a form. I will attach it.

We don’t allow any schedule changes after April for the next school year. The only thing students can do is drop a class for a study hall if they don’t already have one. We implemented this a few years for the same reason…August was just unbearable. It was hard on our teachers and our master schedule. The first couple years we had to say no a lot, and we got a little pushback, but we held firm and we pointed out that this policy was in our curriculum handbook well in advance…and then everyone just got it and it’s been really a great thing. We would get all these excuses like, “Well, I thought I wanted to study that in college but now I want to study something else” which really meant “My senior year schedule looks really hard now and I want something easier” or “My friend dropped it so now I don’t want it”. There was some whining but after holding firm, it’s been great. As far as parents being upset about schedule changes…I think that’s also a culture thing. I have 500-600 students and we make a lot of changes in June/July due to balancing, new teacher hires, teachers leaving, all that kind of stuff. We tell kids, check your schedule the night before the first day, and that nothing is final until then. You don’t have time to tell every family about every schedule change, and they have to understand that! If I were you, I would not keep a log of schedule changes…that’s a lot of work, and really, it’s nothing they need to worry about. August is so hectic as it is, trying to get school started.

We only allow schedule changes to increase academic rigor during the first three days of school. The student picks up a form and it requires a parent signature. It has taken me years to undo what the previous counselor did, but the consistency has paid off. On our course request sheets, we also include a line about not expecting to change requests once it is turned in. In the summer, we mail home a course verification which is just what the student has in their schedule, but not the order or who their teacher is. Some parents/students feel the 3 day rule is harsh, but I am the only school counselor at a small school. I cannot spend that long working with students that have changed their mind and our master schedule cannot handle it. We also have courses where they have taken quizzes or tests within the first week of the semester.

Honestly, we have quit allowing changes. We were putting hours and hours into the process in the spring only to make a ton of changes when the school year starts in the fall. We started advertising in the spring that changes will not be made after May 1, including the beginning of the school year. It is a culture shift that is initially painful to make but worth it. Now we only make a few changes on a case-by-case basis, and it’s wonderful! The hardest part is getting all of the counselors in your school to follow the protocol; they all have to give the same message in order for it to work.