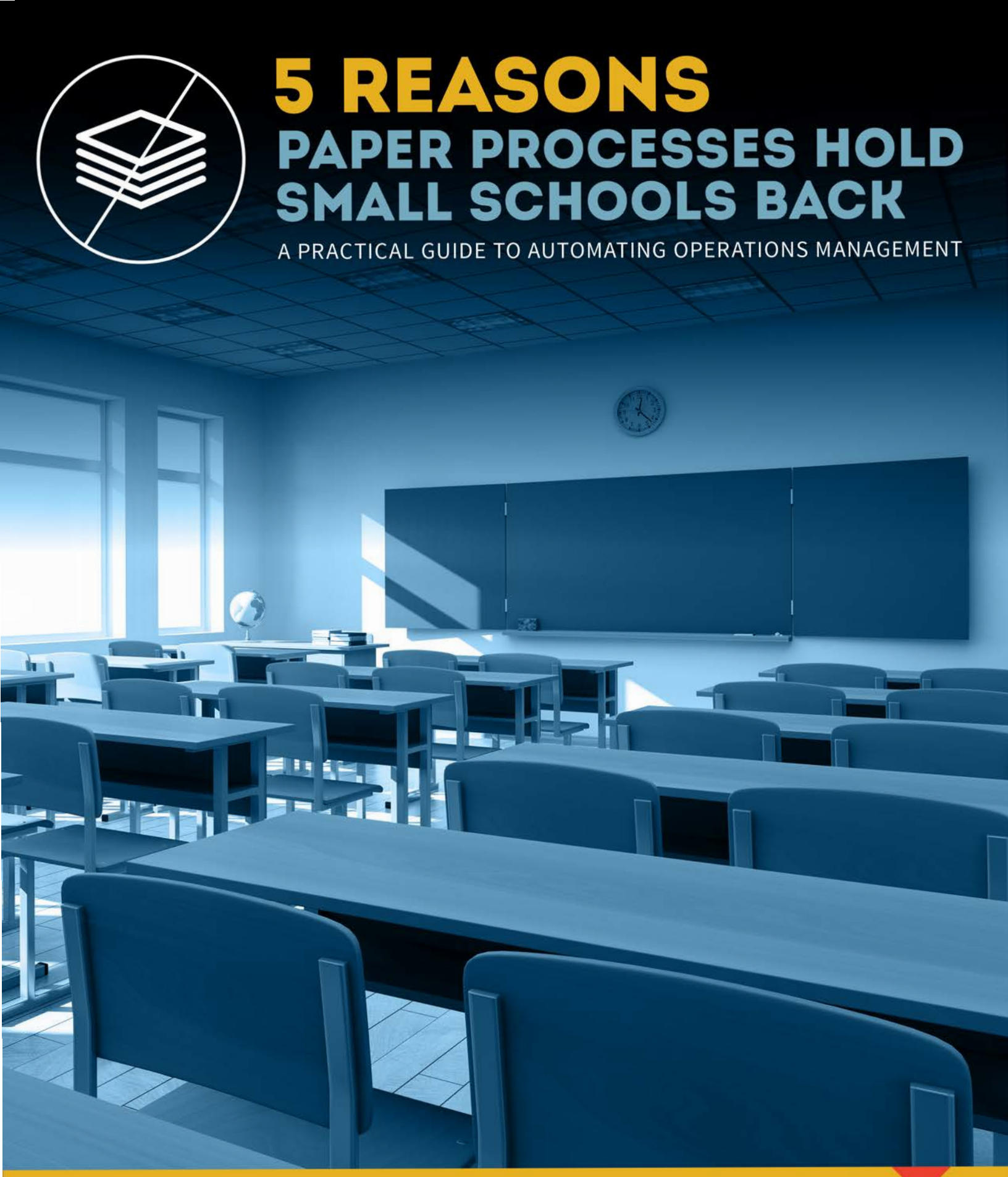
5 REASONS PAPER PROCESSES HOLD SMALL SCHOOLS BACK

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO AUTOMATING OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT



SCHOOLDUDE

eBook

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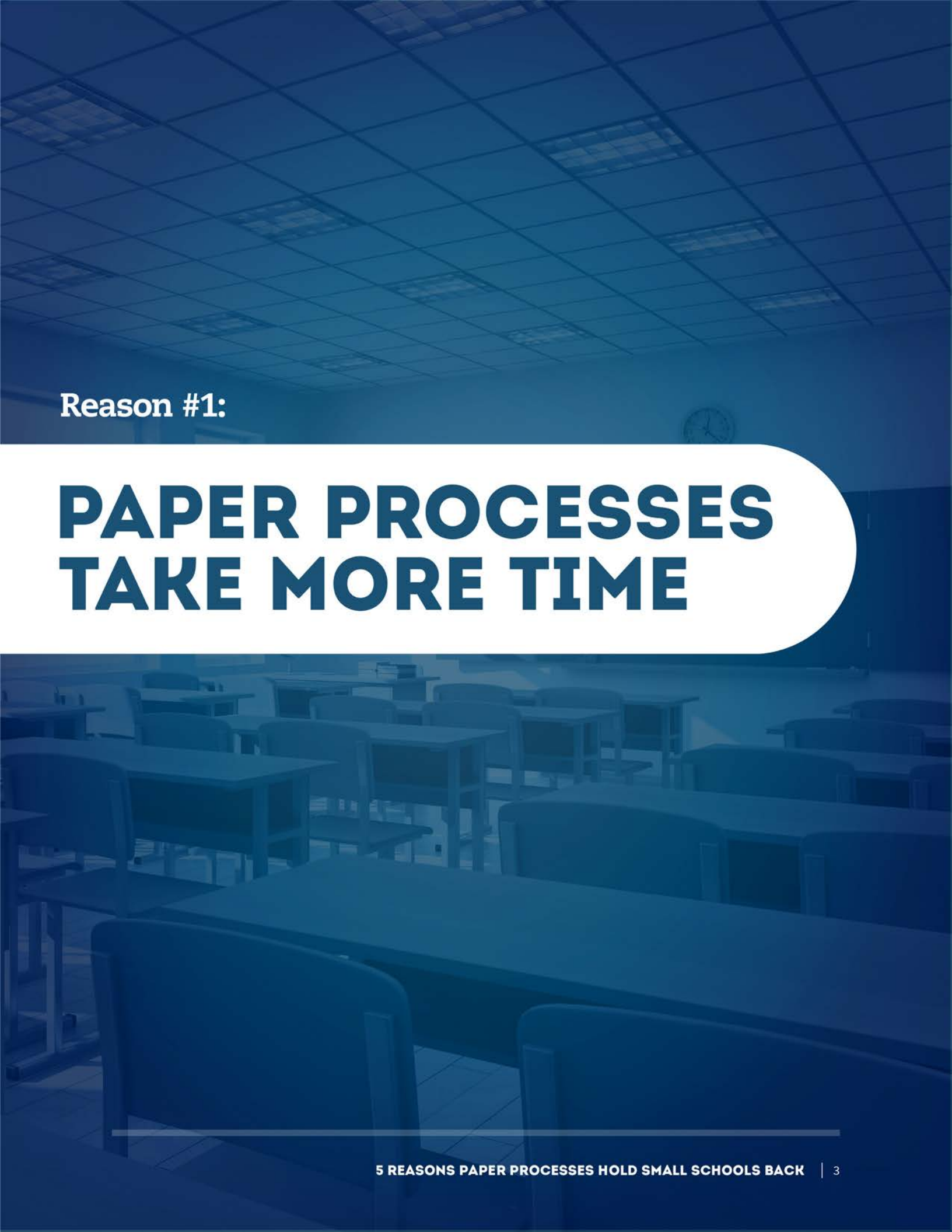
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INTRODUCTION

Small school districts have much to offer the students, parents, teachers and communities they serve. The term "small" is, in many ways, a misnomer considering the huge impact these schools and districts have on so many. But when it comes to budget, staffing and many other resources, being a smaller school can often feel like an anchor holding back progress.

> ***"...when it comes to budget, staffing and many other resources, being a smaller school can often feel like an anchor holding back progress."***

Antiquated paper processes are a thorn in the side of administrators and staff members in smaller schools. Operations departments often have a perception that moving to automation or software is a major challenge and time commitment; however, making the move to automation represents a significant opportunity for small schools to do much more with their time and resources. This eBook explores **5 Reasons Paper Processes Hold Small Schools Back** and provides peer-proven tips for automating your operations management.



Reason #1:

PAPER PROCESSES TAKE MORE TIME

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If there is one thing that school staffers don't have enough of, it's time. There's the Superintendent who is also managing maintenance; the Maintenance Director dealing with transportation, energy and events; the librarian performing double duty as IT Director. You'd be hard pressed to find an enterprise business where folks wear quite so many hats. Add to this multi-role setup a slow-moving paper process and you've got a recipe for backlog.

How many times per school year do teachers complain about lost or delayed maintenance requests? What about the office assistant whose entire job is being taken over by pushing paper or logging requests into a spreadsheet...and where do the requests go from there?

A software-based operations management solution eradicates the problem of forms being lost on impossibly busy desks and makes it easier for staff to process requests in a quick and easy manner. And when that solution has workflow technology built in, the process becomes simpler for everyone—from a teacher requesting an issue be fixed to the maintenance staff or IT technicians fixing the problem.

Allen Thacker, Supervisor of Maintenance & Custodial Operations at Oak Ridge Schools in Tennessee greatly improved their efficiency by switching from paper. ***"We reduced a backlog of over 600 work orders within one week, and have maintained a work order completion rate of over 70%,"*** said Allen.

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Reason #1: (cont'd)

PAPER PROCESSES TAKE MORE TIME

Imagine the number of work orders you process each year. On average, schools complete one work order per student annually.



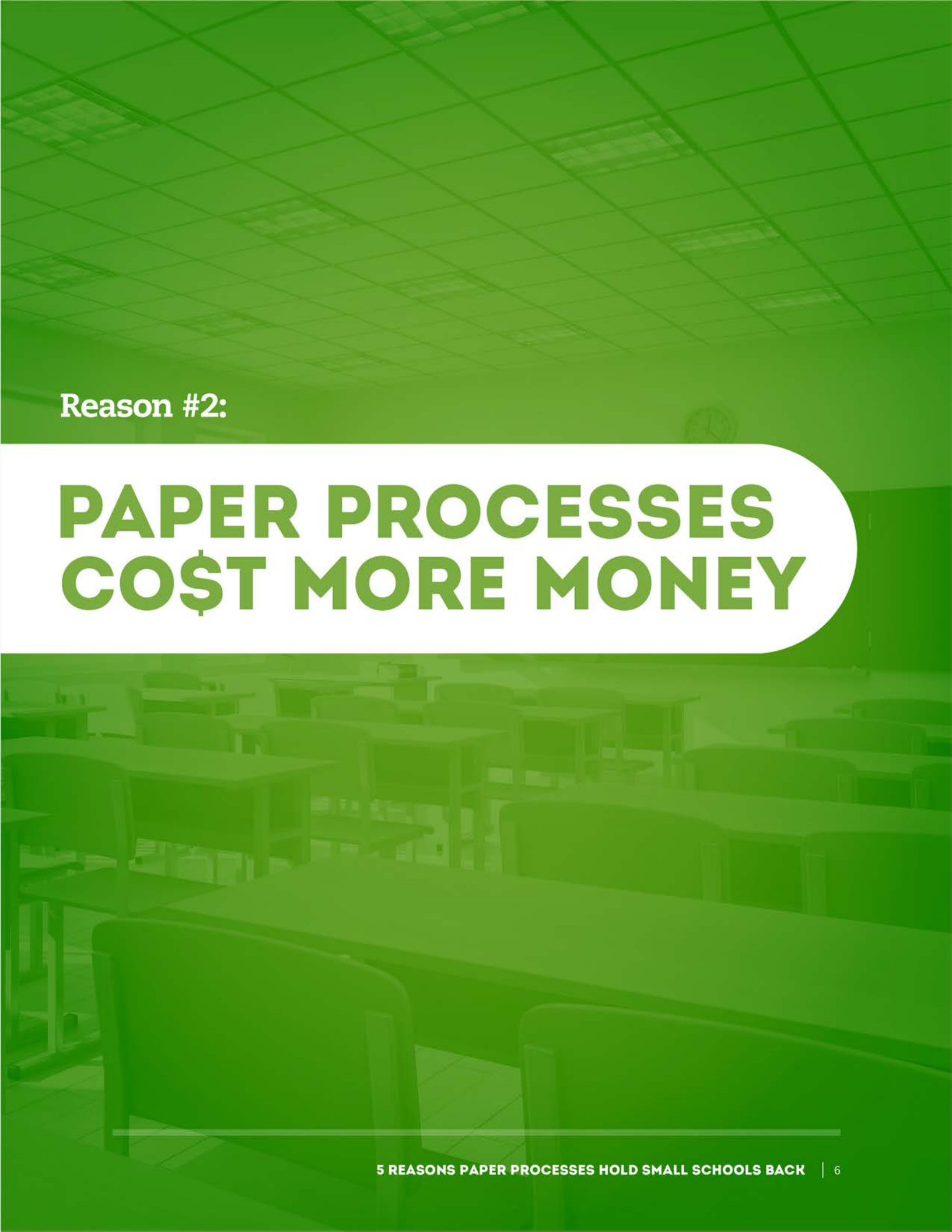
Average **MINUTES** saved per work order with a move away from paper.

EXAMPLE:
If your district has 2,500 students, you could save over 1,250 hours per year by simply automating the work order process.

SCHOOLDUDE CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

"When we were dealing in paper, requests would sometimes sit on someone's desk for weeks with the Maintenance Department having never been notified. With SchoolDude's [maintenance platform], work is no longer misplaced or disregarded. We now have a much clearer way to communicate requests and notify staff of stats, updates, and progress."

– Shane Palmer, Maintenance and Transportation Director, Stratford ISD, Stratford, TX



Reason #2:

PAPER PROCESSES CO$T MORE MONEY

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If the old adage "time is money" applies anywhere, it's here—but there's much more to the cost equation when it comes to using paper processes for operations management in schools. Much of the expense related to paper boils down to districts' inability to properly track their work, impacting every element of your operations and budget. Let's look at three key situations where paper processes bleed money:

- **Employee salaries & overtime**
- **Recouping event costs**
- **Tracking historical data**

EMPLOYEE SALARIES & OVERTIME: There are many different scenarios in which staff is impacted by lack of automation. Consider a process where outside agencies or groups must request event space via paper. Now imagine that paper form, once submitted, gets lost or sits a few days too long—or the event staff doesn't give the maintenance team enough notice about required set-up. At the last minute, staff members are in panic mode pulling bodies to meet an everyday sort of request, often resulting in facilities staff overtime that could have been avoided with proper planning.

In an automated process scenario, that same event request could come in via an online form. In such a case, it would be immediately processed into workflow—with someone assigned to every step of fulfillment. Rushes may still occur, but an automated workflow process adds a new layer of accountability, visibility, and measurement that can make it much easier to plan and budget for similar events in the future.

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Reason #2: (cont'd)

PAPER PROCESSES COST MORE MONEY

RECOUPING EVENT COSTS: Events in your buildings cost money. There's the cost of having maintenance staff on site, increased utility fees, and wear and tear on facilities over time to just name a few. Automating your workflow makes it much easier to keep track of these costs all in one place. By capturing event costs over time, your district can start to be better informed about what—and how—to charge for future events. Sure, a stack of paper can be entered into a spreadsheet and quantified, but an automated system allows you to view detailed reports at the click of a mouse and stay up-to-date as events take place and costs change, unlike spreadsheets.

SCHOOLDUDE CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

"With SchoolDude's facility scheduling, we've been better able to evaluate requests and determine if there should be rental fees assessed. This has allowed us to recoup some of our prior losses and better plan for the future."

– Pamela White, Transportation and Maintenance Administrative Assistant, Sturgis Public Schools, Sturgis, MI

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Reason #2: (cont'd)

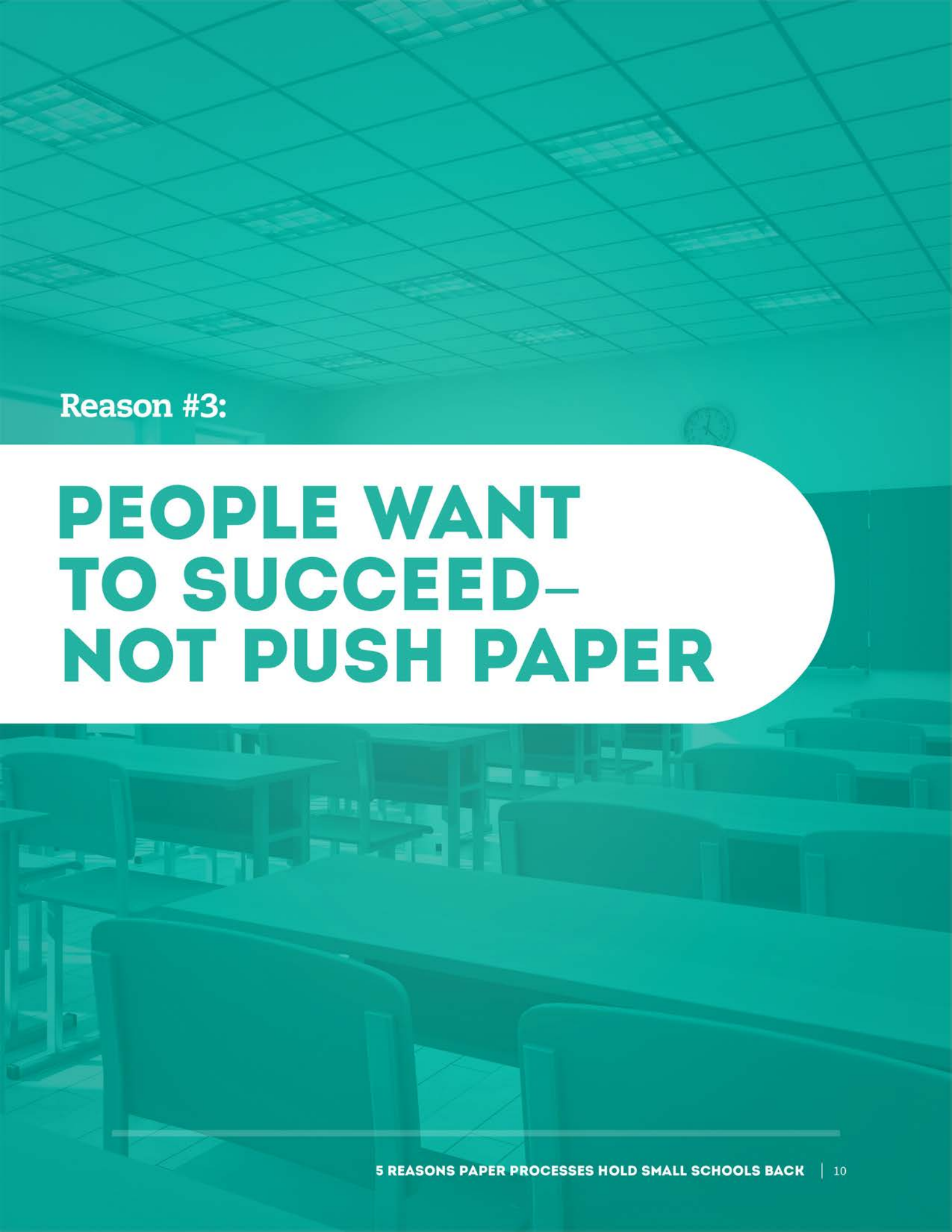
PAPER PROCESSES CO$T MORE MONEY

TRACKING HISTORICAL DATA: When everything you do is on paper and in file folders, it's difficult to look up vendor charges, costs for prior events, or past years' utility costs. When everyone has access to one central portal, sharing information such as vendor rates, resources employed, amounts billed, and tickets logged is extremely simple. When complete details for every maintenance call, IT request, field trip, or community event are available at your fingertips, you're better able to plan for future needs in terms of funding, human resources, and time.

SCHOOLDUDE CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

"We needed to cut our utility expenses but had no way of tracking historical data. SchoolDude's [energy management platform] allowed us to track our costs and impose simple behavior modifications to reduce electrical costs. This provided a way to verify high cost problems and placed responsibility on staff to submit their requests electronically."

– Jeff Sargent, Facilities Coordinator, Los Alamos Public Schools, Los Alamos, NM



Reason #3:

PEOPLE WANT TO SUCCEED– NOT PUSH PAPER

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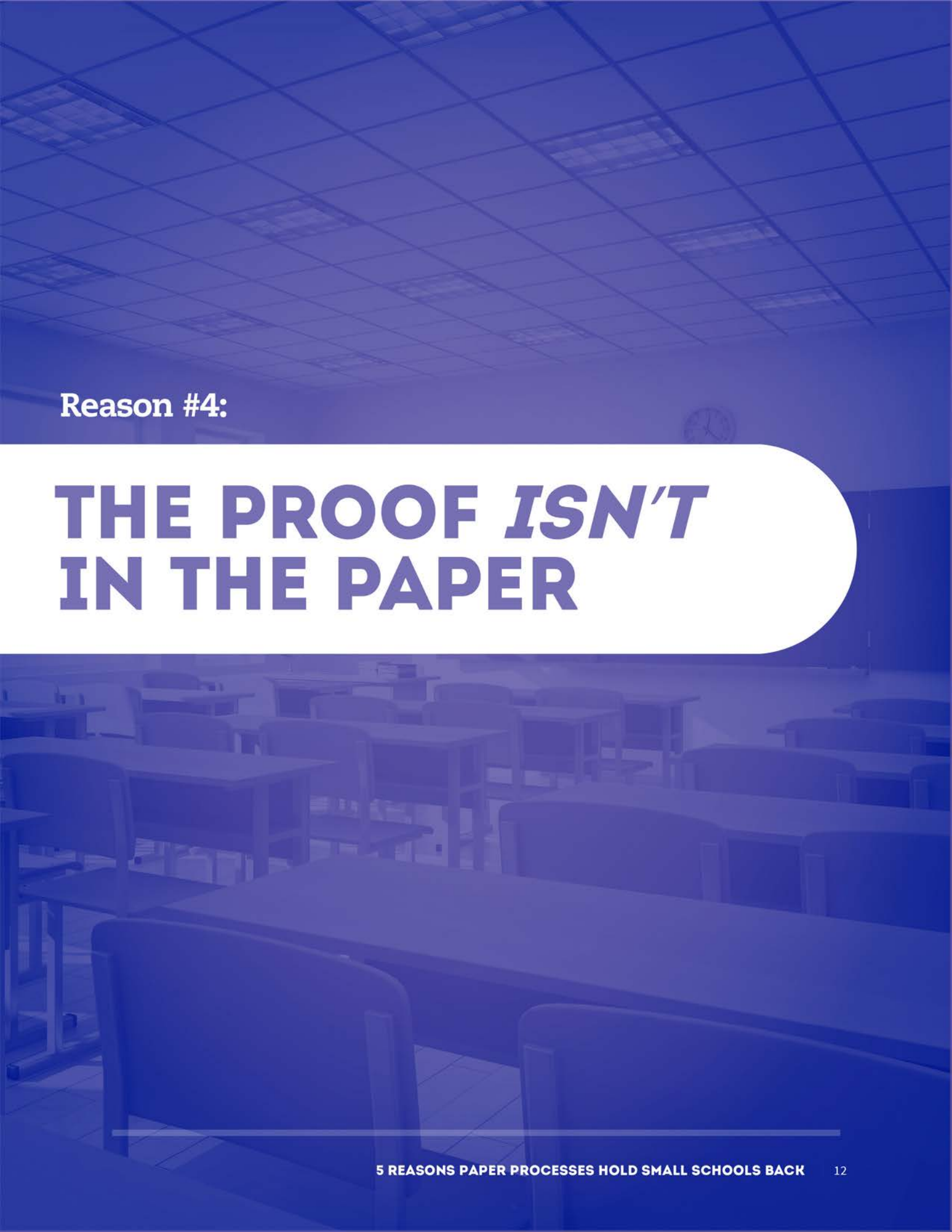
Coming into work on a Monday morning to a desk piled high with papers can feel like a big letdown. Implementing an automated operations management system can work wonders for employee morale by allowing staff members to easily see their accomplishments adding up—and, perhaps more importantly, for the administration to see all the hard work being completed each day and reward it accordingly.

According to a 2015 SchoolDude survey, one of the common challenges small schools face is that maintenance and IT staff receive only negative feedback and complaints from customers within the district. When administration has a simple way to track and report on employee activities, it becomes much easier to prove the value of existing staff members, justify promotions and raises, and identify areas where new hires are required. In addition, the ability to provide positive recognition can be a powerful motivator for people to learn new skills and take on other important tasks.

SCHOOLDUDE CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

"Our Maintenance Department used SchoolDude's software to track in-house costs and compare them with outside contractors' costs to perform the same work. Doing so helped us prove our worth to the district, leading to increased pay for the staff as well as recognition of their outstanding work."

– Scott Clinch, Director of Operations and Maintenance, Ottawa Township High School, Ottawa, IL



Reason #4:

THE PROOF *ISN'T* IN THE PAPER

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Paper processes hinder every aspect of service management, especially measurement of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). With a move to automation, work can be done more quickly and school districts can use concrete data to prove the need for additional budget and resources, including more staff members or higher salaries.

For example, it's a Wednesday morning in January and Ms. Hart's classroom is freezing again. Instead of filling out a paper form to report an HVAC issue, Ms. Hart simply logs a service request online and receives an immediate confirmation that the request was received. Ms. Hart can now go about her day knowing that maintenance is aware of the problem.

Likewise, Mr. Miller from the maintenance team can arrive Wednesday morning and immediately get cracking on new requests. When Ms. Hart's HVAC is fixed, Mr. Miller closes the ticket which automatically notifies Ms. Hart and his Supervisor that the work is complete. Not only is Ms. Hart satisfied with her service, but now there is a record online of who took the ticket, how long it took to complete the work, any issues that came up while the work was being completed, and when the work was done.

Administration can also quickly and easily look up historical data on such requests. For example, if this is the 15th HVAC request Mr. Miller has closed this year, it could be time to evaluate if replacing the HVAC unit is a more cost-effective solution than patchwork repairs. Andrew Choi, the District Administrator of Instructional Technology at Deer Park School District in New York, used data and reports from his software system to ***"determine that 32.3% of our support calls were from one of our 10 district buildings. This data helped get us approval to hire another technician."***

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THE PROOF *ISN'T* IN THE PAPER

SCHOOLDUDE CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

"We had a lot of heating-related requests coming into our Maintenance staff. We used SchoolDude software to track and compile all of these work orders, as well as the dollar amount spent on outside contractors. Doing so helped us justify the need for an on-staff heat technician to our CFO."

– Dave Sutton, Facilities Manager, Norwell Public Schools, Norwell, MA



Reason #5:

PAPER FAILURES IMPACT REPUTATION

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PAPER FAILURES IMPACT REPUTATION

Many elements of operations can significantly impact a school district's reputation. An automated operations management process can help schools get ahead in many key areas including:

- **Performing preventive maintenance**
- **Ensuring the safety of children**
- **Supporting the community**

PERFORMING PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE: In most schools, preventive maintenance is likened to a magical unicorn. It's something all schools would love to see happening but the reality is, there are not enough hours in the day, especially for small schools with limited technicians. An automated preventive maintenance program can help maintenance staff be more proactive, with set schedules for preventive tasks, which ultimately result in less emergency work orders and less requests coming in from faculty and other customers.

ENSURING STUDENT SAFETY: Believe it or not, paper processes have the power to put students in harm's way. It could be the bus that fails to show up at an away football game because the paper request form got lost on someone's desk. Or the leaky roof that finally gives way and sends water and debris crashing down on a fourth grader's desk. These types of incidents can cause serious reputation issues that last for years (in addition to upset parents and disrupted student life).

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Reason #5: (cont'd)

PAPER FAILURES IMPACT REPUTATION

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: As more outside groups place demands on school spaces, it's important to have an efficient way to manage after-school events, keep track of all requirements to ensure events run smoothly, and create a positive image for the school district within the community.

For example, if an interested party is required to download and complete a request form from your website, then fax or mail it into the school—or come to the school to pick up the request form—the process can feel taxing and very outdated. Even worse, if paper requests get lost and a space is double-booked, the district's reputation suffers.

An automated operations management solution allows you to provide the community with easy-to-use online request forms while giving your staff members all the event management, resource planning, and billing support required to make any event a success.

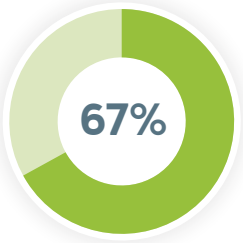
SCHOOLDUDE CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

"Our paper trip request process was causing major problems due to a big lag time for the request to reach the transportation office. This caused instances where students would be waiting outside for a bus that never shows up. With SchoolDude's [transportation management] software, all requests are now handled electronically and routed to the transportation supervisor in a timely manner."

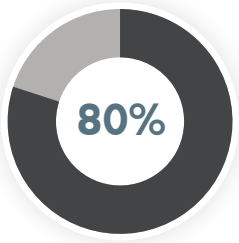
– Roger Worms, Supervisor of Operations, Western School Division, Morden, Canada

CONCLUSION

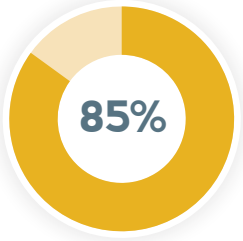
Making the transition from paper processes to an automated operations management system can transform your school district's operational efficiency, improve staff morale, and enhance its overall reputation. A recent SchoolDude client survey* asked school districts with less than 5,000 students about their move to automation. They reported experiencing the following benefits:



said that automating their processes helped them justify budget and staff requests



said automating their processes helped improve the learning environment/facilities



said automating their processes helped them better juggle multiple responsibilities



said automating their processes helped them improve student/teacher morale

Public K-12 Small School Survey, SchoolDude, March 31, 2015, 441 respondents

Don't let your paper processes be an anchor holding your school district back. Learn more about cloud-based software to automate your processes and transform your operations.

About SchoolDude

SchoolDude offers cloud-based software solutions to streamline all areas of your operations – maintenance management, energy management, facility usage, technology management, and safety management. SchoolDude's solutions automate the work order and IT ticket request process, monitor inventory usage, schedule preventive maintenance, forecast capital needs, simplify event management, and track technology assets. Our solutions provide a global view of your organization's operations and improve communication with all departments, faculty and students at your district. Learn more at www.schooldude.com/smallschools.