

Novi Community School District

# **Simplified Professional Development Requests**

## Manual, Paper-based Process Blocks Professional Development

Novi Community School District, the #1 Best School District in Michigan according to Niche, faced significant delays and frustrations with their manual, paper-based Professional Release Time Request process.

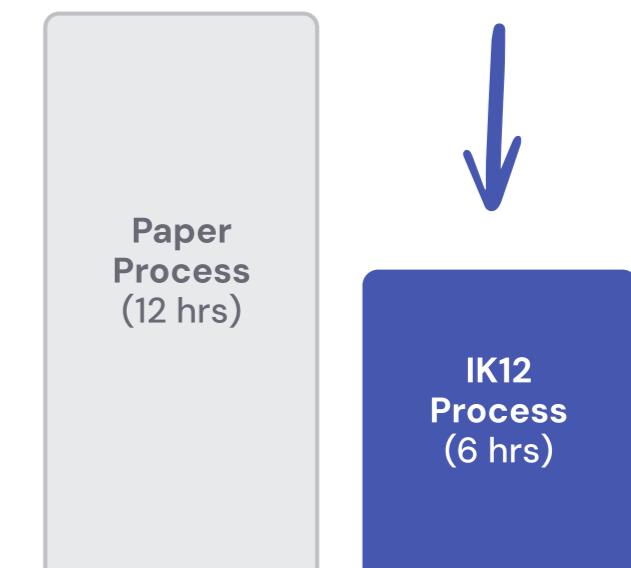
Teachers and administrators struggled with lengthy approval timelines, redundant steps, and frequent errors, making it difficult for educators to access crucial professional development opportunities.

## 1,200 Hours Saved, 4,500 Hours of Growth and Development

By partnering with Informed K12, Novi streamlined their process, **saving over 1,200 hours in administrative time**. Teachers completed over 4,500 hours of professional development, leading workshops and attending national conferences.

Research consistently shows that effective teacher professional development positively impacts student achievement by improving instructional practices and fostering student engagement (IMSE Journal, Teacher PD and Student Achievement). The new system empowered educators and improved workflow efficiency, enhancing student learning opportunities.

For Novi, the improved workflow is more than just a logistical win. It's an investment in the professional development of its teachers, the empowerment of its leaders, and the enrichment of its students' learning experiences. With every hour saved and every conference attended, Novi is building a stronger, more connected community of educators.



**1,200 hours saved on over 400 submissions**

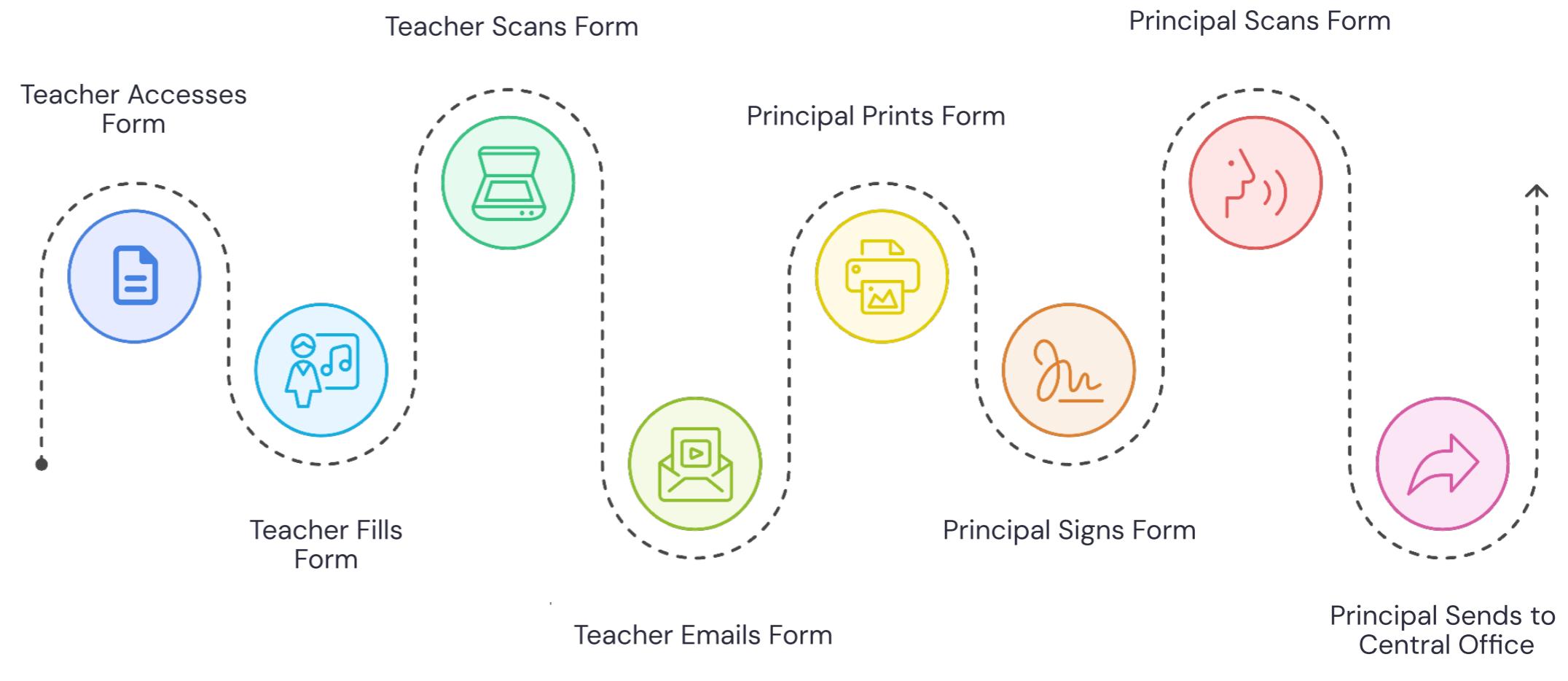
## Delays That Frustrate, Details That Matter

The process was frustrating for teachers and the central office team, as approval timelines could take days or weeks, requiring teachers to plan well in advance.

Administrators aim to support teachers' professional development while ensuring requests are accurate to manage budgets, comply with funding guidelines, and align opportunities with district goals.

Accurate information also aids in logistical planning, like arranging substitute coverage, and ensures equitable access to professional development.

## Professional Release Time Request





**“The implementation process forces us to think about step by step, piece by piece, where everything goes.**

**This made the workflow a lot cleaner.”**

Jeffrey Dinklemann



#### **Digitization and Redesign: A Workflow Overhaul**

Jeffrey Dinklemann, Director of Employee Relations, discovered that Informed K12 could solve the district's Professional Release Time Requests. Digitizing the forms would make it easier for teachers to access and complete them, and the workflow automation would ensure that each form went to the correct approver.

Jeff and the Human Resources team discovered early during implementation that their Professional Release Time Request process needed adjustments. Informed K12's implementation team, leveraging their deep knowledge of trends and best practices in school district operations, partnered closely with Jeff's team to refine the process without requiring an extensive overhaul. Through hands-on consultations, they

helped the district evaluate each step of the workflow, asking targeted questions about approval necessity, submission access, and areas needing stronger checks and balances. By guiding the team through these considerations and offering tailored recommendations, the district emerged with a streamlined and more effective Professional Release Time Request process that aligned with their unique needs and maintained familiar workflows.

The form now addressed requests for all events, in-district or out, virtual or in-person. No longer a standalone request, the form also had a section dedicated to estimating expenses that provided additional information for teachers on how to submit mileage reimbursement requests and the proper process to receive sales tax exemption for lodging.

## Learn more about how Informed K12 supports districts across the nation



### Saving Hours, Gaining Leaders

According to Cathryn Loeffler-Park, Executive Assistant for the Teacher and Learning Department, they processed more requests in a shorter amount of time. On average, the district has saved three hours to complete and process a single request. Since partnering with Informed K12, they have received over 400 submissions for Professional Release Time. That's a time savings of 1,200 hours or 30 weeks.

Since transitioning off of paper and to Informed K12, **employees have completed over 4,500 hours of professional development**. Novi teachers and administrators have also used the time to lead training sessions or present at state or national conferences.

More than 51 employees indicated that they were presenting or leading sessions on the Professional Release

Time request. Novi employees presented and led sessions at institutions like the following:

- Michigan Association of School Business Officials annual conference
- Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education
- National Council of Teachers of English workshops

### Advancing District Excellence

As Michigan's #1 school district, Novi Community School District exemplifies excellence in education. By saving over 1,200 hours and enabling 4,500 hours of professional development through Informed K12, they've empowered teachers to lead and excel. Novi's success highlights how innovation and streamlined processes can drive meaningful impact for educators and students alike.