



CASE STUDY

Cyber Recovery for a School District



The challenge: A Wake-Up Call: Addressing a School District's Cyber Vulnerabilities

For the school district, serving the needs of students, parents, and faculty was always the top priority. However, recent incidents in neighboring districts served as a sobering wake-up call. Multiple school districts had been crippled by severe ransomware attacks, resulting in the permanent loss of critical student and administrative data. These events exposed a glaring vulnerability: the district had no reliable means of recovering if they were targeted in a similar attack.

Despite their robust commitment to education and community, the district's existing systems lacked the sophistication and resilience necessary to withstand modern cyber threats. The potential consequences of a cyberattack were staggering—operational downtime, loss of sensitive records, disruption to learning, reputational harm, and significant financial strain. When the leadership team assessed the risks, it became clear that the costs of data loss and prolonged system outages would far exceed the investment required for a comprehensive cyber recovery solution.

Recognizing the stakes, the district's IT and executive teams knew they could not afford to remain unprepared. The challenge was to secure buy-in for a transformative cyber recovery strategy that could safeguard their community's future in the face of escalating cyber risks.

The solution: Empowering a School District with Advanced Cyber Recovery Measures

To effectively address the rising threat of ransomware, the school district partnered with C1 to design and implement a robust cyber recovery strategy. C1 began by conducting a tailored Ransomware Readiness Workshop and a comprehensive assessment of current vulnerabilities. These efforts allowed the district's IT team to clearly demonstrate the urgent need for investment to executive leadership, backed by data-driven insights and scenario analyses.

The solution centered on the deployment of an air-gapped Cyber Recovery Vault, leveraging Dell EMC Data Protection Systems, VxRail, PowerEdge Servers, and the powerful Index Engines CyberSense analytics platform. This isolated environment ensures that backup data remains untouched and safe from external threats, serving as a "safe room" for critical student and administrative records. C1 also developed a detailed cyber recovery runbook, established governance procedures, and provided hands-on training for district staff, ensuring preparedness for any future event.

To further strengthen resilience, C1 implemented immutable backups and simulated real-time recovery scenarios, equipping the district with the confidence and capability to restore services rapidly in the event of an attack. Through these proactive measures, the school district gained a future-ready foundation to protect its community and educational mission against escalating cyber risks. Across all projects, C1's ability to provide scalable solutions while working collaboratively with Bethel's small but mighty IT team ensured success. "The scale and resources C1 offers have enabled us to punch above our weight," Bethel adds.



The result: Report Card Ready: Cyber Recovery Excellence

Following the comprehensive partnership with C1, the school district rapidly achieved board approval and mobilized critical resources, accelerating the deployment of its new cyber recovery strategy. The implementation of an air-gapped Cyber Recovery Vault and immutable backup solutions has provided the district with a level of assurance previously unattainable. In the face of evolving ransomware threats, the district now stands protected from the financial and operational consequences of ransomware attacks, effectively eliminating the need to ever consider paying ransoms in the future.

Through rigorous scenario testing and hands-on training, IT staff can restore student, faculty, and administrative services swiftly and with confidence, ensuring minimal disruption to essential operations. This rapid restoration capability not only maintains trust among the district's community but also reinforces the district's reputation as a technology-forward and resilient educational institution.

Moreover, the visibility gained through data-driven assessments and the establishment of robust governance practices have de-incentivized future ransomware attacks, signaling to potential adversaries that attempts will be met with resistance and rapid recovery. The proactive measures taken have resulted in a future-ready environment where the school district's educational mission—and the people it serves—are protected, empowered, and resilient against ever-escalating cyber risks.

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