



Coppel Independent School District Earns A+ in Email Security with Mimecast

Customer Vision

Most people would not consider K-12 school districts prime targets for cybercriminals, but K-12 IT directors know better. And Coppel (Texas) Independent School District Executive Director of Technology Stephen McGilvray has personally experienced how K-12 students have become targets for threat actors.

“There’s a rise in K-12 phishing and malware attacks, as hackers realize school districts hold extremely sensitive data, such as student birth dates, home addresses, even health information,” he says.

“Cybercriminals can take this sensitive data and use it for nefarious purposes, and it could be many years before the victim knows about it. After all, a five-year-old is not likely to apply for a credit card any time soon.”

After the state of Texas instituted new security and compliance regulations for K-12 school districts, McGilvray knew it was time to implement more comprehensive email security and Domain-based Message Authentication Reporting and Conformance (DMARC) solutions to strengthen Microsoft Office 365’s basic security functions. He turned to Mimecast for answers.

At a Glance

Coppel Independent School District is a premier public school system serving more than 13,100 learners in the communities of Coppel, Dallas (Cypress Waters), North Irving, Lewisville and Valley Ranch.

Problem

After the State of Texas updated its K-12 education security and compliance regulations, Coppel Independent School District needed to upgrade its email security and add DMARC to its security toolbox.

Solution:

Email security with targeted threat protection and DMARC

Benefits:

- Complete visibility into phishing, domain spoofing and malware attacks
- Ability to meet increased compliance requests and more robust security standards
- Increased uptime of Office 365
- Ability to thwart various attack vectors to protect students’ and faculty’s sensitive data

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- Stephen McGilvray, Coppell Independent School District Executive Director of Technology

Customer Strategy

“When we migrated from Microsoft Exchange to Office 365, we didn’t want to rely solely on the native security component within Office 365,” McGilvray says. “Having a layered security approach, rather than all our eggs in the Office 365 basket, was important to us to ensure the best protection.” He added that Mimecast provided the ideal fit for his dual needs, with both Email Security and the DMARC Analyzer.

This was a high-stakes decision for McGilvray, because the new system would impact 1,500 staff members using Microsoft Office 365 to communicate with more than 13,000 students as well as their parents and guardians. “For our staff, email is our main form of communication, so we need to safeguard against any disruptions,” McGilvray says. “With Mimecast, we’re protecting our staff from falling victim to malware and phishing campaigns, as well as eliminating domain spoofing.

Customer Outcome

McGilvray was able to deploy Mimecast Email Security and DMARC quickly, thanks to the Mimecast implementation team. The system was fully operational within a month, giving the organization increased protection against ransomware, targeted attacks and domain spoofing.

“Mimecast’s DMARC solution gave us insight into who was using our email domain and with this full visibility, we were able to lock down any unauthorized uses and block the delivery of any suspect emails.”

McGilvray is happy with his decision to trust Mimecast and has been approached by other school systems looking for his advice. “I have had conversations with several school systems looking to transition to Mimecast. And I’ve told them at the end of the day, the Mimecast security portfolio, with URL, domain spoofing protection and email threat detection, is a full-fledged solution that fits the bill for us,” McGilvray says. “The Mimecast suite of solutions is more robust, provides us with more visibility and the capabilities to stop a variety of attacks.