

Enhanced Security and Scalability for Public Schools with AT&T Cybersecurity and Zscaler

Solutions

- Zscaler Transformation Edition managed by AT&T Cybersecurity
- Fortinet FortiGate firewalls
- Juniper Networks firewalls
- AT&T's bundled internet services

Challenges

1. Existing Lightspeed K-12 security standard's lack of scalability and support
2. CPE-heavy environment with data center support directly from Lightspeed
3. Need for content filtering, zero trust, and sandboxing capabilities
4. Need to secure network security to ensure student safety
5. Meeting the demands and rising costs of a growing school district

Overview

A large school district in southern California was using Lightspeed Systems K-12 security standard to provide content filtering and maintain a secure environment for their students. However, this aging solution no longer suited their needs; it was difficult to manage and required a large amount of physical and virtual resources to maintain, along with scalability and support issues. These challenges had district leadership looking for a new lightweight, comprehensive solution that would provide content filtering, zero trust, and sandboxing capabilities to protect their students and staff while also allowing the district to grow and adapt as needed.

Introduction

The district faced challenges with their existing Lightspeed Systems K-12 security standard due to its lack of support and flexibility as well as hefty system requirements. As cyber threats continue to evolve, school administration was interested in a more modern cloud-delivered solution with zero-trust and sandboxing capabilities.

AT&T Cybersecurity worked with Fortinet, Juniper Networks, and Zscaler to provide a tailored but cost-effective solution that addressed the network security and scalability concerns of this growing school district. Since the district had previously worked with Fortinet and was familiar with the vendor's technology, they had expressed interest in deploying Fortinet FortiGate firewalls for their on-premises security and bandwidth capabilities. However, because the Fortinet firewalls did not include secure web gateway (SWG) technology, the district needed to investigate adding these capabilities.

AT&T Cybersecurity worked with the district to evaluate various competing technology options, acting as a trusted advisor and single point of contact through the proof of concept and evaluation process.

After evaluating various cloud technologies, school leadership selected Zscaler Transformation Edition managed by AT&T Cybersecurity because of the solution's competitive pricing, performance, and scalability. The district determined that the solution could meet their unique cloud network and security needs and would enable a seamless transition to a more robust and scalable security infrastructure. In addition to the Fortigate system, premise-based Juniper Network firewalls were deployed at multiple locations throughout the district to secure the edge of the network.

Results

AT&T, Fortinet, Juniper Networks, and Zscaler delivered the following benefits:

1. Enhanced security through content filtering, zero trust, and sandboxing capabilities, ensuring a safer online environment for students and staff.
2. Improved scalability by transitioning from a CPE-heavy environment to a cloud-based security solution, allowing the school district to adapt to their growing needs more efficiently.
3. Ensured eRate eligibility with AT&T's bundled internet services, providing cost savings to the school district.
4. Simplified vendor management by leveraging AT&T Cybersecurity as a Managed Security Service Provider, reducing the complexity of managing multiple vendors.
5. A smooth transition to the new security solution, minimizing disruptions to the school district's operations.

Conclusion

Partnering with AT&T Cybersecurity significantly aided the public school district in their security transformation by delivering a secure, scalable, and affordable solution tailored to their specific requirements. In addition, AT&T Cybersecurity was able to provide the customer with a managed customer solution using Fortinet, Juniper Networks, Zscaler and AT&T, tackling the scalability and functionality expansion concerns.