SOLUTION BRIEF

Don't Let Cyberattacks Prevent Your Schools From Returning to Normal

Confusion reigns as new school years begin across the country, and that has not gone unnoticed by cyberattackers. School districts have long struggled with a lack of resources, budget dollars, and expert personnel. The coronavirus pandemic is exacerbating these issues. However, that doesn't mean that a district needs a Fortune 500 company's large budget and a team of expert professionals to harden its security posture.

Of course, the trend of cyber attackers increasingly targeting the education sector began years before the pandemic struck. The K–12 Cybersecurity Resource Center reports there have been 855 cyber incidents publicly disclosed by U.S. schools and districts since 2016. There were 348 last year, nearly three times the number in 2018.

According to the Verizon 2020 Data Breach Investigations Report: "(The Education Services industry) saw phishing attacks in 28% of breaches and hacking via stolen credentials in 23% of breaches. In incident data, Ransomware accounts for approximately 80% of Malware infections in this vertical. Education Services performed poorly in terms of reporting phishing attacks, thus losing critical response time for the victim organizations."

Attackers see schools as soft targets because they don't have the same technologies and personnel more common to the private sector. Security personnel are typically contractors, and the district's IT staff are overwhelmed. Training on security policies and best practices for staff and students is often sporadic, at best. And the risk increases exponentially now with so many children logging into their schools' networks from home.

Consider just the week of September 10th. After Miami-Dade County Public School students struggled to access online learning platforms

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for two straight days, officials discovered the district was the target of a DDoS attack. And attacks against districts in Hartford, Conn. and Clark County, Nev. forced public schools to delay the first day of school.

Even if training is provided, it's impossible to prevent people from occasionally making innocent mistakes and falling victim to phishing attacks. No security solution can guarantee it will block 100% of attacks. However, that does not mean a school district has to rip-and-replace its existing security solutions or hire additional IT personnel.

Nyotron's award-winning, patented, positive Microsoft endpoint security solution is fully automated at the lowest common denominator. It complements traditional security solutions like antivirus that rely on blacklisting to identify and block most known threats. The trouble is that approach not effective against unknown and file-less threats.

Nyotron has fully mapped the one constant across all organizations: the operating system (OS). Our solution, Paranoid, utilizes the map to surgically block specific system calls that are the result of bad OS behaviors - a list that is much shorter than the millions of known and unknown threats that target all organizations every day.

This unique approach enables Paranoid to deliver several benefits immediately after implementation, including:

- Zero trust model
- No learning or threat feeds required.
- Security remains constant even for unpatched systems.
- Fine-tuned alerts with complete visibility into an event start-to-finish
- Automated fine-tuned blocking that maintains educational continuity

No matter if a district decides to re-open schools, hold remote learning sessions, or take a hybrid approach, officials need to ask themselves just one question: "Are we confident that our institution is achieving the highest level of protection?"

If the answer is "no" or "I don't know," take action immediately. Conduct a thorough security audit across the entire network to determine your current security posture. Then visit www.nyotron.com to learn how Nyotron's Paranoid solution will protect your staff and students from even new, never-seen-before, and file-less malware threats.

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