How the School Accounting System-Online Option Helped the Yankton School District Avert Disaster

SCHOOL DISTRICT NETWORK COMPROMISED:

In early May 2019, the Yankton School District (Yankton, SD) was the target of cyber incursion. The attack came to the attention of IT staff at about 2:30 p.m. on May 14 when they were alerted to printing problems on the school district's network. Upon investigation, they realized that there were other issues involving inaccessible files and resources, and that their internal network was potentially compromised. At one point, IT staff witnessed unauthorized file deletion in progress, but were able to stop some of it. However, the damage had been done.

In June 2019, Yankton School District Superintendent Dr. Wayne Kindle shared an update on the district's recovery efforts in the wake of a destructive cyber attack. Superintendent Kindle reported that the school district was able to recover the student information system data which includes grades, attendance and demographics of individual students. The cyber incursion was a malicious act according to the superintendent, adding that targeting a school is very disheartening. The IT team continues to work to get the district's network and systems back to 100 percent.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTING SYSTEM UNAFFECTED:

While the Yankton School District continues to recover, many within the district know the situation could have been much worse. Jason Bietz, Business Manager for the Yankton School District, noted, "Many files on our network have been lost and will likely never be recovered. Luckily for finance operations at the district, all of our accounting and payroll information is in the cloud and was protected from the network breach."

The Yankton School District migrated to the School Accounting System-Online option in February 2017. The School Accounting System has traditionally been an application installed on district equipment. However, with increasing hardware replacement and maintenance costs, schools are looking for ways to securely offload their hardware responsibility. The School Accounting System-Online option is a completely cloud-based solution that offers online access to the School Accounting System and integrated add-on modules. The software is hosted on secured servers with multiple redundancies to ensure the safety of school district data and provides *anywhere, anytime access to the School Accounting System, and all software updates and backups are managed for the district.*

While nothing is 100 percent secure in our fast-paced, technology-driven world, certain precautions can be taken to help mitigate potential threats. The School Accounting System-Online is one option an organization can consider to help ensure sensitive financial data is protected and is unaffected in the event of hardware failure or any other major incident at a school district.

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