

Fulton County Schools concentrates its security efforts with Forsyte's Guardian 365 security managed services



OVERVIEW

Fulton County Schools (Fulton), the fourth largest district in the state of Georgia, was looking to improve control over its security operations. Fulton's IT leaders understood the importance of heavily focusing its efforts on cybersecurity to increase the district's security stance with a 24x7 managed security approach.

Fulton looked to trusted Microsoft Gold Partner, Forsyte I.T. Solutions (Forsyte), to reduce the ongoing administrative burdens and cost of monitoring, maintaining, and supporting Microsoft 365 and Azure Sentinel with Guardian 365 security managed services. Through a zero-trust security model, Forsyte deployed A5 Microsoft 365 security workloads and Sentinel, used to protect, detect and respond to attacks across more than 100 schools within the Fulton County School District.

In an effort to streamline technology operations and maximize return on investment, Fulton began making the transition from Google to Microsoft in 2020 with the mandate that all of its schools migrate from Google Suite and Chromebooks to Microsoft 365 and devices. Fulton worked with Forsyte to complete the migration and position its district with stronger security under the large Microsoft and Microsoft 365 umbrella. Fulton prioritized the migration with a goal of later deploying the full Microsoft 365 A5 security stack to continue its security managed services with Forsyte.

PROJECT GOALS

- 1 Reduce cost and administrative burdens associated with threat detection and prevention environment.
- 2 Unify Fulton user access and endpoint protection with zero-trust security.
- 3 Leverage Microsoft 365 A5 enterprise security and combine data into a single pane of glass with AI-powered technology.

ORGANIZATION

Fulton County Schools

Website:
www.fultonschools.org

Location:
Atlanta, Georgia

Industry:
K-12 Education

Implementation:
Security Managed Services

Size:

- 95,600+ Students
- 12,000+ Faculty and Staff

"Knowing that Guardian 365 is monitoring our environment around the clock has given us added piece of mind."

*-Derrick Johnson
Director of IT Security,
Fulton County Schools*

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With a focus on student achievement and a commitment to continual improvement, Fulton County Schools (Fulton), one of the largest school systems in Georgia based on geographic area, has earned a reputation as a premier school system in the country. This long history of excellence is evidenced by the many state and national honors bestowed on Fulton's schools, staff, and students.

CHALLENGE

In 2018, Fulton worked with Forsyte I.T. Solutions to implement and manage a solution designed to detect when a user's account has been compromised as a result of a phishing attack, called PhishHunter. For years, Fulton ran PhishHunter with Forsyte to successfully thwart phishing threats in its environment. With advancements to Microsoft 365 security technology and increased cyberattack threats over the years, Fulton wanted to increase its security with the use of Microsoft 365 A5 security and Sentinel technology with Forsyte, to enhance its always-on, 24x7 security managed services approach.

Fulton had been moving towards a Microsoft-centric environment and was interested in adopting Microsoft Sentinel, as it would aggregate the data from other threat detection services and technologies they already had in place while also saving money. In addition to the tooling provided by Microsoft, Fulton was looking to ingest M365 data with a comprehensive managed security approach across the board. Forsyte was eager to support this security initiative and went to work developing an automation and remediation service called, Guardian 365, that would put more eyes on Fulton's environment than what they had internally.

SOLUTION

Fulton looked to Forsyte to deploy Microsoft Sentinel as well as Forsyte's security managed service, Guardian 365, to leverage the best of Microsoft's A5 and Sentinel enterprise security solutions. Working as a Sentinel enhancement, Guardian 365 is able to aggregate Fulton's data into a single pane of glass, providing Fulton's IT team with a comprehensive view of its security, from executive-level dashboards to detailed security incident monitoring to drill into user activity, threat analytics, and incident responses.

Using Guardian 365 security managed services, Forsyte engineers augmented Fulton's internal technology to proactively monitor its environment around the clock. This automation sends Fulton notifications when threats have been auto-remediated, as well as daily and weekly status emails reporting the health of its infrastructure.



Increased security posture & increased cost savings.



8+ security portals in a single pane of glass.



Executive-level dashboards & reporting.

BENEFITS

Fulton's continued focus on the Microsoft security stack and long-time relationship with trusted advisor, Forsyte, were driving forces behind its decision to work together in pursuit to strengthen security initiatives and engage in around-the-clock monitoring of its A5 and Sentinel environments. With Guardian 365 security managed services, Fulton's IT team has properly deployed workloads across A5 and Sentinel and is backed by Forsyte's expert security team 24/7/365. Guardian 365 is a continually evolving service that adapts to meet the needs and demands of Fulton's ever-changing security landscape.