



Clayton County Public Schools Creating an Integrated Hybrid Cloud Backup Solution



Sovereign is one of the most reliable companies we've ever worked with. One of the best things about working with Sovereign is that their engineers were a part of the entire process – from pre-sale to implementation. They were the ones doing the evaluations and proposing the solution so we never ran into a situation where someone promised us one thing, but then couldn't deliver on it because it wasn't technically feasible. It was a very smooth process.



Summary:

Understanding the benefits of both on-premise and cloud solutions, Sovereign Systems created a hybrid cloud storage solution that operationalized Clayton County Public School District's storage and backup processes. The solution enabled the school district to comply with the data archival requirements, support its highly virtualized environment and increase productivity by eliminating manual processes.

The Situation:

Supporting all of the IT needs for a large school district and ensuring the storage and backup of its critical data posed significant challenges for the Clayton County Public School's IT team, made up of eight employees.

The team was responsible for the management of the entire school district's server, active directory, storage, backup systems, networking, wireless as well as internet and network security solutions.

The primary issues were the disparate storage systems and antiquated tape backup system they relied on for the entire district's data. The legacy backup platforms consumed 40 percent of a single full-time employee's time through manual backup and archiving. With 98 percent virtualized environment, the unreliability and inefficiency of the storage solution also made the protection of its virtual machines a critical factor.

Further compounding issues for the team was the rigorous five-year data retention policy the school district had to comply with, making affordable storage space a critical requirement. Because of the way the school district receives funding, its budget would not accommodate a major capital expense for archival and disaster recovery of five years of data on a purpose-built appliance.

Clayton County Public School's goal was multi-faceted. The first to optimize its backup and data recovery processes with a less complex and more modern solution. This would allow the school district to achieve another storage performance goal to gain back the man hours spent on manual backup. The second was to replace its current process with an optimized and secure solution to adequately handle its virtual environment while avoiding upfront capital expenditures.

The Solution:

The first step in the process was for Sovereign Systems to architect a storage solution that consolidated the disparate systems while taking into account the school district's data retention and archival policy. Sovereign was also tasked to design a solution that would revamp the existing backup solution to enable them to move from tapes to disc.

To augment Clayton County Public School's backup and recovery system, Sovereign designed a backup solution leveraging the existing on-premise data center and utilizing EMC Data Domain. This provides the school district with a next generation solution to automate data backup and recovery that improves the reliability and functionality of the solution.

For Clayton County Public School's long-term data requirements, Sovereign implemented a cloud-based integration solution. With EMC's EMC's CloudArray cost-effective cloud-integrated storage solution, the school district was able to save 120 days of data on-premise while running its quarterly and annual data backup in the cloud at a cost of just pennies/GB.

With the new solution in place, all data backups are done on disc, replicated

in the school district's environment and then copied to the cloud making the data more secure and enabling the team to primarily monitor the system as opposed to daily manual intervention.

Clayton County School's virtual environment is also more adequately supported with the hybrid solution in place. Now the IT support team can easily create backup policies or restore virtual machines and protect its data without the need for a traditional backup window.

The Results:

- With the hybrid storage and backup solution, the school district saved nearly \$500,000 on upfront capital expenditure for hardware to meet the data retention requirements.
- The optimized backup solution freed up almost 16 hours per week for one employee by eliminating manual processes.
- With more capacity among the team, the school district's IT department was able to focus on more strategic and critical items.

Why Sovereign Systems:

- Gold-level business partnership with EMC achieving numerous accolades over the tenure of partnership including North American Services Delivery Partner of the Year and annual recipient of EMC's Quality of Service Delivery Award
- Invested \$2 million+ in the Sovereign Briefing Center to test and validate all EMC technologies
- Completes 125+ EMC implementations each year
- Exemplary project management skills delivering clarity of vision and the ability to execute goals and exceed expectations



About Clayton County Public Schools:

Clayton County Public Schools is the largest school district in Georgia, yet is the second smallest county in the state. The school district is comprised of 65 schools, with more than 50,000 students and 8,000- plus employees.