



Houston-area School District Lowers Data Management TCO by 10-15% with Cohesity



INDUSTRY
Education

USE CASE
Backup and Recovery, Cloud,
Disaster Recovery

COHESITY SOLUTIONS
DataProtect, Helios

WORKLOADS
VMware VMs, Microsoft SQL

TECHNOLOGY PARTNER
AWS

SOLUTION PARTNER
SHI

Key Benefits

- Eliminated 4 costly legacy backup solutions and vendor management of them
- 5-6 hour reduction in file restore times
- 10-15% lower data management TCO

The spike in online learning and digital resources has K-12 school districts producing more data than ever. Yet legacy backup and recovery infrastructure makes it challenging to store, manage, protect, and extract value from increasing data volumes. When modernizing backups and disaster recovery (DR) systems became a priority at Houston-area's Spring Independent School District (ISD), IT staff chose the converged hyperscale Cohesity data management platform, in part due to its native Amazon Web Services (AWS) integration. Today, the robust solution delivers efficient, reliable backup and recovery onsite and in the cloud for Spring ISD at 10-15 percent lower total cost of ownership (TCO).

Challenges

When Bobby LaFleur joined Spring ISD, they began to strategize about replacing legacy infrastructure with more efficient, best-of-breed technologies. Backups and DR were among the first items to be addressed because the K-12 school district was running a patchwork of point products—from Veeam and Idera software to Dell Compellent and EqualLogic target storage—for backing up virtual machine (VM) and SQL servers onsite while contracting a co-location facility, or co-lo within the same geographical area, to support a mirror set of the same products for DR. With the district's co-lo contract nearing termination and a new site under consideration, the discussion turned to adopting a more



“We’re always working to move the district forward with the best technology solutions for the future, and Cohesity is one of them. Modern and reliable, Cohesity—natively integrated with AWS—prevents downtime that takes away from student learning while lowering our data management TCO.”

Bobby LaFleur, Director of Application Support at Spring Independent School District

modern solution that natively integrates with cloud to avoid the time and expense of adding new equipment to a new co-lo just for backups.

“The district was using older technologies for backup and primary storage, which checked a box, but wasn’t ideal. Hard drives were failing, and there were concerns that because the same technologies operated production and backups that if the worst-case happened, we could lose everything,” remembers Bobby LaFleur, Director of Application Support at Spring ISD.

Solution

Introduced to Cohesity as a data management solution that provides modern backup by its implementation partner, SHI, Spring ISD quickly realized that Cohesity with native cloud integration into AWS could also fulfill the district’s DR requirements without the need for additional co-lo space. Today, Cohesity provides Spring ISD with a multicloud data platform to back up both its SQL servers and VMware virtual machines (VMs) on-prem and to AWS for DR.

Unlike previous systems which required many manual steps, Cohesity protection jobs—including policies, schedules, replication, and archiving—were easy to set up and now run automatically, saving the team time. “It’s very maintenance-free,” said LaFleur.

On-prem, Cohesity DataProtect retains between 50 and 60 compressed terabytes of Spring ISD data for several weeks before archiving it to Amazon S3 Glacier where AWS stores it longer should the district need it. Spring ISD also uses Cohesity to spin up finance and other mission-critical applications in the AWS cloud on-demand as required.

“I really like the simplicity of Cohesity. It’s a converged platform that allows us to do server backups, file shares, dev/test, and more from a central UI, whereas before, we’d have to be bouncing between systems,” says Spring ISD Sr. System Engineer, Roberto Solorzano. “If I need to pull data on-prem or from the AWS archive for business continuity, I can do it easily within the Cohesity UI, and it’s all policy-based.

“Downtime takes away from student learning, so it has been a relief to be able to push data to AWS rather than our co-lo, in Katy, Texas, which is often impacted first by big storms, making it a risky location for DR,” says LaFleur. “Before, we could have been completely down if a hurricane hit both the co-lo location and our district.”

Because education data is sensitive, modernizing with a solution that could help strengthen data security, and if needed, quickly recover learning, student, and staff data immediately was also a priority for Spring ISD. Cohesity features fully hydrated snapshots that allow for mass instant restore to any period in time. While reducing data center footprints, Cohesity anti-ransomware capabilities help organizations deter, detect, and recover from ransomware attacks.

Results

Moving to the converged multicloud Cohesity platform and switching to AWS for DR enabled Spring ISD to eliminate four legacy point products and co-lo maintenance fees while simplifying backups and DR. This reduced the district’s overall data management TCO by approximately 10–15 percent, including more than a half-million dollars in equipment. Spring ISD IT also gained peace of mind because AWS has redundancy in two different parts of the U.S.

Should a user delete one file, Spring ISD IT no longer has to go back and spend five or six hours restoring an entire database to retrieve it. Cohesity provides a global, actionable search to locate the particular file or program quickly and instantly restores it in minutes. “Since deploying Cohesity, I get more sleep,” jokes Rob Solorzano.

With Cohesity and integrated AWS, Spring ISD has achieved the following benefits:

- Eliminated four costly legacy backup solutions and vendor management of them
- 5-6 hour reduction in file restore times
- 10-15 percent lower data management TCO
- Strengthened security posture
- Gained peace of mind

About Spring ISD

The Spring Independent School District serves over 35,000 prekindergarten through 12th-grade students in a diverse district located 20 miles north of central Houston.

Learn more at [Cohesity.com](https://www.cohesity.com)

COHESITY

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