



**Company** Cascade School District

**Industry** K-12 Education

**Country / Region** Salem, OR

**Website** [www.cascade.k12.or.us/](http://www.cascade.k12.or.us/)

### Company Profile

Cascade School District (CSD) in rural Oregon consists of 2300 students served by about 300 staff members, spread over five campuses.

### Business Situation

With a limited budget, but increasing network demands from BYOD and new technologies, CSD needed a solution that would secure the growing network, satisfy compliance regulations, and provide a compelling value.

### Solution

Unified Threat Management (UTM) from WatchGuard

### Benefits

- Multifunction UTM security unifies many vital technologies within one appliance
- Flexibility of the UTM solution accommodates the unique needs of the network
- Ease of use and a seamless, centralized management experience
- Value: improved security, while cutting costs and saving time

WatchGuard Security

## Saves Time, Money, & Effort for Cascade Schools



“I believe that, over the next three years, we’re saving approximately \$24,000 in annual fees and maintenance by consolidating everything with WatchGuard. On top of that, we are realizing significant time-savings from unifying management. The benefits of WatchGuard really just keep adding up—and it’s been huge for us.”

- Michael King,  
Network Administrator,  
Cascade School District

### Background

Located just outside of Salem, Oregon, Cascade School District (CSD) consists of five separate campuses spread throughout rural Willamette Valley. With approximately 300 staff members, CSD serves 2300 students in a K-12 public education environment.

## The Challenge

CSD operates with an IT staff of three, working with older equipment and a limited budget. Pushed by more demanding networking needs and security compliance regulations than ever before, the current network environment was becoming increasingly untenable.

## BYOD & Web 2.0 Reshape Security Landscape

Putting technology in students' hands is transforming the educational experience, from K-12 schools to colleges and universities. BYOD (bring your own device) is fueling the transition as educators move from traditional instruction to new ways of learning. Rather than resist this revolution in education, CSD, like many institutions, is now embracing BYOD.

"BYOD is the biggest change for us, versus a few years back," relates Michael King, Network Administrator for CSD. "Everyone has their own device, everyone wants to get online, so we are trying to deliver on that, while at the same time--security is a major challenge."

"When I started here about seven years ago, we simply did not allow personal devices at all—no personal computer, phones, none of that," recounts King. "We were essentially just telling users --'you can't do that, you can't access that site, you can't go there, you can't stream this, you can't use that device.'"

Today's school network environment reflects a substantial shift in policy. "Today, everybody needs outside access," declares King. About three years ago, Cascade School District started allowing personal devices. "We opened up a guest network where users can go right out to the internet via a guest VLAN, and it's throttled. It's actually thanks to WatchGuard that we could throttle it."

The Cloud plays a prominent role in this policy shift. "Many applications, such as Payroll, that we used to host in-house are migrating to the Cloud," notes King. "We're also moving to Office 365. It's free for education, so that makes hosting an exchange server one less thing we need to worry about hosting onsite."

## Dated Equipment, Complexity of Multiple Point Solutions Pave Way for Security Refresh

Leading up to the switch to WatchGuard, CSD's aging equipment proved increasingly difficult to maintain. "We had the ISA server on a weekly restart due to buffer out of space," relates King.

At the time, Cascade School District's IT department employed a mix of point solutions, each with its own management needs. "We were using ISA 2006, Windows Server, Websense for web filtering, and Barracuda for anti-spam and load-balancing, and there were big expenses for each," King says. "Yet, we still couldn't even do things like HTTPS, which is incredibly important these days with Facebook, Google, et cetera. And, it kind of defeats the purpose to even have a web filter in place if the students can bypass it."

## WatchGuard Boosts Security, Simplifies Management, and Saves Time & Money

"So, in looking to update our server and our security, we started performing some research," recounts King. "When we learned about WatchGuard, we were like, 'WOW!' With WatchGuard, everything you need is right there in one box. We can condense all those solutions down and manage it all together--and it will save us money too. WatchGuard has delivered all of that."

"I believe that, over the next three years, we're saving approximately \$24,000 in annual fees and maintenance by consolidating everything with WatchGuard," assesses King. "On top of that, we are realizing significant time-savings from unifying management. The benefits of WatchGuard really just keep adding up—and it's been huge for us."

“When we learned about WatchGuard, we were like, ‘WOW!’ With WatchGuard, everything you need is right there in one box. We can condense all those solutions down and manage it all together--and it will save us money too. WatchGuard has delivered all of that.”

## Deploying Best-of-Breed Security

Cascade School District phased in their WatchGuard XTM deployment over the summer. "Overall, deployment was pretty simple and really straightforward," says King.

Cascade School District is leveraging most of the best-of-breed UTM security services on the XTM firewall, including web filtering, application control, anti-spam, and anti-virus, which are powered by partner technologies from the industry standard-bearers.

"Application Control is a totally new solution to us," says King. "Previously, we would just default block sites, such as YouTube. With WatchGuard Application Control, we can now allow students to access the parts of sites that have an educational purpose, but then block them from playing games or other features. WatchGuard provides us with a really fine level of control," adds King. "We're discovering that it helps out a lot."

### **Flexible, Multifunction Solution – At an Excellent Value**

"WatchGuard has been fantastic for us, and I'm still learning about new features," enthuses King. "For instance, I just learned we can do load-balancing with WatchGuard. Right now, we have a separate load balancer for our terminal services. If we would have known about WatchGuard earlier, we also could have used the branch office VPNs to connect some of our rural schools to our district office, eliminating the need for pricey fiber right from the start."

**“With WatchGuard Application Control, we can now allow students to access the parts of sites that have an educational purpose, but then block them from playing games or other features.”**

King's team is also working on leveraging the WatchGuard solution for VPNs to allow staff and students remote access from home, and Cascade School District is going to test drive WatchGuard's wireless Access Point (AP) devices, which extend the best-of-breed UTM protection of the XTM firewalls to the WLAN. "We're learning that WatchGuard can help us do all this," remarks King. "With WatchGuard, it's all in one box—and it dramatically simplifies our jobs."

"Having WatchGuard now just gives us so much peace of mind. With WatchGuard, we can definitely sleep easier at night. And, having everything in one box makes administration so much easier. WatchGuard has definitely saved us time, money, and effort. It's been an excellent value for us."



### **About WatchGuard**

Since 1996, WatchGuard Technologies has provided reliable, easy-to-manage security appliances to hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide. WatchGuard's award-winning extensible threat management (XTM) network security solutions combine firewall, VPN, and a suite of security services to boost protection in critical attack areas. The extensible content security (XCS) line of products offers content security across email and web, as well as data loss prevention. Both product lines help you meet regulatory compliance requirements including PCI DSS, HIPAA, SOX and GLBA. Represented by more than 15,000 partners in 120 countries, WatchGuard is headquartered in Seattle, Washington, with offices in North America, Latin America, Europe, and Asia Pacific. For more information, visit [www.watchguard.com](http://www.watchguard.com).

ADDRESS: 505 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98104

WEB: [www.watchguard.com](http://www.watchguard.com) • U.S. SALES: 1.800.734.9905 • INTERNATIONAL SALES: +1.206.613.0895