

## CASE STUDY

# Identity-based education

Edmonton Catholic School District ensures 43,000 students and 5,000 employees have fast, protected access to hybrid-cloud resources, while boosting security and efficiency

## Key Facts

- **Company**  
Edmonton Catholic School District
- **Industry**  
K-12 Education
- **Country**  
Canada
- **Website**  
[www.ecsd.net](http://www.ecsd.net)

## Challenges

- IT access issues impeded teaching and learning and general employee/student onboarding
- Decentralized, manual workflows created inefficiency and risk
- Teachers and administrators lacked control over their IT resources
- Managing access to hybrid-cloud resources introduced complexity

## Results

- Improves learning and user experience
- Speeds IT access for new users from days to 1 hour
- Increases security and efficiency via automation
- Empowers teachers and staff with appropriate IT controls

## Solutions

- [One Identity Active Roles](#)
- [One Identity Password Manager](#)

Edmonton Catholic School District needed to give students, teachers and staff faster access to IT tools including on-premises and cloud applications. New users had to wait days to access resources, and students had to ask IT staff for help with any problems with access, including password resets. In addition, deprovisioning was manual, which increased risk.

To overcome these challenges, the district implemented One Identity. Today, new users gain access to the IT resources they need within one hour. Automated provisioning and deprovisioning processes also increase security and efficiency, and improve learning.

K-12 school districts must provide students and staff with fast access to diverse digital resources as quickly as possible, while maintaining security, regulatory and budget requirements. However, factors such as student grade progression, staff movement between sites, and an ever-increasing list of new IT resources, especially in the cloud, created complexity that could quickly jeopardize learning, efficiency and user experience.

**“We now have a fully automated, identity-management system that improves everyone’s efficiency, so teachers focus on teaching and students spend more class time actively learning.”**

Trevor Smith, IT Enterprise Network Analyst,  
Edmonton Catholic School District

To provide the most effective learning environment, Edmonton Catholic School District (ECSD) needed a modern solution to manage IT access for 43,000 students and 5,000 employees across 120 district sites. Students would sometimes have to wait days to gain access to the applications they needed in class or for homework, which impeded learning. Employees also faced access delays, and it could take weeks to be added to the email distribution lists they needed to be effective in their jobs. Trevor Smith, IT enterprise network analyst at ECSD, says, "We're a school board. We're here to teach kids. If kids don't have access to their accounts, how can they learn? We also need to be sure that teachers have proper access to their systems and accurate, up-to-date information about the students in their classes."

After reviewing technologies, ECSD decided to standardize and automate its provisioning, deprovisioning and password-management processes using a seamless solution based on One Identity Active Roles, One Identity Password Manager and an existing Active Directory. "We looked at many products, but when we saw One Identity's solution, it was like a huge light bulb went on," says Smith. "We could replace reactive, manual processes with one centralized automated solution."

## **New users access resources in one hour**

Today, instead of IT staff having to manage multiple accounts for each user, everyone has one identity, which is based on their profile or role in the district's human resources and student information systems. There are 10 standardized roles in the district, and each one includes hundreds of configurable variables such as grade level, classes, job title and work location. "As soon as changes are made to our central systems, they're automatically reflected in our Active Directory," says Smith. "And within an hour, new users have access to the resources they need, including on-premises systems and cloud services such as G Suite, Adobe and Office 365. They are also added to the appropriate user groups and distribution lists, all automatically with minimal IT involvement."

## **Increases security and efficiency**

New accounts automatically have the right security in place, including a default password, which users reset themselves. "Self-service passwords save a lot of time for students, teachers and IT staff," says Smith. "And with Password Manager, we can create very granular policies for different types of users that take into account things like the variables in users' roles and varying levels of security needed for different systems."



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Deprovisioning is also automated and fast. “We don’t have security holes from orphaned accounts,” Smith says. “With Active Roles, the system automatically cleans itself. This includes the deprovisioning of more than 6,000 accounts when students graduate every year.” In addition, because provisioning is based on information that’s entered in the HR and student systems, the district eliminated direct access to Active Directory, which cuts risk. And there are no longer data-entry errors that create inaccuracies in student and staff information, and orphaned accounts.

## Empowers staff and improves learning

To further boost efficiency and improve users’ experience, the district now gives teachers and staff appropriate controls over specific IT resources, such as managing access to WiFi, printers and some applications used in class. “There are always exceptions to automated processes,” says Smith. “With Active Roles, we can empower people such as teachers and administrators to manage those exceptions in a consistent way that meets our security requirements. We originally deployed our One Identity solution to just manage provisioning and deprovisioning, but we now have a fully automated, identity-management system that improves everyone’s efficiency, so teachers focus on teaching and students spend more class time actively learning.”

## About One Identity

One Identity helps organizations get identity and access management (IAM) right. With our unique combination of offerings, including a portfolio of identity governance, access management, privileged management and identity as a service solutions, organizations can achieve their full potential—unimpeded by security, yet safeguarded against threats. Learn more at [OneIdentity.com](https://www.oneidentity.com)

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