

# From Schools to Universities: The Escalating Cyberattack Landscape for Educational Institutions

Educational institutions are prime targets for cyberattacks and social engineering due to vast networks of students, faculty, and staff with varying levels of cybersecurity awareness. This infographic highlights key attack vectors and underscores the critical role of security awareness training.

## Cybersecurity Challenges and Risks

The education sector faces unique cybersecurity challenges due to its open, data-rich environment, diverse user base and increasing reliance on digital infrastructure. From protecting research data to mitigating risks associated with remote learning and third-party vendors, institutions must balance accessibility and security.

### Data-Rich Environment

With complex networks and large amounts of sensitive data, high schools and universities are vulnerable to intrusion and extortion.

### Students' Lack of Security Awareness

Students often use personal devices without training on security protocols, accessing institutional networks and email systems.

### Reliance on Third-Party Vendors

Institutions of primary and higher education heavily rely on third-party vendors for software-as-a-service, cloud storage and IT services.

### Research and Collaboration

Research and innovation drives collaboration, but sharing sensitive data with others, whether across campuses or institutions, poses security risks.

### Remote Learning and Increased Attack Surface

The growth of virtual and remote learning means more systems, devices and networks are interconnected, increasing the risk of potential breaches.

## A Rising Tide

From every angle, the number of attacks against educational institutions is soaring, and shows no signs of relenting:



### Most Targeted

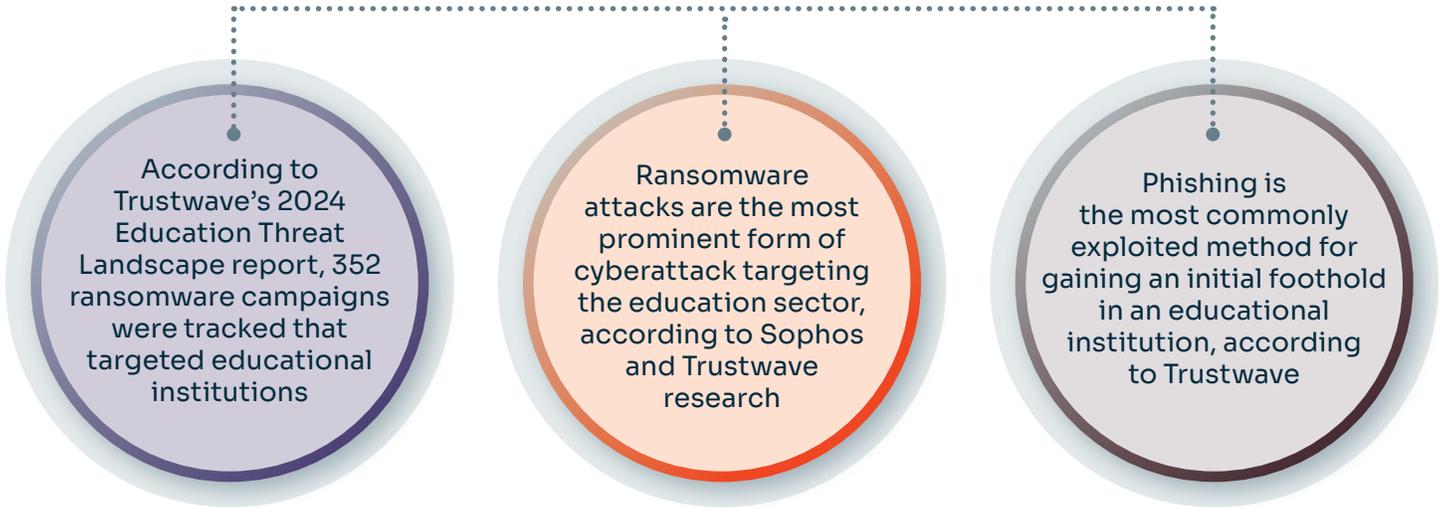
The education sector was the most targeted industry for cyberattacks in 2024, according to Check Point Research

↑  
75%

### Weekly Cyberattacks

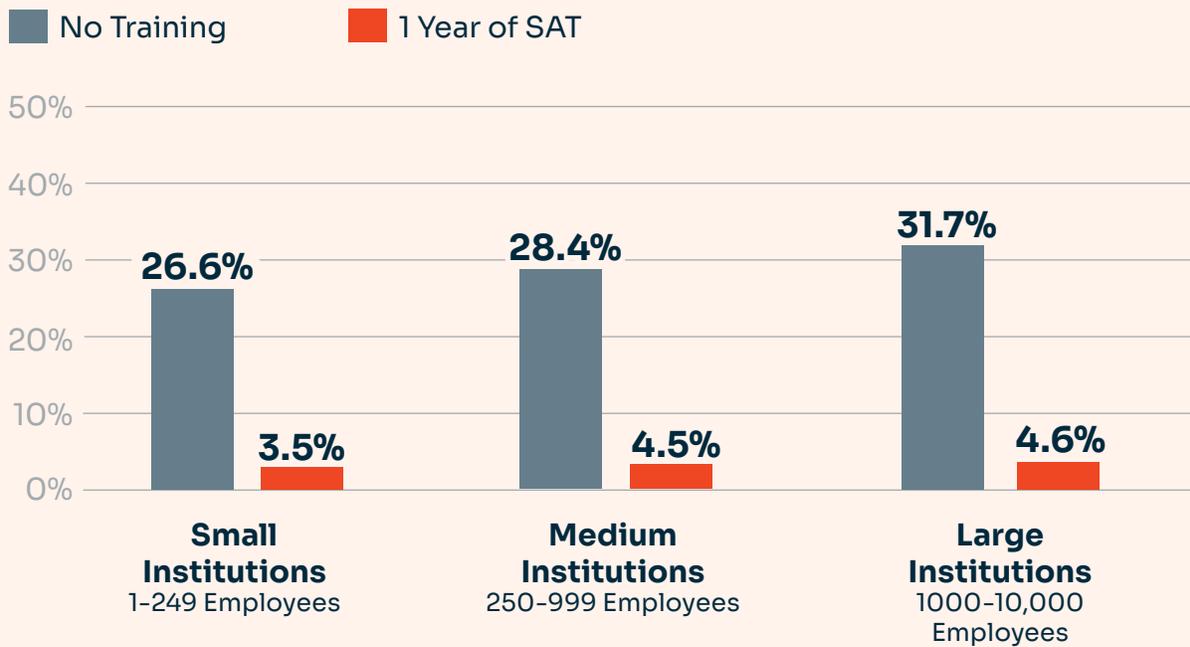
The average number of weekly cyberattacks increased by 75% over the previous year, according to The State of Cyber Security 2025 Report.

## The Attacker's Toolbox: Ransomware and Phishing



## The Impact of Security Awareness Training

One year of Security Awareness Training can dramatically reduce an educational institution's **Phish-prone™ Percentage (PPP)**, or the likelihood that employees will click on a phishing link, according to KnowBe4's Phishing By Industry Benchmarking Report.



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