

identiMetrics Brings Biometrics to Strom Thurmond High School



Greg Thompson
Principal

Strom Thurmond High School is located in Edgefield County, South Carolina and is considered a regular high school located in a rural area. Seventy-seven percent of the 1012 students attending are on a free or reduced lunch program. The motto of Strom Thurmond High School is "Preserving the Past, Shaping the Future." Strom Thurmond continues its positive history of tradition while at the same time is moving forward in curriculum and preparing students for the future. The biometric student identification program from identiMetrics is helping us do just that.



As principal, I'm always interested in improving safety and efficiency in my school. One challenge has been accurate student identification in our cafeteria and library. We were using student ID cards with PINs. Many students would show up every day without their cards and would be sent to obtain temporary or replacement ID's. This was extremely disruptive and significantly extended the time it took us to settle the school down every morning. We obviously needed a better solution.

We wanted something that students could not forget, lose, damage or steal. But it had to be compatible with our existing cafeteria and library software and it had to be cost-effective.

We decided that fingerscan biometrics was the solution. Students would never forget their fingers. We found several cafeteria applications that sold a fingerscan biometric device, but all of them wanted us to spend thousands of dollars to buy their application and replace our already existing and working software. Then, we found a company called identiMetrics.

identiMetrics' solution, identiFi™, scans a student's finger for identification. It seamlessly integrates with any cafeteria application that uses swipe cards, PINs or bar codes, so there's no need to spend money to replace what you already have. identiFi can operate in a single lunch line or provide identification throughout the entire school district. There's an added bonus: once identiFi is installed in the cafeteria, it can be used to identify students in other areas of the school like classroom attendance, library, nurse's office and for security access at the front door. identiFi provides a single identification solution and integrates with the different applications you already have in place.



Biometric fingerscan identification was well accepted by the Board, Superintendent, teachers, parents and the community. They all understood our need to correctly identify students and realized the disruption and cost required to administer the card program. Initially, there were questions regarding privacy. But identiFi doesn't take an actual fingerprint, just unique identifying points. Everyone felt comfortable that the fingerprints can't be recreated. Our school board was convinced in advance and we no longer require our students to wear their ID badges. They just need to have them available if asked. As a result, the school settles down within 10 minutes most mornings, a major improvement! We have also significantly reduced the number of disciplinary actions required when students forget their ID badges. An unexpected benefit is that eliminating an entry point into our disciplinary system has already reduced the number of student suspensions we are experiencing!

How's it working? Our foodservice and library staffs mastered the program easily. Lines move quickly and account records are accurate. Our cashiers and librarians no longer have to type in the student identification number for students who forgot their cards.

Students adapted quickly. They no longer need to look for their cards, get replacement cards, go to the end of the line when they don't have their cards, feel embarrassed if they are on free or reduced lunch, or spend time in detention for not having their cards. Now, students ALWAYS have their ID with them!



Today, biometric technology is evolving and is no longer limited to just government applications. Like the computers that have become an integral part of our schools, homes and businesses, biometric identification is the next step in making things work better, faster, safer and more reliably. Edgefield County Schools is among a leading group of school districts around the country using biometric student identification. In the future, we plan to expand the biometric ID program to the tardy office and eventually to classrooms for attendance. We are proud to be leaders in this type of technology. Our students will benefit from our efforts to be among the best!

I highly recommend that you call Norm Rischbieter at identiMetrics to find out how a biometric student identification program can help you in your school. His number is 803-663-7000. You can also visit the identiMetrics website at www.identimetrics.net