

identiMetrics Brings Biometrics to Lauderdale County Alabama Schools



Debbie Romine
CNP Cafeteria Manager

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Lauderdale County High is located in Rogersville, Alabama and is one of 11 schools in the county. The fifty-two acre campus has an elementary building, a junior high building and a high school building. We have approximately 1,100 students from kindergarten through 12th grade and serve both breakfast and lunch in a shared cafeteria.

As the CNP Cafeteria Manager, I’m responsible for managing all aspects of breakfasts and lunches, scheduling, inventory, food ordering and following all federal laws for the Child Nutrition Program. This is an area that is growing increasingly complex with one of the requirements being accurate student identification for reimbursement.

I have been with Lauderdale County for 21 years. The beginning of the school year is difficult, especially for the kindergarten students. Young children have a hard enough time learning their numbers let alone memorizing a four or five digit PIN number! We have to look up their names and this slows down the lunch lines considerably. We tried cards a few years ago and they were a disaster.

One of the reasons I was hired 21 years ago is that I knew computers and I wasn’t afraid of technology. At Lauderdale County, we pride ourselves on being on the leading edge of technology. Our tech department had read about biometrics and thought that it would help our lunch lines move faster as well as increase the security of the students’ accounts. They asked me if I would pilot the program in Lauderdale High and I said “Yes!”

We use the Lunchbox point of sale system that has identiMetrics biometric finger scanning system. identiMetrics is the leader in school cafeteria biometrics. They work with any cafeteria application that uses cards or PINs. They know schools and how to implement biometrics in schools. And most importantly, they specialize in biometrics for young children. We needed a biometric system that worked

and knew that most of them did not work with young children. identiMetrics works even with our kindergarteners, every day.

identiMetrics’ solution, identiFi™, scans a student’s finger for identification. 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 since the students are already enrolled.

How’s it working? Our foodservice staff has mastered the program. Some of them have become experts in enrolling students. The Principal was very supportive. Parent response has been excellent. They love the account set-up since everything is now confidential. We were even featured in an article in the local paper. Initially, there were questions regarding privacy. But I just told parents that identiFi doesn’t take an actual fingerprint, just unique identifying points. It’s certainly more private than a picture and a name on a lost card or someone punching in a wrong PIN. Everyone felt comfortable that the fingerprints can’t be recreated. Students adapted pretty quickly. We spent some time with the little ones helping them to place their fingers, but they learned how to place their fingers on the scanner in no time. And the support I got from Tina and Tom on the identiMetrics team was awesome.

In foodservice, seconds count. Our goal is to keep it simple for the students, my staff and myself and make it an enjoyable experience to come to the school cafeteria. identiMetrics biometric finger scanning system as part of our cafeteria point-of-sale did just that. Our food service operation has improved, we’re saving time and money. This was the best start of the school year I’ve had in 21 years. The kindergarten students are just soaring through the lunch lines in record time... identiMetrics works!