

Are biometrics still safe during Covid-19?

YES! Biometric finger scanners are still the safest hygienic solution for student and staff ID management in schools.

Remember, according to the CDC, Covid-19 is a respiratory virus; contact transmission is unlikely the main way the Covid-19 virus spreads.

Biometric Finger Scanners – Cleaner Than You Think!

Researchers at Purdue University observed that the use of biometric devices was rapidly expanding. They wanted to examine whether touching the small plate glass on the finger scanners would subject users to more germs than they would be exposed to by touching objects such as pens, doorknobs and elevator buttons.

The Purdue University researchers found that the glass surfaces of finger scanners have the same amount of bacteria as in a typical doorknob. The researchers concluded that a person is not any more likely to become ill from touching a biometric device than from a plain, old-fashioned doorknob.

ID Cards & PIN Pads - Even Dirtier Than Public Toilets!

Researchers studied the cleanliness of other objects that we come in contact with every day like ID cards, PIN pads, card readers, wallets, backpacks, purses, cash and even cell phones. Some of these studies took place in hospitals, some in office buildings and others in public places.

All of the studies reviewed compared the types and levels of bacteria and/or viruses to what is lurking on the “grossest of the gross” — public toilets. Why use public toilets as the *Gold Standard* in filth? Because studies show that most people rank public toilets as #1 in being contaminated and downright filthy compared with all other items that we touch. How can anything be more disgusting than a public toilet, right?

Wrong! Researchers found that PIN pads are even dirtier than public toilets! PIN pads have nooks crannies and many areas to harbor bacteria and viruses. They're also more difficult to clean thoroughly.

Other studies showed that bacteria and viruses cling to ID cards, wallets, purses and backpacks. In a school setting, ID cards are typically stored in wallets, purses, backpacks or on lanyards hung around the students' necks. They're often passed from person to person and even end up on the floor and in mouths — in other words, ID cards are dirty and germ-ridden. Even cash was found to be cleaner than ID cards!

Contactless Options

So called “contactless” options aren't so contactless when you look at the whole picture. These options generally require a card. Dirty cards mean that hands will immediately be contaminated - and so will all the sanitized surfaces those hands touch.

Even good old fashioned visual identification is challenging during physical distancing. (Did you ever try to hear a first grader say his name with a mask on?) Of course, you still have to deal with the same problems of accuracy, efficiency and accountability that you dealt with pre-Covid-19.

What's Next

School districts continue to see the value in finger scanning biometrics - not in spite of these times – but because of these times. Here's the point: *Not only is finger scanning biometrics simple, easy and fast, it also provides the additional value of efficiency, accountability and, most importantly, safety.* None of that has changed.



For more information about biometrics in K12 education visit [identiMetrics.net](https://www.identimetrics.net) and for up-to-date information on the Centers of Disease Control's recommendations, please visit www.cdc.gov