

Multi-Purpose School ID Cards:

Implementing a Student Lunch Card Program

More Than Just a Photo ID

- ID badges aren't just for identification – they can do so much more!
- See how a Maine School District implemented a school lunch card program that went well beyond its initial scope.



How the Program Started

- It began with a desire to help students fit in.
- Maine School Administrative District (MSAD) 58 replaced color-coded punch cards with uniform barcoded plastic school ID cards so that students eligible for free lunches could not easily be identified by their friends.
 - The issue was significant. At the time, 40 – 60% of students in MSAD 58 qualified for a reduced lunch.
- Today, all students carry the same plastic school ID card. Information on their lunch status is contained in a barcode on the back of the card.

How the Program Works

- All students, staff, and faculty carry a school ID badge that contains a barcode.
- The barcode is scanned into the school's cafeteria software. The software recognizes who is eligible for a reduced lunch.
- A debit system allows parents to apply money to the cards so their children can charge against it rather than carry money in school.

Hannah Scherer
Sophomore
1/6/1993
Advisor: Mr. Biehn

Allergies: Penicillin
Emergency Contacts:
Janet Scherer
(555) 963-8527
Richard Scherer
(555) 963-3216



There's More!

- While Maine School Administration District began their plastic school ID badge program to help students in the reduced lunch program fit in, they've found multiple uses for their cards!
 - **Library check-out cards:** Students and faculty can check out library materials using their cards.
 - **School visitor badges:** ID cards without photos now identify substitute teachers, volunteers, and parents.
 - **Off-site student identification:** Students without drivers licenses use their school ID cards for identification on school trips.

School ID Card Details

- The school district's cards are printed on plastic PVC cards using an ID card printer.
- The front of the cards contain identifying student information (photo, name, grade level, etc.).
- The back of the cards contain a barcode that allows the cards to also function as student lunch debit cards and library check-out cards!

Younger Students

- Administration recognized that younger students couldn't be responsible for remembering their lunch card everyday.
- Therefore, students grab their lunch cards from a rack on the wall outside the lunch room each day before lunch.
- Cards are scanned by the cashier and put back in a basket so someone can replace them in the rack after lunch.



Older Students & Adults

- High school students are required to carry their school ID cards at all times.
- Employees, especially those in multi-school assignments – such as administrators, supervisors, maintenance, food service, and transportation – are required to display their school ID badges at all times when performing duties for the school system.

You Can Do This Too!

- Maine School Administrative District's school ID card program can easily be implemented in your school.
- You're really just two steps away from getting started!
 - Discuss your lunch and/or library software program provider to see how they can assist.
 - Talk with an ID card printer supplier about the specific equipment and supplies that will work best for your program plan and budget.



Equipment & Supplies You'll Need

- When you talk with a retailer who specializes in photo ID, you'll learn more about the equipment and supplies that are needed to make school ID badges, including:
 - [ID card printer](#), [printer ribbons](#), and [blank ID cards](#)
 - [ID software](#) to manage your database & design cards
 - [Cleaning kit](#) to maintain efficiency & protect from damage
 - [Camera, tripod & backdrop](#) to take quality ID photos
 - [Badge holders, lanyards & reels](#) to wear & display cards

We Can Help!

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