

With Monique Merhige



High-profile Security

High school students and staff safer at Florida campus



With 150 miles of pristine coastline, 27 miles of sublime beaches and an enticing overall annual temperature of 72.7 degrees, it's no wonder that Manatee County is a magnet for people looking for a great place to live and work in Florida.

Led by a five-member school board and Superintendent Dr. Diana Greene, the school district is Manatee County's largest employer with more than 5,300 employees and staff members. Together, with the help of thousands of individual volunteers and corporate business partners, the men and women of the Manatee County School District work daily to enhance the community by nurturing and sustaining the dreams and aspirations of more

than 46,000 students district-wide.

One of the main high schools in the district—Manatee High School in Bradenton, Florida—was looking for a new ID badge solution that would help keep their students and staff safe and secure at all times. Manatee High School enrolls over 2,000 students in grades 9-12 and provides quality education to Florida residents.

Facing the Challenges

The school has been in existence since 1926 and focuses heavily on the well being and safety of their students. The main challenge that the school faced was dealing with an open campus where multiple people entered and exited the building on a daily basis.



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The school wanted a way to keep track of all visitors and ensure the school could verify students and staff.

With 15 rooms in the high school that included classrooms, a gymnasium, portable classrooms and offices, the high school needed a way to track all access points throughout the campus.

Another issue the school faced was tardy students wandering the halls after classes started. It was important to confirm the identity of late students and help control who walked through the school's hallways. In today's world, it's imperative to have an emergency system in place and know who is in your building at all times. There is no room for error and the school was looking for an ID card solution that could put their mind at ease.

A few years ago, high school staff started looking for a new ID vendor when they came across IDSecurityOnline.

"A huge challenge for the school was continually having students lose or break their ID badges and with our own printer on-site we are able to print replacement badges quickly," said Adriana Olarte, discipline secretary at Manatee High School.

Printers and Supplies

The school purchased two Evolis Primacy printers from IDSecurityOnline to take matters into their own hands by printing ID badges on-site for all staff and students. IDSecurityOnline also provided all card printer supplies and badge accessories, including lanyards.

All students, staff and visitors were required to wear a photo ID badge and no one would be allowed on the premises without one. Each student badge includes the student's name, photo ID, graduation year, and barcode. All employee badges feature the staff member's name, photo and title.

Around 150-200 staff badges were printed at the school and more than 1,000 cards were printed for new students. Also, a high rate of badges were lost on an annual basis and reprinted before or after school by the school's discipline secretary. In addition, the student ID cards could be scanned in the cafeteria to pull up important account information on various lunch programs available to the student.

"We are very satisfied with the solution that we implemented and with the quality

of service that we received from IDSecurityOnline," said Olarte. "Having the right ID card system helped us be more efficient while enhancing security at the school."

"Our goal is to work closely with our customers and advise on the right ID card printer that meets their needs," said George Ciottono, vice president to sales at IDSecurityOnline. "We were right there with Manatee High School to help them select the best onsite printer that would be able to handle a high frequency of badges being printed at the school."

The Importance of Identifying Students

The school has reaped the benefits of an ID card system by being able to account for students even in an emergency. If a student is sick, the school has the ability to identify the student quickly with pertinent information printed on the ID Badge and contact family members quickly.

The importance of identifying a student in an emergency situation is crucial to schools everywhere. With the right solution, schools can be prepared for any type of emergency—large or small on a moment's notice. In addition, parents in the community can relax knowing their children are in good hands at all times during the school year. With school lockdowns on the rise, school administrators need to ensure that all students are accounted for with an ID card system that requires everyone to wear their badges on school grounds.

"We firmly believe in working with schools across the country no matter how much they have budgeted for security," said Gabriel Schonzeit, president of IDSecurityOnline. "We would never turn down a school based on budget and will come up with the right ID card solution on a case by case basis."

Having the right ID card solution is the first step to making schools safer not only for students; but the staff members who are dedicated to providing a quality education for students. IDSecurityOnline allows schools to focus on what they do best—providing curriculums and activities that help students succeed—without the need to worry about security. ■

Monique Merhige is a freelance writer based in Long Island, New York.