

May 2015

### Biometrics Make Schools Safe in St. Louis

The International Biometrics & Identification Association (IBIA) is pleased to see that schools throughout the United States are continuing to choose biometric technology for security and efficiency. In many cases, biometrics in education are employed to increase efficiency in the classroom, the cafeteria, the library and other areas in the school that require fast and accurate student ID. St. Mary's high school in St. Louis, MO, however, [has deployed facial recognition for security purposes](#), showing that biometric technology can help protect students, faculty and staff.

The facial recognition system used by St. Mary's has been deployed in an access control capacity. Students, teachers and other authorized personnel have had their faces uploaded into the schools' biometric database. When an enrolled person approaches a door in the school, a facial recognition camera verifies that he or she is authorized for entry by comparing the captured face to the one stored in the database. A positive match will grant access, and like all optimal biometric deployments, it is both secure and highly convenient.

What's more, the system can have undesirable persona added to the database, such as disgruntled staff, abusive parents and known sexual predators, and if they are identified by the facial recognition technology, select staff will be notified via SMS or email.

A driving factor in the choice of biometric access control for St. Mary's is its reputation for being located in a high crime neighborhood.

"I hear all the time, 'That's a great school, but oh, that neighborhood,'" said School President Michael England, in an interview with the [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#). "Like all cities, there are pockets of the city that have issues, but we're not doing it because we have any issues. We believe it's a very positive step in the right direction."

Given that last year at this time, the Florida Senate ruled against allowing schools to collect biometrics from students, it is encouraging to see such a comprehensive biometric system deployed on a school campus.

"Biometric technology offers a cost-effective, reliable, safe and efficient way for school administrators to know for certain who is in their schools and that they receive the services they require and deserve," says Jay Fry, President and CEO of identiMetrics. "At identiMetrics, we've been serving schools for more than ten years. We applaud the forward thinking administration at St. Mary's who realize the importance of using biometric technology to significantly enhance the security in their school."

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The IBIA hopes that other schools will follow the example set by St. Mary's high school and embrace biometric technology, whether it be for security, access control, attendance, lunch line management or other applications.

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