



Memphis City Schools Improves Student Attendance with Socket Mobile and Plasco ID



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– Sgt. Kenneth Pinkney
Director of Student Intervention and Behavior
Memphis City Schools



Founded in 1869, Memphis City Schools is the largest school system in the state of Tennessee and the 21st largest metropolitan school system in the United States. Serving approximately 112,300 students in 203 schools, Memphis City Schools is devoted to the academic achievement of its students, with the vision of becoming an internationally competitive urban school system.

In order to foster academic achievement, the school district has made it a priority to promote positive student behavior and improve student attendance. However, like most metropolitan school systems, Memphis City Schools found it challenging to track tardies and other policy violations. As a result, the school district has deployed an innovative mobile tracking system that allows hall monitors and security officers to view student records, log student infractions, and print tardy slips on the fly. In just its first month, the deployment has helped schools not only save 10-15 minutes from every tardy slip they issued, but also decrease the number of tardy students by 10 to 15 percent.

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TRACKING STUDENT VIOLATIONS

Many of the middle and high schools in the district had problems with students loitering in hallways. Part of the problem was that school buildings are so large that it took students 10-15 minutes to walk to the main of-

fice to get a tardy slip. Also, because the citations were handwritten, they were slow and tedious to fill out, and at some schools, long lines of 100 or more students would often form outside the office door.

Another problem was that hall monitors and security officers didn't have access to student records while monitoring the schools. Students could easily claim that they were on their way to the office when they really weren't. Also, school administrators wanted a better way of managing school security.

“Some of our goals were dealing with truants and improving attendance. We felt that we had to have some kind of way of being able to track students who walk on and off campus. Plus, with the emergency management needs, we wanted to be conscious of intruders and students who don't belong on campus,” explained Sgt. Kenneth Pinkney, Director of Student Intervention and Behavior at Memphis City Schools.

TURNING TO TECHNOLOGY

Memphis City Schools turned to Plasco ID, one of the world's largest identification solution providers and a leader in card-based technology solutions. Plasco ID provided the school district with a state-of-the-art mobile student tracking solution that features the Socket SoMo® 650 handheld computer and PlascoTrac software. Plugged into the top of the handheld computer is the Socket CF Scan Card, a small bar code scanner.

After the bell rings for class to start, hall monitors do a “hall sweep” to make sure that students are in class on time. If a tardy student is found, a hall monitor quickly scans the bar code on the student's ID card and views the student's file on the handheld computer, including the student's photo and any recent policy violations. The hall monitor then logs the infraction and prints

out a tardy slip using a small wireless printer worn on the hip.

At the end of each day, the handheld computer synchronizes with the school's central student management system in order to provide the latest student files on both the device and the central network.

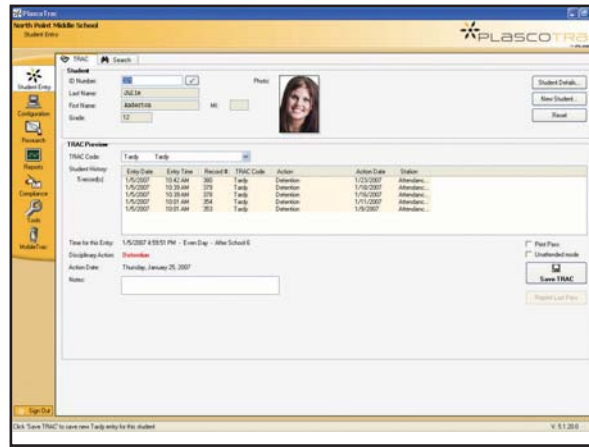
BENEFITS OF THE SYSTEM

The mobile system has helped the school district both save time and reduce the number of tardies, helping to maximize students' learning time. "The mobile system saves almost 10 to 15 minutes every time a student receives a tardy slip, because the larger the school building, the longer it takes students to get to the main office. Plus, it decreases the number of tardies because of the fact that there was an immediate consequence. There are automatic disciplinary actions built into the system," Pinkney explained.

In just its first month of testing at five of the city's largest middle and high schools, the number of tardies decreased by 10 to 15 percent. "The principals, assistant principals, and hall monitors really love the system," Pinkney said. "It's a great start in getting students accountable."

Additionally, it enables schools to effectively manage student policy violations without a lot of tedious paperwork. "You can see exactly what incidents you had and track those incidents without a lot of pencil and paper," Pinkney remarked.

Because hall monitors and security officers can automatically look up the photo and record of any student, the mobile system prevents misbehaving or trespassing students from claiming to be someone else. They can make sure that students on suspension aren't mistakenly admitted to school-sponsored athletic events. Additionally, the system helps to prevent truancy by providing authorities with the names and photos of students who are skipping school.



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Like with any school initiative, parental involvement is key, and part of the success of PlascoTrac at Memphis City Schools is its close connection with parents. "Parents love the system, because they're being informed. We tied PlascoTrac with our parent notification system, so when we upload that your child was absent or had some problems this week, parents can get a message overnight and make some corrective actions," Pinkney remarked.

After successfully using the system for tracking tardies, reducing truancy, and improving security, the school district plans to expand the deployment to other areas, such as libraries, nutritional services, transportation, and professional development for teachers.

Student ID Card with Bar Code

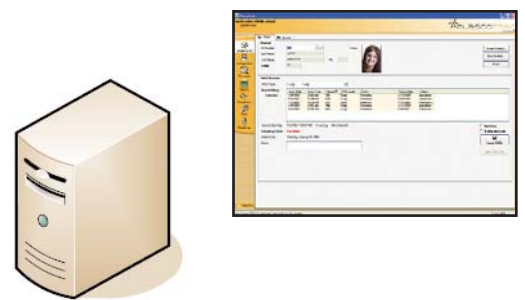


School Hallway, Sports Field, etc.

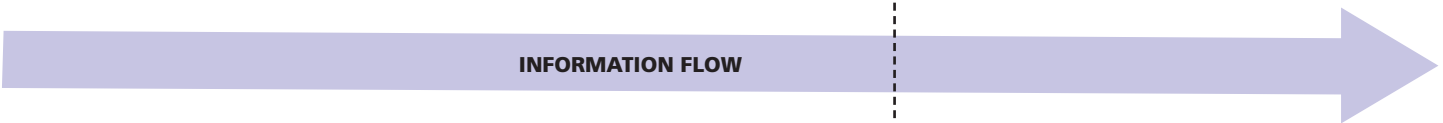
SoMo 650 with CF Scan Card and PlacoTrac software connected to a wireless printer



Student Management System



Main Office



CUSTOMER AT A GLANCE

- Organization: Memphis City Schools
- Founded: 1869
- Headquarters: Memphis, TN, USA
- URL: www.mcsk12.net
- Primary business: Public school system

PARTNER AT A GLANCE

- Organization: Plasco, Inc.
- Founded: 1983
- Headquarters: Miami, FL, USA
- URL: www.plascotracc.com
- Phone: 888-457-5272
- Primary business: Leader in the plastic card personalization industry

CHALLENGE

Efficiently track tardies and other policy violations

SOLUTIONS

- Socket SoMo 650 handheld computer
- Socket CompactFlash Scan Card Series 5
- PlascoTrac software from Plasco ID
- Wireless wearable printer



RESULTS

- Decrease tardies by 10-15% in just the first month of deployment
- Save 10-15 minutes from every tardy slip given to a student, maximizing instruction time
- Eliminate tedious paperwork and long lines outside the main office
- Ability to look up student record, log infractions, and print tardy slips anywhere
- Reduce truancies by providing authorities of name and photo of every student skipping school
- Automatically inform parents of their children's disciplinary problems
- Improve security by identifying intruders



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