School Cafeteria Meal Ordering and **Payment Safety** 2020

PANDEMIC TIPS AND TACTICS TO MINIMIZE RISK AND KEEP YOUR COMMUNITY SAFE

PaySchools

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During the coronavirus pandemic, your school district has been challenged to plan for numerous process changes so you can continue to educate and nourish children while keeping students, staff, and volunteers healthy.

What does this look like in the cafeteria when students return to school?

This white paper presents a number of meal ordering and payment safety tactics for you to consider. It also covers cashier station hygiene. The goals are to:

1. eliminate as much unnecessary touches of surfaces as possible

2. minimize the amount of time students have to spend in lines and common areas

3. maintain hygiene.

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Student meal ordering and payment tactics

As large spaces that often congregate hundreds of students, school cafeterias pose particular risk. The CDC recommends limiting access to common areas and, if there is community spread, adjusting any gatherings that mix classes and grades. Here are several ideas to minimize student time spent in payment and pick-up lines.

CLASSROOM ORDERING

PaySchools QuikLunch software can integrate with your attendance system. When teachers take attendance, they can also mark lunch orders. Cafeteria staff can view these orders and prepare them for pick-up. Orders can even be bagged and delivered to classrooms for segregated dining.
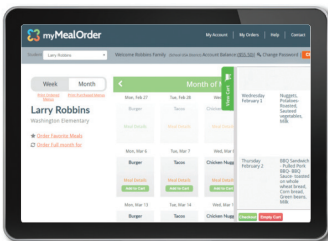
MEAL PREORDERS

Parents can preorder their children's lunches through PaySchools Central. Again, cafeteria staff view the orders electronically and prepare them for pick-up. PaySchools' preorder system, brought to you by myMealOrder, works with both cafeteria-prepared meals and meals brought in by outside vendors.

FASTER LUNCH LINES

The speed of lunch lines has never been more important. If students in your district will still be lining up to select and pay for lunches, it's essential that the line move quickly—especially if you will be requiring students to maintain distance from each other in the line or if multiple classes will be lining up at the same time. The sooner students can move through communal spaces and return to the safety of their classroom, the better. PaySchools QuikLunch is known as the speedy point-of-sale system.

TOUCHLESS PAYMENTS

When it comes to school cafeterias, the fewer student touchpoints, the better. Cafeteria point-of-sale systems that rely on touch-dependent pin pads can be upgraded to safer scanner or RFID technology. PaySchools offers complimentary hardware safety check-ups and can guide you through making your process more hygienic.

Cash considerations

Anywhere your district accepts and handles cash is a risk point. This guidance applies not only to cafeterias but also to front offices, refreshment stands, box offices, and more.
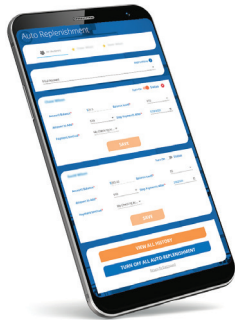
ONLINE PAYMENTS

Coronavirus may survive on paper and other porous surfaces for up to 24 hours. What's more, cash use often leads to skin contact when it's passed hand to hand.

Promoting online meal payments over cash will help keep your community safe. The CDC is recommending touchless payments whenever possible, and many businesses have already transitioned to accepting only digital forms of payment.

With PaySchools software, families can pay for lunches, fees, registrations, event tickets, and more online, quickly and easily.

CDC Coronavirus Guidance

AFFECTING SCHOOL PAYMENT-RELATED PROCESSES, INCLUDING CAFETERIA ORDERING AND PAYMENT

General guidance for BUSINESSES, which the CDC recommends that schools also review:

- Practice social distancing by **avoiding large gatherings** and **maintaining distance** (at least 6 feet) from others when possible.
- **Consider closing or limiting access to common areas** where people are likely to congregate and interact.

Specific guidance for SCHOOLS:

- **Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched**. Clean with the cleaners typically used. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
- Provide EPA-registered disposable wipes to staff so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before use.
- If there is minimal to moderate community spread, implement multiple social distancing strategies for gatherings, classrooms, and movement through the building.

These strategies include **avoiding mixing students in common areas such as the cafeteria**. If it is not possible to suspend the use of common areas, try to **limit the extent to which students mix with each other** in the common areas, particularly students from other classes.

Limiting movement through the building might include throttling high-traffic situations such as lunch lines to minimize close contact.

Guidelines for RETAIL SETTINGS similar to school-cafeteria and front-office payment circumstances:

- Encourage customers to use **touchless payment options** when available. Minimize handling cash and cards.
- **Provide remote (online) shopping alternatives for customers**. Set up designated pick-up areas.
- Control the flow of traffic into the establishment by ensuring that maximum capacity plans are adjusted and managed at the entry door.

These guidelines are current as of 5/13/20. For the most up-to-date guidance, visit the CDC site at:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html

MEAL ORDER IDEAS

The purpose of this tool is to assist administrators in making (re)opening decisions regarding K-12 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to check with state and local health officials and other partners to determine the most appropriate actions while adjusting to meet the unique needs and circumstances of the local community.

Should you consider opening?

✓ Will reopening be consistent with applicable state and local orders?

✓ Is the school ready to protect children and employees at higher risk for severe illness?

✓ Are you able to screen students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure?

ALL YES →

ANY NO
↓

DO NOT OPEN

Deploying TOUCH-FREE PAYMENTS will also REDUCE EXPOSURE. Remove cash and pin pads, and go touchless with scanners or RFID readers.

Are recommended health and safety actions in place?

✓ Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing and employees wearing a cloth face covering, as feasible

✓ Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation

✓ Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups and limited mixing between groups, if feasible

✓ Train all employees on health and safety protocols

ALL YES →

ANY NO
↓

MEET SAFEGUARDS FIRST

Use a PREORDER or POS SYSTEM that allows classroom or bulk ordering to minimize gatherings in common areas/cafeteria.

Is ongoing monitoring in place?

✓ Develop and implement procedures to check for signs and symptoms of students and employees daily upon arrival, as feasible

✓ Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home

✓ Plan for if students or employees get sick

✓ Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures

✓ Monitor student and employee absences and have flexible leave policies and practices

✓ Be ready to consult with the local health authorities if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area

ALL YES →

OPEN AND MONITOR

ANY NO
↓

MEET SAFEGUARDS FIRST

Implement new tactics to REDUCE EXPOSURE:
- Online preorders
- Classroom/bulk orders
- Online F/R meal applications
- Touchless peripheral devices
- Cashless schools

Cafeteria point-of-sale system options

As you know, children will often cough or sneeze without covering their faces. These airborne droplets can then come to rest anywhere in the cashier station area at any time. By minimizing the areas that children must touch as they move through the cashier station, you will be safeguarding their health as well as yours.

**The more touchless a system is on the student side, the safer it is. Cashless is also safer.**

1.   **TRADITIONAL — PIN PADS**

2.   **MOSTLY TOUCHLESS: SCANNERS**

3.   **ENTIRELY TOUCHLESS: RFID READERS**

Your PaySchools representative can help you review upgrade options and select the cafeteria point-of-sale system that's best for you.
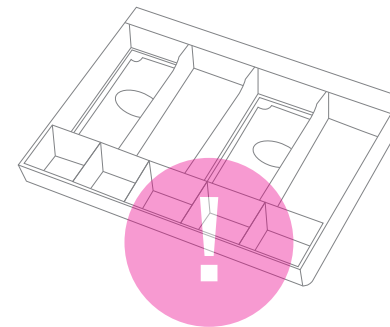
1

TRADITIONAL — PIN PADS

In this common set-up, students enter their ID numbers into the pin pad—a touch point that can be eliminated with newer technology. Many schools accept cash in the lunch line, but eliminating cash, which itself can harbor germs, eliminates the back-and-forth touching of cash transactions as well as the skin-to-skin contact that often occurs. PaySchools Central software makes online payments simple for families.
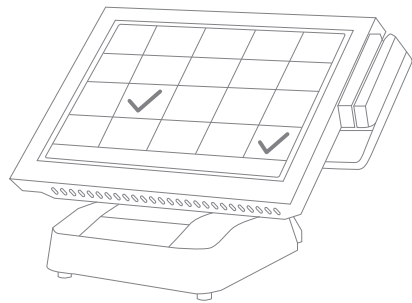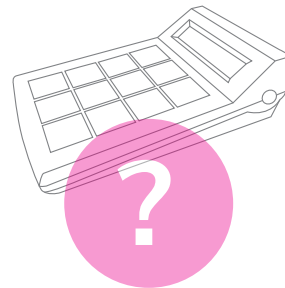
**Point of Sale Computer**   **+**   **Pin Pad**   **+**   **Cash Drawer**
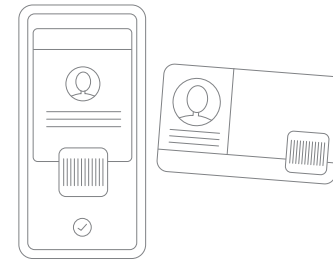
2

MOSTLY TOUCHLESS: SCANNERS

In this set-up, students present their ID cards to the scanner, which reads the barcode in the same way a grocery-store barcode reader works. It's faster than pin pads, and though students may tap their cards on the scanner, touch is minimized. For older students, cards can be stored on their phones, in digital wallets.
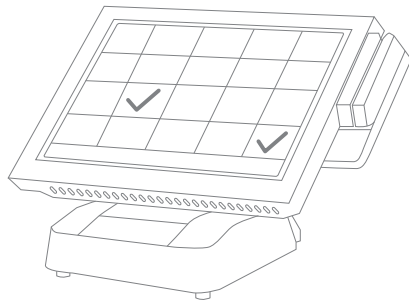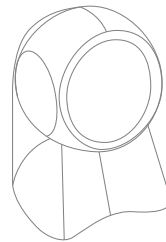
**Point of Sale Computer**   +   **Orbital Scanner**   +   **Student ID Card with Barcode**
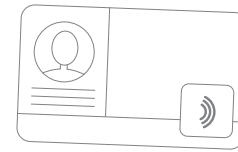
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ENTIRELY TOUCHLESS: RFID READERS

RFID technology, also called tap-to-pay, is used to provide best distancing. Students present their RFID-enabled ID cards to the reader. The cards only need to be close to the reader to be accepted. In fact, the reader can detect the RFID tag inside a student's pocket or even on the outside pocket of a backpack. Some districts are moving to RFID systems to track student entry, attendance, bus ridership, and more.
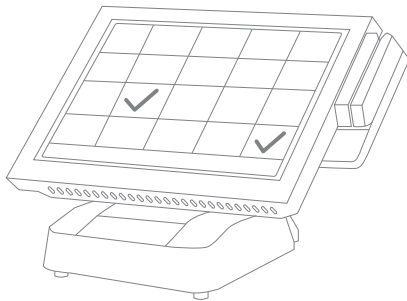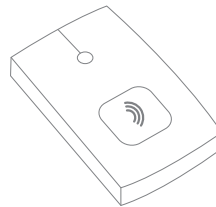
Point of Sale Computer   **RFID Reader**   **Student ID Card with RFID**

Keeping cashier stations sanitized and safe

Your cafeteria cashiers fill a role that is both high-touch and high-tech. It's also high-speed. They are tasked with interacting quickly and efficiently with most if not all of their facility's students once or twice a day. In their stations, many hands are touching many surfaces, including computers and other peripheral technology.

How do you help them keep their cashier stations as sanitized and safe as possible in this busy location?

We know that your schools in general and cafeterias in particular are always making efforts to stay in compliance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sanitation guidelines, including those related to the novel coronavirus. The International Sanitary Supply Association, or ISSA, also publishes Clean Standards for K-12 schools, and your state's Department of Education and Department of Health also have standards and requirements. And of course, your schools have their own written procedures for cleaning and disinfecting. The tips in this technology alert are intended to be supplementary to these fundamentals.

SANITIZING ELECTRONICS

Most electronics can be safely wiped down with a 70-percent alcohol wipe or Clorox disinfectant wipe. Do not spray the bleach-water or other liquid solution directly onto electronics. Instead, use wipes to wipe down any cashier point-of-sale electronic surfaces that are being routinely touched, including computer screens, keyboards, and pin pads, at the beginning and end of each meal shift. If time allows, wipe down these surfaces more frequently.

If you are using pin pads on which students type in their IDs, consider upgrading to **scanners or RFID readers**. These **touch-free options are safer** because they dramatically reduce the number of times students place their hands on surfaces in the cashier area. They are also easier to wipe down when it's time to wipe down all the electronic surfaces.

Talk to the professionals

PaySchools conducts complimentary meal ordering and payment system check-ups for K-12 school districts. We can help you assess the functionality as well as safety of all of your district's family payment systems.

To schedule a check-up or initiate a discussion about heightening the safety of your ordering and payment processes, please contact us at:

sales@payschools.com

800.669.0792, option 4

www.payschools.com

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