

PTIONS

For alternative education

Executive Summary Statewide Alternative Grants Program Evaluation, 1998-1999

This report presents the findings from this year's evaluation of the alternative education programs conducted by the 471 participating districts. These districts conducted a total of 280 alternative education programs in 71 counties; 13,137 students were served, an increase of 2,426 over the total served last year and more than double the number served the previous year. The Statewide Alternative Grant Program was initiated to assist Oklahoma school districts in setting up or continuing alternative education programs and has been funded (since 1996) for just over \$40 million.

Alternative Education Student Characteristics

- 56 percent male, 44 percent female
- 78.9 percent were in grades 9-12
- racial/ethnic distribution similar to that of statewide student demographics
- 34.9 percent were older than the norm for their grade placement; 29 percent of these were recovered dropouts
- average length of enrollment was 18.89 weeks
- 31.7 percent were referred for academic deficiencies, 20 percent for behavioral problems, 16.9 percent for excessive absences or truancy and 6.1 percent due to adjustment problems
- 21.2 percent were former dropouts
- 8.0 percent were pregnant/parenting teens
- 2.5 percent were direct referrals from the juvenile justice system
- Students self-reported that at least 20.3 percent of all alternative students were juvenile offenders

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Alternative Education Program Characteristics

- Seventy-one programs were determined to be out of compliance with at least one of the 16 required criteria; counseling was the most frequently failed component. Thirty-one programs failed to incorporate the arts, 15 programs did not meet minimal criteria for collaborations with other agencies, and 13 programs did not include life skills
- Low student-teacher ratio was the only criterion met by all programs
- Only 13.9 percent of this high-risk population dropped out of the alternative programs
- 2.9 percent were suspended through the end of the school year; less than 5 percent were referred to other programs
- 31.4 percent of the alternative education students planned to continue in the program the next year
- 65 percent of those classified as seniors either graduated or earned their GED



Analyses of negative (dropped out, suspended) program exits

- A slightly lower dropout/pushout rate was present in 12th grade
- There was no difference in the percentage of negative exits by gender
- The highest percent of negative exits was recorded for Native American students, although the percentages were similar across all racial groups
- Students who indicated they had past contact with juvenile justice agencies had substantially more negative exits as did students who were overage
- Over one-fourth of the students who were referred by juvenile justice agencies exited with a negative outcome
- Only one other referral group—those referred because of excessive absences—had negative exits of more than 20 percent
- Although recovered dropouts were most likely to drop out of the alternative education program, over one-fourth (25.7 percent) graduated or earned a GED
- The graduation rate of the recovered dropouts was second only to that of pregnant and parenting teens (26.1 percent)
- Students with behavioral problems were most often returned to the traditional program and most often suspended from the alternative program
- Students referred by juvenile justice agencies were much more likely than any other group to be referred to another program

(Continued from page 2)

Student Performance

Statistically significant differences were found between students' pre-program and post-program status on the following variables:

- alternative students were absent less
- alternative students made higher grades
- alternative students failed fewer classes
- alternative students were referred less often for disciplinary problems

Additionally, the performance of students in Statewide Alternative Programs exceeded that of at-risk students not enrolled in alternative programs. The changes were not only statistically significant, but also quite substantial on all four variables.

The complete Statewide Program report (54 pages) is available from our office or may be viewed on our website in early December. The complete evaluation report (over 1600 pages) is available on CD. To order either free of charge, please contact Jackie at the OTAC office, 1-800-687-5730.



Alternative Education Puts Franklin Academy Students in Stitches

What began as a school project for Tulsa's Franklin Academy students became a lesson in team-building and a surprise for the school's principal.

English, math and history were studied as twenty-two students participated in designing a 45-square quilt. Twenty-three of the squares represented the states crossed by Route 66, which the students studied and wrote about. Friendship knots connected the squares of the quilt which was presented by the Franklin youth to principal David Deville in appreciation for his support and love of education.



.....Oklahoma State Testing

(Continued from page 9)

Friday, December 10

Francis Tuttle Vocational Technical Center, Business and Industry Center, Oklahoma City
 Session I: 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
 (Oklahoma City, Bethany, Choctaw-Nicoma Park, Crooked Oak, Crutcho)

Session II: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 (Deer Creek, Edmond, Harrah, Jones, Luther, Millwood, Oakdale)
 County: Oklahoma

Reminder: Alternative Education Inservice Opportunities

We have already completed almost three-fourths of our professional development trainings, but there are still some exceptional sessions scheduled for January and February. We encourage you to call and register today - don't wait until the last minute! Just call Dixie at 1-800-687-5730 to register—and remember, there are no fees charged! (For complete descriptions of the upcoming programs, see the September issue of Options—that's the blue one!)



Date	Program	Location	Registration Deadline
January 11	50 Ways to Use your Noodle	Tulsa	January 3
January 13	50 Ways to Use your Noodle	Oklahoma City	January 3
January 25	Reaching the Tough to Teach	Oklahoma City	January 10
February 4	Managing Aggressive Behavior	Enid	January 24
February 9	P.E.A.C.E. Curriculum	Clinton	January 24



Second Biennial POP-TV Writing Contest

*Sponsored by the Zero
Population Growth's
Education Program*

The contest is open to all students in high school and college. Students can compete in one of three categories—9th-10th grade, 11th-12th grade, or college undergraduate.

Each category has a first place prize of \$1,000 and a second place prize of \$500.

Creates an opportunity for teachers to use multi-disciplinary lessons in language arts, social studies and science.

Postmark deadline for entries— February 15, 2000

Students need to: Write a plot description or “treatment” for an episode of any current (does not include re-runs) television drama, sitcom, soap opera or cartoon. The characters should react to and reflect on a situation involving suburban sprawl. Entries must be typed, 1500 words or less, in third person and in the present tense.

For more information on the essay contest, including last year's winning essays, sample treatments, suggested plot angles and other tips, please visit www.zpg.org/education.



SPRAWL
THE ZPG POP-TV WRITING CONTEST

Mark February 17 on your calendar now!

Chad Foster To Spark Student Conference

You may not know the name but you know his work. Every time you walk into a McDonald's play area and you feel your feet cushioned by the ground, you are stepping on Chad Foster's invention. At a young age Foster invented the flooring McDonald's uses all over the world to protect kids from being hurt while they play. Foster is also well known by sports enthusiasts for

his ESPN program, *Fly Fishing in America*. Oklahoma's alternative education students and teachers will get to know him when he kicks-off the February student conference

Since making millions at a young age Foster has invested time and energy in America's youth. His book, *Preparing Teens for the Real World*, is popular among teens and teachers alike for its insightful information and easy readability. The Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center has purchased Foster's book for all alternative programs in Oklahoma and each conference participant. Foster is a dynamic speaker with a great story to tell.

After starting off the conference with his keynote address, Foster will also meet with students for a question and answer period. This is a great opportunity for students to get information about the "real" world of business and "life" from one of its greatest successes. OTAC's Alternative Student Conference will be February 17, 2000, at the University of Central Oklahoma. Put the date on your calendar and plan to attend. More information about the conference will be in next month's newsletter.



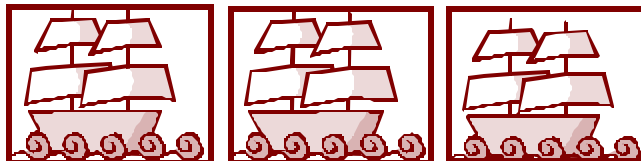
Sunrise

As you walk through life there is no such thing as a straight road.
 There will be hills, bumps, and curves.
 You can choose to challenge the road or turn back and take the easy way out.
 You will love yourself a little more if you make the walk.
 When it gets dark and lonely just remember another hill,
 Another ray of sunlight to get you through the day.
 It seems like the hills turn into mountains and the sunlight starts to dim.
 Life is like the mountains that truly never end.



*Amy Wilson-Hall, 12th grade
 Union Alternative School, Tulsa*

.....student stuff



The following poems were submitted by two students from the Hugo Alternative School.

Silas Marner led a lonely life,
 Lovely Sarah was to be his wife.
 William Dane set him up,
 The church cast him out and he packed up.

With Lantern Yard part of his past,
 He moved to Raveloe and tried to make it last.
 Weaving linen got him gold,
 Bet he was still all alone.

He has his gold under the floor,
 Then Dunsey Cass walked in the door.
 Unknown to everyone in the town,
 Dunsey fell in the pit and drowned.

When Silas walked in his door,
 He no longer found his gold under the floor.
 With unbelief and a cry of rage,
 He ran to town like an escaped animal from a cage.

When he reached his destination,
 Silas entered without hesitation,
 He asked for some assistance,
 And answered questions with persistence.

Silas never found his gold,
 Until the night it became cold.
 He awoke to a golden shine,
 Which was a child whose mother had died.

With someone to care for at last,
 Silas forgot about this past.
 Raising the child with the golden hair,
 Got him through life without despair.

All the while, Godfrey Cass,
 Knew the secret of the child's past.
 Eppie wonders about her early life,
 She is Godfrey's child, but not his wife's.

When the secret is finally revealed,
 Silas and Eppie are less than thrilled.
 Instead of moving in with her real parent,
 She decides to marry her true love, Aaron.



Stephani Alexander

Silas Marner
 Was accused of a crime.
 He left Lantern Yard
 Without wasting time.

Silas Marner
 Moved into a house of stone.
 No one in Lantern Yard
 Even knew he was gone.

Silas Marner
 Weave linen which he sold.
 He weaved and he weaved
 'Til he had lots of gold

Silas kept his gold
 Hidden under the floor.
 And when he left,
 He left an unlocked door.

Outside Silas' door,
 A poor woman had fallen.
 She dropped her child
 And didn't hear her callin'.

Inside the door
 The child walked alone.
 Made Silas her father,
 Her very own.

Now the poor woman,
 Poor woman was dead.
 So Godfrey and Nancy
 Soon could be wed.

Inside the Stone Pit,
 A body was found,
 The town didn't know,
 But Dunstan had drowned.

Godfrey and Nancy
 That night did go
 To the house of stone,
 But Eppie said, "No".

Aaron was the son
 Silas came to know
 When he married Eppie
 In the town of Raveloe.

Amber Carlile

Enid's Lincoln Alternative Center

.....student stuff

Recognized as one of the best alternative education programs in the country, Enid's Lincoln Alternative Academy continues to encourage its students to return to school or recover lost academic credits while involving them in community projects. The pictures on this page reflect a few of the many service activities these students provide to Enid.



Monica Montoya (above) works on a Halloween costume for her daughter (also named Monica) during Teen Mom's group. (Left) Ready for trick-or-treating!



Enid Lincoln Alternative Center principal Jarry Hillman and students getting "fired up" for the Back-to-School cookout.



Alicia Hiatt and Edwina Peterman (Teacher Cadets) hiding Easter eggs for the Teen Mom's Easter party.



Heather Miller and Mr. Hillman working on the "Christmas in April" project.



Shaun Franklin does his part for the Oklahoma Blood Institute's annual drive, part of the Academy's Health curriculum.

Robin Hughes signs the "Wall of Fame" after graduating last year.



Alicia Baer reads the children's book she wrote and published to a group of Enid elementary students.

Oklahoma School Testing Program Pretest Inservice Schedule

Sessions for the following counties were held prior to publishing this month's newsletter: Atoka, Beckham, Choctaw, Coal, Creek, Custer, Dewey, Ellis, Garfield, Garvin, Greer, Kingfisher, Lincoln, Logan, Murray, Noble, Pontotoc, Pushmataha, Rogers, Roger Mills, Washita, and Woodward. If you failed to attend your county's meeting, please attend the next-closest session.

Tuesday, November 16

Wes Watkins Technology Center, Wetumka
10:00 a.m. to noon
Counties: Hughes, McIntosh, Okfuskee

Northwood Elementary School, Seminole
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
County: Seminole

Alternative Academy Video Conference Center, Guymon
10:00 a.m. to noon
Counties: Beaver, Cimarron, Texas

Thursday, November 18

Southwest Technology Center, Altus
10:00 a.m. to noon
Counties: Harmon, Jackson, Tillman

Hobart Administration Center, Hobart
3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
County: Kiowa

Northwest Technology Center, Fairview
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: Major

Meridian Technology Center, Stillwater
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
County: Payne

Friday, November 19

Red River Area Vo -Tech, Duncan
10:00 a.m. to noon
Counties: Stephens, Jefferson

Medford High School Auditorium, Medford
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
County: Grant

Friday, November 19, continued

Tri-County Technology Center, Bartlesville
10:00 a.m. to noon
Counties: Washington, Nowata

Monday, November 22

S. Arch Thompson Auditorium, McAlester
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: Pittsburg

Chisholm Trail Technology Center, Omega
3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
County: Blain

Northwest Technology Center, Alva
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Counties: Woods, Alfalfa

During November, December, and January, the Student Assessment, Research and Planning staff will conduct the Oklahoma School Testing Program Pretest Inservices. **Attendance at these sessions is required for those responsible for local management and administration of the tests.** Districts must send a minimum of one representative from each school site to this inservice. School representatives should attend the session scheduled within their county.

NOTE: Do not include any alternative education students in testing dis-aggregation who are not enrolled in alternative education classes for at least four hours and 12 minutes a day, four days a week.

Questions on testing? Please contact either:

Dr. Annette Loop	(405) 521-3341
Dr. Mary Merrit	(405) 522-0276



..... Oklahoma School Testing Program

Green Country Area Vo-Tech School, Okmulgee
10:00 a.m. to noon
Counties: Okmulgee, Okfuskee

Thursday, December 2

Moore Norman Technology Center, Norman
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: Cleveland

Tulsa-Lemley Campus, Technology Center, Tulsa
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
County: Tulsa

Central Elementary Auditorium, Tahlequah
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
County: Cherokee

Canadian Valley Technology Center, El
Reno
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: Canadian

Sallisaw P. S. Administration Building,
Sallisaw
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: Sequoyah

December 3

Kiamichi Technology Center, Idabel
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: McCurtain

Indian Capital Technology Center, Stilwell
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
County: Adair

Monday, December 6

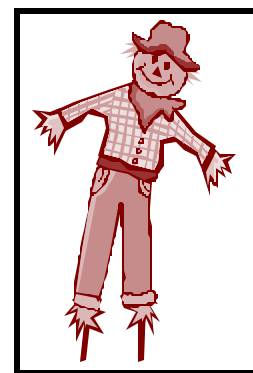
Kiamichi Technology Center, Durant
10:00 p.m. to noon
Counties: Bryan, Marshall, Johnston

Tuesday, December 7

Kiamichi Technology Center, Stigler
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Counties: Haskell, Latimer

Wednesday, December 8

Kiamichi Technology Center, Poteau
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
County: LeFlore



(continued from page 8)

Tuesday, November 23

Gordon Cooper Technology Center, Shawnee
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: Pottawatomie

Pawhuska High School Lecture Hall, Pawhuska
10:00 a.m. to noon
Counties: Osage, Pawnee

Monday, November 29

Great Plains Area Vo-Tech School, Lawton
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Counties: Comanche, Cotton

Northeast Technology Center (South Campus), Pryor
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
County: Mayes

Tuesday, November 30

Mid-America Technology Center, Wayne
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: McClain

Northeast Technology Center (North Campus), Afton
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Counties: Craig, Delaware, Ottawa

Indian Capital Technology Center, Muskogee
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Counties: Muskogee, Wagoner

Pioneer Technology Center, Ponca City
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: Kay

Wednesday, December 1

Canadian Valley Technology Center, Chickasha
10:00 a.m. to noon
County: Grady

Caddo-Kiowa Vo -Tech, Fort Cobb
3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
County: Caddo

this and that.....

Games Simulate Workplace at School *Interagency Committee Focuses on Career Development*

The National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) established by Congress in 1976, includes representatives from the departments of Labor, Education, Commerce, Defense and Agriculture. You might say that a portion of their work is child's play.

The first version, "The Real Game", was available in March of 1966 and was intended to help 7th and 8th graders develop basic skills for career exploration. In less than a year, the game was being used in 10,000 classrooms in the United States and Canada.

Since that time, other grade-level-appropriate games have been developed or are in the process of being designed.

The Play Real Game (Grades 3 and 4; available summer of 2000)

Through a series of game activities, students will create a simulated society where work roles connect in order for the society to function. Each student will learn first-hand the importance of teamwork and how skills interconnect with each other. Parents, families and communities are central to the program.

The Make it Real Game (Grades 5 and 6)

Students can create and explore work roles within a simulated society. The emphasis is on the development and creation of a simulated town where students create a cross-section of work roles and business that are integral to any city or town.

The Real Game (Grades 7 & 8)

This game is designed to teach middle school/junior high students about aspects of the working world by living them within the safety of the classroom. Students take on one of the 40 occupations in the game, and through a series of activities, they learn about earning an income, what money will buy, and what their occupation's income can afford. They plan and budget for lei-

sure time and vacations, learn about their work roles, experience the whims of change and feel the effects of changing technology and global economic trends.

The Be Real Game (Grades 9 and 10)

Students take on a series of adult life/work roles while budgeting, changing jobs, learning family responsibilities, taking on community challenges, and experiencing chance events. Most students involve their parents/guardians in this experience and strong links to the community may be established as speakers and experts in various work and civic sectors are invited in to become part of the program.

The Get Real Game (Grades 11 and 12; available spring of 2000)

The focus of this game is on activities that allow students to simulate the real society into which they are preparing to move. The program serves as a "dress rehearsal" for post-secondary life. Community interaction is the key, as well as the creation of individual Student Action Plans.

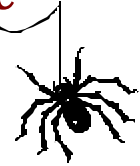
All of the games are \$195, with the exception of the **Be Real Game** which is \$220. Prices include a Facilitator's Kit which includes maps, job profiles, outlines, glossaries, question and answer cards, transparencies and other reusable resources. The content of each kit is determined by which grade level is ordered.

Students folders are also available (\$20 for a package of 10), as well as Career Development Program and Reference Guides, Blueprints for Adult Career Development, and many other related resources. In addition, optional but helpful national training sessions are scheduled through next spring.

For more information on the games or ordering details, please call 1-888-700-8940, Fax 206-870-3787, or email ntsc@hcc.ctc.edu. The website for the NOICC is www.noicc.com.

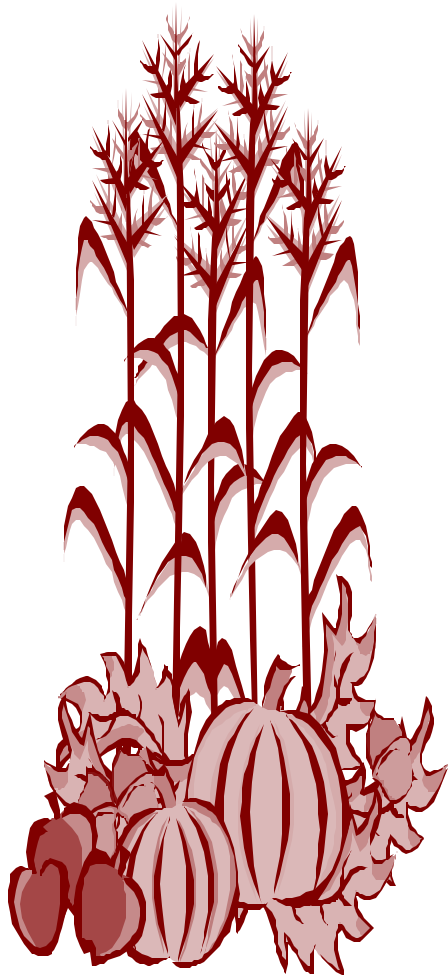


Miracles do happen! The good news is our website is operational again; the bad news is it needs some serious work, so it will take a few weeks before it looks like we want it to. The week after Thanksgiving has been set aside for this task, which means that with any luck at all, everything should be in order by Christmas break!



This doesn't mean that you can't visit us today at www.csdcotac.org—in fact, we hope you will. As of this writing, the history of alternative education and the legislation that created it is available online, as well as information on professional development inservice opportunities offered through the CSDC (our parent organization) and everything you ever wanted to know about OTAC, including email addresses for all the Field Coordinators.

During the next few weeks we will be adding the Executive Summary for the Statewide Alternative Grants Program Evaluation. This will be your chance to view what happens to all that data you turn in to us in June! We will also be working on our chat room and making past issues of *Options* available to you. Also in the works is an interactive component that will allow you to register online for any of CSDC's workshops. There is a lot happening on the techno-track around here and we appreciate your patience as we piece it all together.



Like it or not, ready or not, the new millennium is a scant six weeks away. There is no cause for panic in the streets, but it wouldn't hurt to make sure you have done everything you can to ensure that your classroom computers run smoothly when you return from Christmas break.



1. Many schools will bring in Y2K specialists to ensure that their district's hardware, software and data are all updated and ready for the year 2000. Make sure that your classroom or building is on the list of those needing to be checked, especially if your alternative education program is located away from the main campus.
2. Make sure you have the latest version of all your software programs. Most companies have free upgrades available on their websites. You will need to know your operating system and its applications before you upgrade. For example, if you use a Microsoft program, just go to www.microsoft.com/y2k to get year 2000 information and software updates.
3. Go to the control panel under settings on your computer. Find the icon for "Region" or "Time/Date". Make sure the default setting for the year is a four digit number, not a two digit one. Most computers "know" to roll from "99" to "00", but have to be "told" to change from "19" to "20".
4. Be sure to make back-up copies of all your student data, especially if you are running your data from the hard drive.

anything goes.....

Like other small towns in Oklahoma, many of the downtown structures here in Cushing have been updated to house more timely businesses and agencies. Our building, at the corner of Harrison and Broadway, was once a Montgomery Ward store. City Drug (a favorite lunch spot) is across the street, and the old Cushing Hotel, half a block to the east, is now apartment housing for senior citizens.



The alley behind our building runs east and west; it serves as the block-long driveway to the drop-off mailboxes at the Cushing post office. Our “veranda” (formerly known as the loading dock) provides the perfect place to observe and greet townspeople and businesspersons as they cut through the alley to pick up their mail at 9:00 a.m.

But earlier each morning, before the bustle of the day begins, another figure comes down the alley, carrying a large brown paper sack. She shuffles, wearing a pink cardigan sweater or, in colder weather, a light blue jacket. On windy days, a flowered scarf hides her pewter curls. Faded but clean pastel pants and sensible black shoes complete her daily attire. She rarely speaks, but always smiles, deepening the creases in a kindly worn face.

She moves slowly, but with purpose, accompanied by a small dog on a blue leash. He is short-haired, white with big brown spots, and his tail curls expectantly over his back. He doesn't bark at passersby or strain at the leash. His brown eyes are alert and watchful, his gait deliberate, determined and protective.

Every day the woman and her dog march the length of the alley, scattering popcorn for the other, smaller inhabitants within her realm. Their eastward progression is greatly anticipated, especially by the sparrows. The woman's movements are practiced and refined; she knows just where to place the food for the more timid birds within her domain. No creature rushes her approach or squabbles over the bits of sustenance she provides. Her concentration is obvious as she takes care to leave even the smallest kernel for those less fortunate.

The woman's bearing is almost regal as she and her companion complete their parade down the alley, having accomplished their daily mission of mercy. Duty done, they turn the corner and disappear. She is as close to royalty as most of us will ever come.

There must be countless out-of-the-way places in hundreds of Oklahoma towns where routine happenings can assume special significance if only they are noticed and appreciated.

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Nonprofit Rate
U.S. Postage
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*Meeting the needs
of Oklahoma's alternative
education students*

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