

Transforming the Workforce: Innovations and Lessons Learned from Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge States

This resource was prepared in response to a request for information about the innovations and lessons learned as the result of the investments States have made in transforming their workforce using their Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grants. These strategies and accomplishments will be helpful to other States as they explore ways to provide all children with high-quality early education.

To address this request, ELC TA reviewed the 2015 Annual Performance Report (APR) data that the 20 RTT-ELC States submitted to the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services in the spring of 2016 detailing their grant work in 2015.

In their RTT-ELC applications, States could address one or both of the priority areas within Focused Investment D: A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce. Nine States (Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island) wrote to both D1 and D2. All States wrote to at least one area.

- D1 Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and Progression of Credentials: Describe progress made during the reporting year, including progress in engaging postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. Please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in this area by the end of the grant period.
 - 14 States (Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin) choose D1 as a Focused Investment Area.
- D2: Supporting Early Childhood Educators in Improving Their Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities: Describe the progress made during the reporting year. Please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in this area by the end of the grant period.
 - 15 States (California, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont) choose D2 as a Focused Investment Area.

This summary includes a representative sample of the innovative workforce activities that States described in their 2015 APRs. It does not include all RTT-ELC workforce projects, which are extensive. In addition, States have other initiatives that they did not include in their APRs because those initiatives were not funded by their RTT-ELC grants. These examples are intended to provide information about which States to contact to find out more information. Additional data can be found in the individual 2015 RTT-ELC Annual Performance Reports at https://elc.grads360.org/#program/annual-performance-reports.

This State Technical Assistance Resource is a companion piece to the October 2016 Webinar by the National Center for Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning about Transforming the Workforce: Innovations and Lessons Learned from Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge States.

The initiatives are grouped into two broad categories:

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Professional Development and More

Knowledge and Competency Framework

Alignment to State standards

 California created a rubric for mapping the Workforce Competencies to coursework and professional development training activities. They also created a web-based Mapping Tool to assist faculty and professional development providers in mapping their learning objectives to specific competencies.

Alignment to other early learning standards

- The Colorado Early Childhood Professional Credential 2.0 is aligned to the Early Childhood Competencies, to child care licensing regulations, and to the Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System Workforce Quality Indicators.
- New Jersey aligned their Core Knowledge and Competencies with other standards including Birth to Three Early Learning Standards, Preschool Teaching & Learning Standards, Grow NJ Kids (New Jersey's Quality Rating and Improvement System), and NAEYC Standards.

Competencies for home visitors

- Georgia convened a home visiting workgroup to ensure that home visiting is overtly
 linked to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) and the
 Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and sufficiently meets
 criteria set forth in the Council for Exceptional Children/Division for Early Childhood
 competencies and in competencies for teaching dual language learners.
- The Pennsylvania Home Visitor Core Competencies include knowledge, skills, and
 practices that impact the relationship home visiting professionals have with families
 and promote a strength-based approach to continuous quality improvement.

Competencies for early childhood and related professionals working with adults

- Minnesota: Qualifications and approval processes have been identified for coaches, including Inclusion Coaches, Accreditation Coaches, Minnesota Licensed Family Child Care Association (MLFCCA) Quality Coaches, and Business Consultants in Develop (Minnesota's Quality Improvement and Registry Tool).
- Wisconsin: In 2015, the Training and Technical Assistance Professional (T-TAP)
 Competency Workgroup finalized the Wisconsin T-TAP Competencies for Early
 Childhood and Related Professionals Working with Adults. The competencies began to be promoted through a basic six-hour T-TAP course that provides detailed

guidance on the T-TAP competencies. The printed versions in English and Spanish are now available and online (See: http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/ WI TTAP Competenciesfinal 1 15.pdf)

On-line training

- Colorado: An online Adult Learning course and an online Instructional Design course
 have been developed and are available in the Professional Development
 Information System at no-cost.
- The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care developed an online
 Business Planning Course to help programs perform effectively on the Program
 Administration Scale (PAS) and Business Administration Scale (BAS) so that they can
 meet higher level criteria on the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) to
 demonstrate improved program quality.
- North Carolina: A Master's Degree in Early Childhood Program Leadership and Management was established as an online degree through two universities in the State university system.

Self-reflection tools for professional development based on core competencies

- In California, the Early Childhood Educator Competencies Self-Assessment Toolkit
 (ECE CompSAT) is a professional development self-reflection resource for the early
 childhood education workforce. It assists RTT-ELC site leaders and coaches with the
 development of professional growth plans by identifying the competencies needed
 for effective, high-quality early education practice.
- Maryland is developing a self-reflection tool for child care professionals to use alongside the Core Competencies Framework.

Professional Development

Hierarchy for professional development

Georgia's Professional Development Hierarchy (GPDH) is a four-tiered hierarchy
that starts with a broad audience of stakeholder groups and awareness-level
content in tier one. In the top tiers, content becomes more targeted to early
childhood educators who teach students birth to age 5 and focuses on supporting
high-quality teacher child interactions.

Peer assistance and coaching

• In Massachusetts, the Peer Assistance and Coaching (PAC) project utilizes the knowledge and experience of early childhood educators and directors to support

one another's practices through coaching and feedback. Educators review video recording of classroom practices to learn about effective strategies and receive feedback that can improve their competencies.

Training for providers whose home language is not English

Train the trainer

- Minnesota increased capacity through trainer learning communities. In 2015, 30 trainers representing eight language communities participated.
- Oregon increased the number of trainers within the Trainer Program who have the ability to train in languages other than English. 147 community trainers and 276 master trainers can now train in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, or Vietnamese.
- In 2015, Wisconsin focused their Early Dual Language Learners (DLL) Initiative on developing a cadre of personnel trained in DLL who would be accessible to provide training in the various early childhood sectors. The structure for creating the cadre included a seven-session online module and two statewide summits in 2016.
 Resources are located on their collaboratingpartners.com website at http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/dual-language-learners-facts-and-tips.php.

Training

- The Minnesota Child Care Credential (MNCCC) is being offered via a cohort model in English, Spanish, and Somali languages. Development of the Minnesota Infant/Toddler Credential (MNITC) was completed, and English and Spanish cohorts were scheduled to begin in spring 2016.
- Rhode Island developed a pilot program to provide English as a Second Language
 and adult basic education instruction with wrap-around support services for a
 cohort of up to 25 early childhood educators. Classes began in Spanish in May 2015.
 In addition, in 2015, the Center for Early Learning Professionals offered 121 courses
 (81 in English and 40 in Spanish) that were aligned with the State's expectations for
 the workforce.
- In Washington, the first of the stackable certificates, the Initial Certificate, is being
 offered through a variety of delivery formats and is available in English, Spanish, and
 Somali.
- Wisconsin: The Early Dual Language Learners (DLL) Initiative includes statewide needs assessment, continued translations, improved coordination, and professional development opportunities.

Learning Management Systems

- Delaware invested in a Moodle-based online learning platform called DEPDNow!
 This effort joined Nemours, the Office of Child Care Licensing, the Office of Early Learning, the Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program to work with the Brighton Training Group on the development of the website and to populate the site with high-quality content.
- Illinois greatly expanded the number of professional development providers (known as "Authorized Entities") approved to provide "Registry approved" professional development and training opportunities to early childhood educators Authorized Entities include, but are not limited to State agencies, cross-sector partners, and distance learning organizations from across the country. Levels of Learning are based on the depth of content rather than experience or role of the participant. A set of web services allows for the "automatic upload" of participant training completion records to the Gateways Registry.

Professional Development Registries

- Illinois continues to focus efforts on building data systems and integrating administrative data to record and track information related to educators' development, education, credentials, and retention in the Gateways to Opportunity Registry. In late 2012, the Department of Children and Families Services implemented an administrative rule change requiring all staff in licensed child care facilities to establish a profile in the Gateways Registry. By the end of 2015, nearly 100,000 individuals had joined the Gateways Registry, and over 77,500 individuals had "active" records.
- Rhode Island launched the Workforce Registry as part of their Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS). The registry allows the central collection of data regarding the education, credentials, demographics, professional development, and employment history of individuals within the early care and education workforce. It pulls information from the Department of Education and the Center for Early Learning Professionals for State-sponsored professional development.
- In 2015, the Wisconsin Training and Technical Assistance (T-TAP) Competency Workgroup continued to work with the Registry to further align the T-TAP competencies with the Registry Trainer and Consultant structure.

Integrated Professional Development Registry and Learning Management System

Colorado's new Professional Development Information System functions as a
workforce registry and tracks the qualifications of the Early Childhood Workforce
and also functions as a learning management system providing an essential
professional development tool for early childhood professionals.

Support for coaches

 Vermont's M.A.T.C.H. (Mentoring, Advising, Teaching, Coaching, Consulting, and Helping) creates a framework and a process to recognize and support the work of mentoring, coaching, and consulting in early childhood settings. This includes developing a registry of qualified M.A.T.C.H. professionals that will help early childhood professionals and programs identify appropriate individuals to assist with their personal or programmatic goals and needs.

Professional development collaboration coaches

Wisconsin is using Coordination Coaches to provide critical "air traffic control" at a
regional level by coordinating system development, trainings, technical assistance
opportunities, and other relevant activities in each of six regions across the State
and through the corresponding six Regional Action Teams (five regions plus
Milwaukee). Their work increases collaboration, reduces redundancies, identifies
gaps for further support, and helps make the system work more efficiently.

Professional development systems portfolio

• The Wisconsin Professional Development Systems Portfolio is conceived of as an online, interactive portfolio that would also serve as a cross sector multi-level infrastructure tool to enhance communication and coordination of the professional development system. It would not replace other existing tracking systems in Wisconsin; it will be a way to store, track, and evaluate the various projects, committees, leadership, deliverables, documents, work plans, and training/ technical assistance materials. The Project Coordinator is housed at the University of Wisconsin Waisman Center. A contract for Portfolio development exists with the University of Wisconsin Technology Services Department (UW-Dolt).

Development of Credentials

New credentials

Family Child Care, Family Specialist and, Technical Assistance credentials

 Using RTT-ELC funds, Illinois piloted three new credentials during 2015: the Family Child Care credential for home care providers, the Family Specialist credential for those who work with and support families, and the Technical Assistance credential for those who work as coaches or mentors. These new credentials are in addition to the pre-existing Director, Infant Toddler, and Early Childhood Education credentials.

Coaching and mentoring credentials

- Colorado launched a competency-based Coaching Credential in February 2015. Developed in collaboration with the Colorado Coaching Consortium, the Coaching Credential is a three-tiered credential with requirements aligned to the three levels of the Colorado Coaching Competencies.
- Pennsylvania is building leadership capacity through the Peer Mentor Credential.
 Peer Mentors support family child care providers and center providers to move to higher STAR levels on their TQRIS.

Director credential

• **Minnesota:** MNAEYC's Director's Credential classes are delivered online and in classroom settings in a cohort model.

Multiple pathways to credentialing

- In February 2015, Colorado launched a redeveloped Early Childhood Professional Credential 2.0. The new credential provides an individualized, points-based system to support credential progression. In the new system, professionals earn points for formal education, ongoing professional development, and experience.
- Most credentials in **Delaware** have both a higher education pathway and a portfolio
 pathway. The higher education pathway is met by passing higher education courses
 in specific content areas. The portfolio pathway is a combination of community
 based training and the submission of a portfolio with documentation of specific
 content and skills, writing samples, and responses to content specific literature.
- In Illinois, the Gateways Credentials can be earned by completing an approved program at an entitled college or university or by submitting an application with documentation of education and experience.

QRIS and Teacher Licensure

 Massachusetts aligned their QRIS and the educator licensure and professional development. Educators with specified license types will meet the QRIS professional development criteria for active participation in coaching, mentoring, and/or ongoing professional development to improve practice, without requiring further verification.

Recruitment and Retention – Financial Awards and Job Boards

Recruitment and retention - compensation and wage supplements

- Colorado Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education (IDEA) completed
 their first round of scholarship funding by supporting recruitment and retention
 efforts particularly those in the rural areas of the State. In 2015, funds were
 awarded to four community agencies to support their efforts to recruit and/or
 retain highly qualified personnel to provide early intervention and preschool special
 education services. Incentives included student loan repayments, advanced
 professional development opportunities, or salary bonuses.
- Delaware increased the level at which providers became eligible for Compensation, Recruitment and Retention (CORE) Awards, from 4 to 4.5 on the Career Lattice.
 CORE awards are salary supplements for early childhood educators and are based on increased education or professional credentials and retention.
- Illinois continued implementation of the State-funded Great START (Strategies to Attract and Retain Teachers) program, which provides wage supplements to providers in full-day, year-round programs based upon their educational attainment and continued employment. Supplements are based on education level and income.
- In **Minnesota**, R.E.E.T.A.I.N. (Retaining Early Educators Through Attaining Incentives Now) grants recognize educational attainment and years of service.
- WAGE\$ supplements are offered in North Carolina Transformation Zones and in the additional 13 counties initially eligible to apply for Transformation Zone status.
 WAGE\$ is an education-based salary supplement designed to incentivize and reward teacher education and retention.

Statewide job board

 Maryland has established a statewide job board to advertise internships and paid positions designed to enhance child care providers' efforts to find qualified applicants.

Community Councils, Learning Academies, and Conferences

Kentucky offers low-cost or free training to address needs via community early childhood councils, regional *Ready Kids* conferences, and Early Childhood Leadership Academies. In 2015, Kentucky contracted with the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative to deliver a series of Leadership Academies. The academies will be held in five regions concurrently across the State and will include coaching and professional learning communities.

Workforce Studies

- Illinois: The Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation

 Grant: Lessons from Initial Implementation report focused on partnership

 development theory and the unique challenges and opportunities presented by

 engaging in program redesign across two- and four-year institutions of higher

 education. (See http://ierc.education/ierc presentations/early-childhood-educator
 preparation-program-innovation-eppi-grant.)
- North Carolina: An annual Early Childhood Educator Statewide Workforce Study is
 conducted of early childhood educator's education, compensation, and retention
 levels to better identify the strategies needed to improve child access to highquality early learning and development programs. The 2013, 2014, and 2015
 workforce studies are posted here: http://www.childcareservices.org/researchreports/early-childhood-workforce-studies/.
- Vermont: The Child Development Division contracted with EDC to develop a survey
 of the early childhood and afterschool workforce in order to gain information on
 wages, benefits, credentials, and other characteristics. The report was published in
 December 2015.

(http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/CDD/Reports/VT_Workforce_Survey_Report_FINAL_12.31.2015.pdf.)

Higher Education Strategies

Structural

Aligning college courses to competencies

- Workgroups in Colorado re-worked 15 core early childhood education courses to align them to the Early Childhood Competencies. The focus of the work included early childhood education practicums, early childhood administration, pedagogy, methods and techniques, and observation and assessment. Next steps will be to gain approval of the revised courses by the Colorado Community College System governance structure and develop course assignments at the individual college level.
- Ohio held an Early Childhood Higher Education Summit in September 2015. The summit planning committee included State agencies, two- and four-year higher education institutions, and the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association. The meetings looked at articulation agreements as well as how to apply the Early

Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies to maximize education and professional development among early childhood professionals.

Articulation grants and technical assistance

- Using the Illinois Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation Grant, approximately 70 two-and four-year institutions of higher education developed partnerships in the first two years of the program. Outcomes include course-bycourse articulation, cross-institution advising, professional development micromodules, and revising coursework to embed the bilingual/ESL endorsement through the standard teacher preparation pathways.
- The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) commissioned
 the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute to conduct a review and map the
 alignment between the EEC QRIS continuing education requirements and the
 educator licensure and professional development requirements of the
 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- Minnesota established a grant program to assist institutions of higher education in deeply and meaningfully embedding the Knowledge and Competency Framework into their coursework. The grant supported three pairs of two-and four-year programs as they worked to integrate the Competencies into courses, identify the few and powerful competencies, and ensure scaffolding of learning for students if they move from one program to another.
- North Carolina provided technical assistance, training, and resources to selected two- and four- year institutions of higher education to support articulation of early childhood education coursework and degrees. Individual universities were able to adopt an articulation agreement or expand upon an existing articulation agreement.
- Pennsylvania developed a mini-grant program to provide postsecondary institutions
 with financial resources that will allow them to align their early childhood education
 coursework with the revised Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood and
 School-Age Professionals (CKC). Eighteen two-year and four-year institutions of
 higher education, representing all regions of the State, were awarded mini-grants
 ranging from \$7,500 to \$15,000.

Statewide summits to address articulation agreements

- Michigan held two summits where the primary topic of discussion was improving articulation agreements between community colleges and universities.
- **Ohio** held a summit to examine at articulation agreements and how to use competencies in higher education classes.

Stackable certificate

Washington adopted a statewide three-stage stackable certificate that includes
consistent course numbers and credentials that build on each other, provides
transferable credits, and leads to a one-year State credential. The stackable
certificate allows for a smooth transition for students interested in progressing to a
two-year degree in early childhood education.

Dual certification

• In **Maryland**, faculty at two- and four-year institutions of higher education worked to provide more dual certification programs in special education and general education—birth to 3rd grade.

Technical assistance endorsement

 In North Carolina, a Technical Assistance Endorsement provides professional recognition for the education and experience of those who provide technical assistance, coaching and mentoring for teachers and administrators in early childhood settings.

Master's Degree

North Carolina established a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Program
 Leadership and Management as an online degree through two universities in the
 State university system.

Post Master's Certificate

Massachusetts created a 12-credit Post Master's Certificate in Early Education
Research, Policy, and Leadership to improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of
early childhood educators from public and private programs. The coursework is in
alignment with Department of Early Education and Care's Core Competency Areas,
QRIS Standards, NAEYC Advanced Standards within NAEYC's Six Professional
Preparation Standards, and Division of Early Childhood Advanced Personnel
Preparation Standards.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation of institutions of higher education

 The Michigan State Board of Education approved revised Core Knowledge and Core Competencies (CKCC) for the Early Care and Education Workforce in November of 2014. Michigan awarded funding to eight colleges to pursue NAEYC accreditation and one college to pursue reaccreditation.

- North Carolina offered grants to assist all 58 community colleges to achieve accreditation of their Early Childhood Associate Degree programs through the NAEYC. By the end of 2015, 36 community colleges achieved NAEYC accreditation.
- Rhode Island: In 2015, NAEYC awarded accreditation to the Community College of Rhode Island for its Early Childhood Education Associate's degree program.

Website with resources for faculty

 Illinois developed a Higher Education Website for faculty that includes articles, publications, websites, blogs, videos, research, classroom activities, and more. (See http://ilfacultyresources.org/)

Course Development and Alignment

Field experiences

 New Mexico developed a process for certifying Professional Mentor-teachers as part of an effort to improve the field experiences for college students.

Coaching course

• **North Carolina** developed a graduate-level three semester credit hour course, *The Art and Science of Early Childhood Coaching, Mentoring and Technical Assistance*.

Scholarships

T.E.A.C.H. scholarships

- Colorado, Delaware, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhode
 Island, and Vermont offer T.E.A.C.H. scholarships to help cover the costs of tuition
 and books for pursuit of early childhood related degrees. These scholarships require
 sponsorship and a financial contribution from the T.E.A.C.H. scholar's employer.
 - o In **Minnesota**, T.E.A.C.H. scholarships are available to administrators, trainers, and coaches as well as classroom staff.
 - New Mexico includes early interventionists, home visitors, public school special education and Title 1 assistant teachers, New Mexico PreK, T-TAP and FOCUS consultants, and community college faculty in early childhood.
 - o In **Rhode Island**, Program Quality Improvement Grants can be applied to the supports required to sponsor a T.E.A.C.H. scholar.
 - In Vermont, T.E.A.C.H. formed a partnership with the Vermont Agency of Education for a scholarship model to help early education professionals obtain either their Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education endorsements.

Other scholarships

- Illinois provides scholarships to those working towards a credential through the
 Gateways Scholarship Program, funded by Illinois Department of Human Services
 and the Illinois State Board of Education. These scholarships pay a percentage of
 tuition and fees on a sliding scale and are available across a wide range of education
 levels, from beginning practitioners to those who have a Bachelor's degree and are
 working towards additional certification.
 - With RTT-ELC funds, Illinois expanded its scholarship program and provided support to licensed educators with Bachelor's degrees to pursue an English as a Second Language (ESL) or Bilingual Education endorsements. An Illinois administrative rule required that by July 1, 2016, school-based preschool teachers working with children whose home language is not English must hold a specialized ESL or Bilingual endorsement.
- In North Carolina, reduced fees were offered for Early Educator Certification to encourage full participation in the system.
- In Oregon, individuals who achieved a milestone on the Oregon Registry were awarded an education award, which ranged from \$100–500. These education awards recognize and incentivize the workforce to implement quality standards within their programs.
- In Pennsylvania, the Keystone STARS Education and Retention Award (ERA) program
 incentivizes individuals to pursue credentials and degrees while remaining
 employed at Keystone STARS facilities. Individuals must attain specific early
 childhood credit/degrees.
- The Vermont Child Care Industry and Career Council used the RTT-ELC grant to
 expand the availability of a series of six 3-credit college courses required for the
 Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program. Three additional ELC-funded course
 cycles were added to the three already supported. The Industry and Career Council
 and the Vermont Department of Labor collaborated to offer the Apprenticeship
 Program for child care workers seeking education and experience in the field.
- Vermont offered an Educational Opportunity Grant to complete the family child care credential.

Roadmap for English Language Learners

• Massachusetts has developed a roadmap for supporting adult English Language Learners who are interested in attending college.



Resources

Child Care Services Association. *North Carolina Child Care Workforce Study*. The 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 workforce studies are posted here: http://www.childcareservices.org/research-reports/early-childhood-workforce-studies/

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Kratos Learning and Manhattan Strategy Group. *The Early Learning Career Pathways Initiative: Credentialing in the Early Care and Education Field.* Office of Early Learning, U.S. Department of Education, 2016.

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/altcredentialingelcpi 06 16 2016 ada.pdf

The Preschool Development Grant (PDG)'s public *Workforce Development Community of Practice Page* has meeting materials and an extensive group of workforce resources. https://pdg.grads360.org/#communities/workforce

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners. Serving Dual Language Learners: Facts and Tips [webpage]. 2013. http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/dual-language-learners-facts-and-tips.php

The Wisconsin Training and Technical Assistance Professional (T-TAP) Competencies. Created on behalf of the Wisconsin Early Childhood Cross-Sector Professional Development Initiative. 2015. http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/ WI TTAP Competenciesfinal 1 15.pdf

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