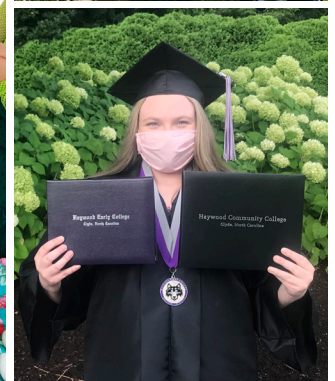


HAYWOOD
EARLY
COLLEGE



Haywood Early College was established in 2006 by Haywood County Schools, Haywood Community College, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as another public high school option for Haywood County students. Today, Haywood Early College is known for its innovative teaching and learning, ambitious student body, and passionate faculty and staff. As a National Blue Ribbon School and Apple Distinguished School, HEC is committed to an exceptional and unique educational experience for our students. A positive learning environment, small class size, individualized attention, and a highly qualified faculty are the pillars of our success.

Our students aren't of a single mold and bring many narratives, strengths, and areas that need growth. HEC wants each student to become a better version of themselves through their time here; a better student, friend, and human being. We are rooted in our commitment to shape our students into people of principle and character. Our school culture is steeped in high expectations of self and kindness to others. Pursuing a passion or new-found interest outside of the classroom allows students to engage not only in the practical application of knowledge but also to venture into new settings. Whether taking advantage of midday club and leadership opportunities, gaining a larger understanding of college life and fit through campus visits, or participating in service activities, students at HEC are encouraged to approach their education as an exciting opportunity to learn and explore in and beyond our campus.

Our hope is that you use this book as a glimpse into Haywood Early College. We look forward to working with you. Please contact us with any questions.

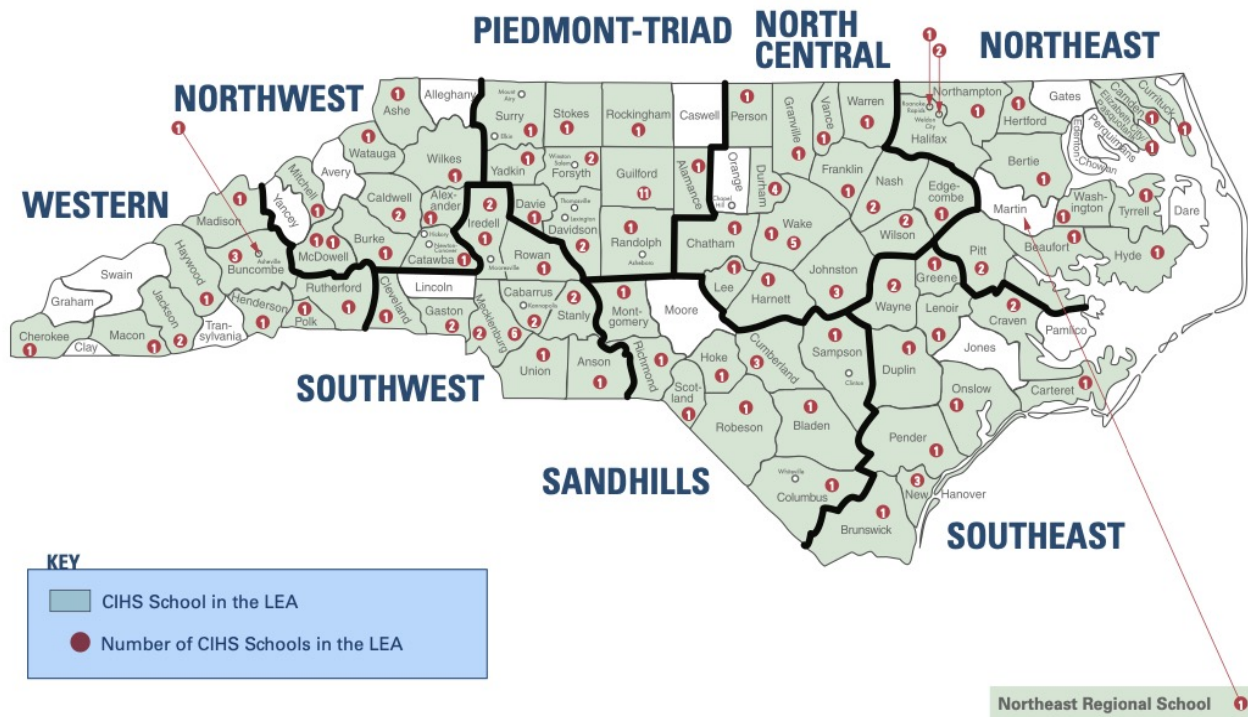
Lori Fox

Lori Fox, Principal



NC Cooperative Innovative High Schools

AS OF AUGUST 2021



OVERVIEW

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), in collaboration with the North Carolina Community Colleges System, and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, established Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS) in 2004 in response to legislation from the NC General Assembly. Originally called the Learn and Earn Initiatives Act and most recently as part of the Career and College Promise Program, this legislation establishes guidelines for the creation and operation of CIHS in North Carolina.

The Appropriations Act of 2011 established the Career and College Promise (CCP) program. The purpose of CCP is to offer structured opportunities for qualified high school students to dually enroll in community college courses that provide pathways leading to a certificate, diploma, or degree, as well as providing entry-level job skills. The three structured pathways include:

1. Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) programs;
2. College Transfer (CT) Pathways

leading to the completion of an associate degree or two years of transferable credit, and 3. Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathways leading to a certificate, diploma, or industry recognized credential aligned with a high school career cluster. The full legislation governing CIHS is available on the NCDPI CIHS webpage. The North Carolina Department of Public instruction (NCDPI), in collaboration with the North Carolina Community Colleges System, and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, established Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS) in 2004 in response to legislation from the NC General Assembly. Originally called the Learn and Earn Initiatives Act and most recently as part of the Career and College Promise Program, this legislation establishes guidelines for the creation and operation of CIHS in North Carolina.

CIHS are innovative models determined locally based on regional needs, including early college high schools, STEM-themed high schools, and career academies. Some schools offer both career and college programs of study. All CIHS partner with an institution of higher education (IHE) and most are located on the campus of their IHE partner. CIHS are small schools, serving no more than 100 students per grade.

CIHS programs focus of students who would be the first in their families to graduate from college, students who are at risk of dropping out of high school, and students who would benefit from accelerated academic instruction. CIHS programs provide innovative public school opportunities for students and families.

North Carolina is a national leader in expanding this innovative high school model, with 133 CIHS programs in Fall 2021. 117 CIHS partner with community colleges, 11 with UNC institutions, and five with independent colleges or universities. Most school districts in North Carolina offer one or more CIHS. Students in CIHS outperform state-wide averages in NC Math I, Biology, English II and NC Math III. CIHS students receive better grades, on average, than college age students in core academic college courses. A growing number of students are benefiting from new opportunities, leading to stronger outcomes, with higher rates of academic achievement, graduation and post secondary enrollment and completion. Together, these high schools and their college partners are transforming teaching and learning for their students, while also promoting the growth of innovative practices in many schools and districts.

180
STUDENTS

21st
CENTURY

Students learn
21st-century, timeless skills
- critical thinking, problem
solving, communication, and
collaboration.

HEC supports
numerous student
clubs - from Tech
Club and Debate
to Drama and
Games Club



college acceptance rate is

100%

HEC QUICK *Facts*

Haywood Early College Top Ranked School

SchoolDigger.com recently ranked Haywood Early College the top high school in North Carolina based on the student/teacher ratio, per pupil expenditures, and testing scores. These rankings were updated on September 1, 2021 based on the most recent test scores available and includes statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics, US Department of Education, and NC Dept of Public Instruction.

11 + 61 in four years
**high school honors + college transferable
credits**

ACADEMIC
ENRICHMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

13:1 ✓
student:teacher ratio

9th
**UNIQUE
ONBOARDING
EXPERIENCE**

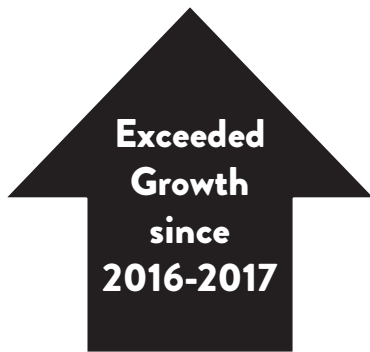


2021 NASSP NC PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR



2018 National Blue
Ribbon School for
Exemplary High
Performing Schools

(1 of 30 high schools to receive
this distinction since 1982)



UNIVERSITY
MATRICULATION
RATE 2020:

96%

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE SNAPSHOT:

UNC - Chapel Hill
NC State University
UNC - Greensboro
UNC - Charlotte
University of Alabama
College of Charleston
Elon University
University of Michigan
Clemson University
Campbell University
Furman University
Harvard University

STUDENT
APPOINTED
AS A
NORTH CAROLINA
BOARD OF
EDUCATION
ADVISOR

Tied for 1st for academic
performance composite
amongst all North Carolina
K-12 schools

2021-2022

2020-2021

2019-2020

2018-2019

\$ Scholarship Money

Class of 2020: \$1,248,747

Class of 2021: \$1,350,149

Class of 2022: \$2,489,758

BRAGGING

Rights



Distinguished School
2021-2024

1 of 2 public schools in North Carolina

**ACT Ranking - 6th amongst North Carolina Cooperative
Innovative High Schools 2020:**

Haywood Early College Composite Average: **25.67**

Haywood County Schools Composite Average: **19.8**

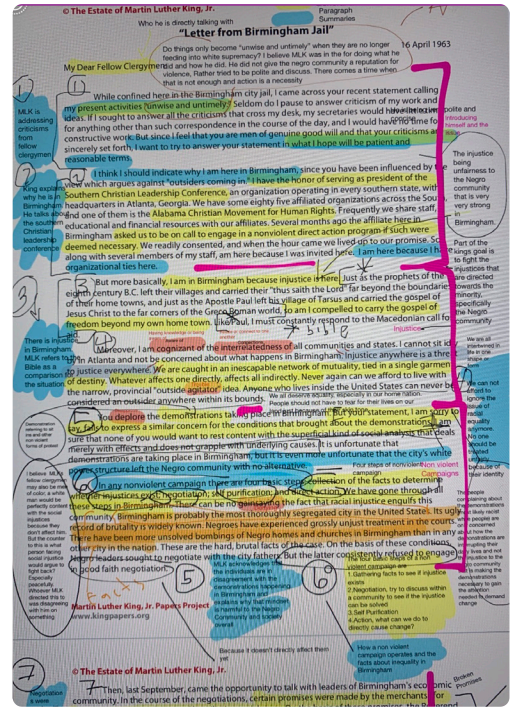
NC Composite Average: **18.4**

ACADEMICS

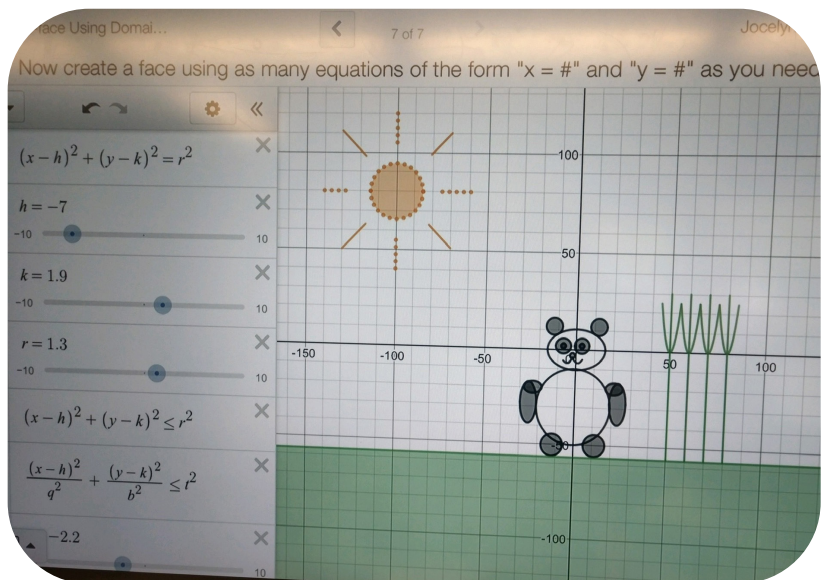
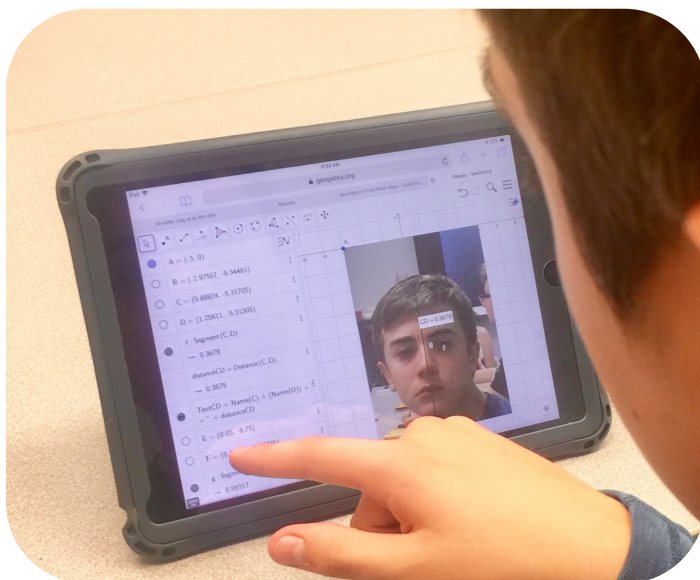
Students are expected to be active participants in every class, even taking part in the decisions about what the class covers and how it does so within the standard course of study. With small class sizes, prospective students need to understand that their involvement is expected and required. We are all in this together.

So what does that mean exactly?

It means that students can expect to have some control over what happens in class, whether that's suggesting and voting on what to read in English, or choosing a written, oral, or digital format to complete work in social studies.



It means that students need to understand that they are a vital role in each class. Participation matters. A math lesson about parabolic motion involves groups of students tossing tennis balls around outdoors. A stoichiometric lab in chemistry requires groups to mix reagents to calculate products. Everyone plays a role.





TECHNOLOGY

We envisioned and implemented an *Apple technology initiative* that *revolutionized learning* for our teachers and students. To nurture *innovative world-changers*, our students must be fully invested and engaged in learning. This level of engagement requires outlets for *creativity and the freedom* to explore classroom content in unconventional ways. The array of applications and technologies available to our students and faculty has allowed us to create *student-driven learning environments* that promote *student investment* through choice and creativity.

We believe we are preparing our students to be *thinkers, designers, and communicators* on the world stage. Students build traditional reading, writing, and problem-solving skills in fresh ways for topics that they choose using whatever tools work best for their needs, in the style of *true innovators*.



How Haywood Early College is making the most of the COVID-19 crisis

*Mebane Rash, EdNC CEO & Editor in Chief
September 3, 2021*

Apple has named an early college in western North Carolina an Apple Distinguished School. And while that is big news, the school's overall proficiency last year during the pandemic was 98.7%, and for the students and faculty who worked together to pull that off, well, that's big news too.

There are 546 Apple Distinguished Schools in 32 countries. Today, Haywood Early College made the invitation-only list. Only three other schools in North Carolina have ever made the list: the Asheville School, North Rowan High School, and the Fletcher School in Charlotte.

"Apple Distinguished Schools are centers of leadership and educational excellence that demonstrate Apple's vision for learning with technology — and we believe they are some of the most innovative schools in the world," says the website.

Lori Fox, the 2021 North Carolina Principal of the Year for the National Association of Secondary School Principals, has been the principal of Haywood Early College since 2017. She had never been a principal before. Fox is thoughtful and intentional about how Apple technology is integrated into student learning.



WHAT LEADERSHIP LOOKS LIKE DURING A PANDEMIC

“We are going to refocus, reset, recreate, and restart as many times as needed to get this right for students given whatever comes our way – pandemics, cyberattacks, floods.” - Principal Lori Fox

Fox first emailed me back on April 7, 2020, just weeks after the pandemic upended education across North Carolina. Recently named western region principal of the year, she seemed interested in principal voice, remote learning, and change management.

We met via Zoom in May 2020. Later in the summer, I joined a call with the other regional principals of the year. On Aug. 25, we met for the first time in person at Haywood Early College, the day after a ransomware attack. I had lunch with her faculty at the picnic tables in front of the school on Oct. 15. Most recently, we met just after the floods in Haywood County on Aug. 19, 2021.

During these meetings over the last year and a half, I learned Fox is deeply curious about anything and everything that might make her better able to serve her students and faculty. Fox lives on the same farm she grew up on in Haywood County. Her dad, Danny Miller, was a lifelong educator, starting as a teacher and coach and then becoming a principal.

“I really saw the day in and the day out,” said Fox, “what a principal looks like at home, the time spent, and just really admired that. For a long, long time, I didn’t want to live in anyone’s footsteps or be overshadowed, but I think this is just a calling.”

Fox’s first position as an assistant principal in 2012 was at Pisgah High School, where her parents graduated, where she graduated, and where her father served as principal for a decade.

“In some ways, I was scared to death to be with teachers who taught me,” Fox said, adding that it was “just a very special beginning to an administrative career.”

She became principal of Haywood Early College in 2017. She said faculty members were willing to “lock arms” with her. She believes leadership is about people and relationships, and that “change moves at the speed of trust.” She said the culture of the school under their collective leadership came together in a hurry, and already-high student performance increased by more than 10 points.

The data may take care of itself, but I will note that her office doesn’t look like any other principal’s office I have ever been in. To start, there is no desk — and that’s on purpose. “I want to be at the table,” she said, “in a chair, just like everyone else.”

There is also a great big white board that shows how she aligns spending with student outcomes. “This is my board to keep pushing in the right direction,” she said.

In year two of her leadership, the school was designated a National Blue Ribbon School. There are 198 students in the early college. “We turn away 40-50% of every incoming class,” said Fox, noting in large part that’s because the size of the building limits enrollment. All of the high school classes are honors classes, and there are no more than 15 students in each class. Students start taking classes at Haywood Community College in ninth grade, and most graduate from high school and earn an associate degree in arts, sciences, or engineering in four years. The student body is predominantly white, about half qualify for free and reduced price lunch, and they come from the district’s middle schools, a charter school, private schools, and homeschools.

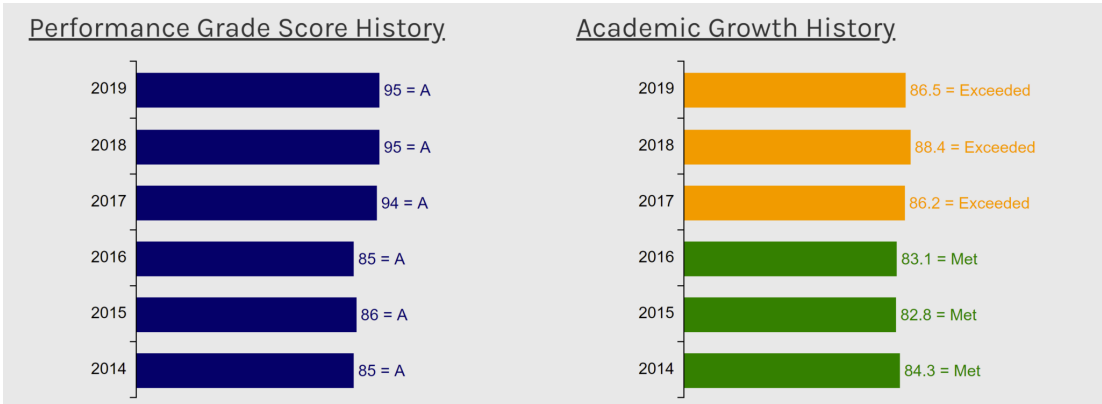
In the days after the recent flooding in western North Carolina, when Fox was still trying to track down two families, she said, “We encompass the whole district. We are not in one community. We are spread out everywhere.”

Fox knows her students. She works breakfast each morning and teaches freshman seminar. She’s involved in conversations that happen every semester with each student about their future. Thinking again about her dad and her decision to follow in his footsteps after all, she said, “Being a principal is not your profession. It’s just who you are.”

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP DURING A PANDEMIC

While the pass rate for college courses and ACT Composite went down during COVID after steadily increasing under Fox’s leadership, academic proficiency continued to increase — at 98.7% it’s in the top 10 statewide.

In addition to test scores, the graduating students earned \$1,350,149 in scholarships — that’s up from \$330,143 for the class of 2019.



HOW DID THEY DO IT?

It's the synergy of Fox's leadership; an experienced, dedicated faculty; technology already integrated into instructional practice; implementing school-day structure even when virtual; having even higher expectations for kids when they are virtual; and teaching students who want to be students how to be students.

Haywood Early College has a small faculty with no turnover year-to-year except for retirements. Fox said, "We are humans first. We encourage each other to be parents. Some of us are caretakers." She said the close-knit faculty creates an environment where they can lean in and support each other, and they can challenge each other. They have common planning time and usually eat lunch together.

Long before the pandemic, the school chose to be 1:1 with Apple iPads and all of the teachers are Apple Teacher certified. Each iPad comes loaded with what Fox calls the "app store." The apps create an internal ecosystem for learning, she said, and incoming ninth-graders are taught how to use the apps and the device with fidelity.

In March 2020 when the pandemic hit, Fox said, "We were in good shape to transition to remote learning." Students and faculty were remote for the remainder of that school year, with Fox being the only one in the school building on most days. In spite of challenges with internet access in this mountainous community, Fox said of the students and faculty, "They're getting it done."

Fox said she learned, "As long as we have our students and faculty, we can have school anywhere." She also said she learned, "We can still grow and stretch. Coming out of this, it'll be neat to see how much we have changed and how much education has changed and what we can now do that we couldn't before."

The next school year kicked off on Aug. 10, 2020. Students remained remote, but much to her relief, faculty were back in the building with Fox. By day three, from 8:30-2:30, students and faculty were engaged in full instructional days. Fox told the students, "Treat it like a normal school day. Wake up. Take a shower. Eat breakfast." And then they were off and learning.

When I met with the faculty, they highlighted the need for classes to meet virtually on the same schedule as if in person. They had noticed at the start of the pandemic that it was easier for students to be silent and harder to build trust in virtual environments. So when they came back to

school in fall 2020, they required the students to show their faces in the virtual classes and used smaller breakout rooms to make sure the students got to know each other. Instruction was designed to foster student engagement and leadership.

Beth Hooper teaches English, and she noticed unexpected avenues of communication that opened up online. Students would message her during class, and she said, “it was like a whisper in the ear.”

Doug Hanson also teaches English, and he tied these virtual instructional practices to expectations of students. “All of us made a very conscious decision at the beginning of the year to make sure that our standards were at least as high as they’ve previously been,” he said. “Students need to know that the rigor is constantly going to be there, and the expectations are going to be there. They’ve got to show up every day because every day we’re doing something meaningful.” Fox was a co-teacher in all classes so she could jump in and observe the instruction.

The faculty also worked with Fox to keep students engaged non-instructionally. There was an in-person freshman orientation and then they met with the freshmen in three different groups in what Fox thought of as a year-long orientation. They met with the graduating class every Friday to check in on things like FAFSA and college applications. The school set up a Friday speaker series and virtual meetings with universities. Teachers met with students in person for walks on the community college campus, and clubs also brought students together in person.

In January 2021, students were allowed back in the building, but 50% chose to remain remote. “We could still thrive in that environment because of strong remote learning,” said Fox.

When she thinks about last year, Fox said, “We can’t lower expectations, so it required a special combination of loving people and cultivating hope along with hard work and fortitude and resilience.”

This school year, everyone is back on campus, and there is no remote option. But as students are quarantined, they will participate just as they did before, synchronously through Google Classrooms. She doesn’t want students missing seat time.

Fox hearkens Winston Churchill and his quote “never let a good crisis go to waste,” commenting, “I can’t say this is a good crisis, but I don’t think we’re letting it go to waste.”

“Congrats, Haywood, you’ve earned it,”

said Anthony Johnson with Apple.



What can you do to be a competitive applicant?

- ✓ Finish 8th grade on a positive note.
- ✓ Great attendance throughout a solid academic year is crucial.

Are you ready to join the Pack?

Stay informed about the application timeline and HEC happenings by joining Remind text messaging for our Prospective Students and Families:

Message to: **81010**

Message: **@applyhec23**

Here's how to apply:

- ✓ Complete an online application.
- ✓ **Homeschool students:** After completing your application, please bring by transcript and all necessary documentation of coursework completed.

For more information:
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