



Community building at the Easterly Parkway Elementary Helping Hands Fair.



**To Prepare Students for Lifelong Success
Through Excellence in Education**

The Year in Review



Annual Report

2019-2020

Our District

Situated in the heart of Pennsylvania, the State College Area School District serves a vibrant, growing community that combines a college town, suburban neighborhoods, farmland and countryside. As the area's fourth largest employer, SCASD draws its students from a 150-square mile attendance area encompassing the Borough of State College and five surrounding townships.

Across eight elementary schools, two middle schools, a high school and the alternative Delta Program for middle and high school levels, our district annually serves an enrollment of about 6,800. Each year, our faculty and staff dedicate themselves to providing the best possible academic experiences for students — from an innovative STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) program for grades K-5 to the middle school introductory foreign language classes to the diverse array of high school courses that include AP, Advanced, International Baccalaureate and Career and Technical Center opportunities. Our art, library and music departments districtwide excel in their fields; in fact, over the past decade the district has perennially received the Best Communities for Music Education Award. At the high school alone, students can choose from 74 clubs and activities, including 19 musical ensembles and 30 athletic



Students in Kathy Seeland's State High anatomy and physiology class use gel electrophoresis to identify which members of a family with a history of colon cancer carry a mutated MSH2 gene.

teams.

Within this dynamic environment, our teachers and students shine. SCASD routinely garners awards for teaching, and district schools annually are highly ranked in state and national lists for instruction and learning opportunities. Four State High students in the past decade have been named U.S. Presidential Scholars, a rare honor, and each class typically includes National Merit Scholarship finalists.

Additionally, we take pride in our special education services, K-12

counseling department, intervention and learning enrichment programs, and individualized education plans to accommodate all student needs. Our district is fully committed to promoting responsive instruction and equity, inclusivity and restorative practices so that all students, faculty and staff feel welcome and supported. In everything we do, we strive to meet the objectives spelled out by our Four Pillars and fulfill our core mission: To prepare students for lifelong success through excellence in education.

Demographics

American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.2%
Asian	8.1%
Black	2.5%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Hispanic	3.8%
White	78.6%
2 or More Races	6.6%

Four Pillars

The district's instructional focus, or road map, is based on four pillars, its prime objectives:

- » Culture of Trust, Relationships and Collaboration
- » Responsive Teaching and Learning
- » High Expectations for All
- » Welcoming, Safe and Inclusive Climate for Learning and Work

Directory

www.scasd.org

Elementary Schools

Corl Street Elementary
235 Corl Street
State College, PA, 16801
Dr. Kelly Mark, principal
814-231-1185
Enrollment: 244

Easterly Parkway Elementary
234 Easterly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Danielle Yoder, principal
814-231-1170
Enrollment: 287

Delta Middle Level
653 Westerly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Dr. Jon Downs, director
814-231-1000
Enrollment: 112

State College Area High School
650 Westerly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Curtis Johnson, principal
814-231-5020
Enrollment: 2,173

Delta Program
653 Westerly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Dr. Jon Downs, director
814-231-1000
Enrollment: 144

State College Virtual School
653 Westerly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Dr. Jon Downs, director
814-231-1002

Ferguson Township Elementary
215 West Pine Grove Road
Pine Grove Mills, PA, 16868
Shelly Buckholtz, principal
814-231-4119
Enrollment: 316

Gray's Woods Elementary
160 Brackenbourne Drive
Port Matilda, PA, 16870
Dr. Kristen Dewitt, principal
814-235-6100
Enrollment: 425

Mount Nittany Elementary
700 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA, 16801
Mark Feldman, principal
814-272-5970
Enrollment: 381

Mount Nittany Middle School
656 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA, 16801
Brian Ishler, principal
814-272-4050
Enrollment: 696

Park Forest Elementary
2181 School Drive
State College, PA, 16803
Tom Weed, principal
814-231-5010
Enrollment: 480

Radio Park Elementary
800 West Cherry Lane
State College, PA, 16803
Zac Wynkoop, principal
814-231-4115
Enrollment: 366

Spring Creek Elementary
217 Scholl Street
State College, PA, 16801
Dr. Todd Dishong, principal
814-231-5026
Enrollment: 363

Park Forest Middle School
2180 School Drive
State College, PA, 16803
Dr. Karen Wisner, principal
814-237-530
Enrollment: 715

Middle Schools

High Schools



Aerial photo of the State High campus.

Quick Facts

- » 2,065 People employed
- » 660 Teachers
- » 6,702 Students
- » 564 State High graduates
- » 4th Largest Centre County employer
- » Average elementary class size: 20
- » Average grades 6-8 class size: 23
- » Average years teaching: 15
- » National Merit: 15 finalists
- » Teachers with PhDs: 14
- » 19th best school district in Pennsylvania out of 494: Niche.com
- » \$158 million in total expenses

Finance

Historically, SCASD schools have benefited from strong community support for public education and consistent revenue streams from a stable economy centered around Penn State. The 2019-2020 real estate tax increase of 1.95 percent was the second lowest tax increase in 10 years. In its fifth year, the district's Supplemental Property Tax Rebate Program issued 261 rebates totaling \$85,200. Additionally, each approved district homestead and farmstead received approximately \$110 in property tax relief.

86% of the budget is used directly to support student learning.

Expenses in 2019-2020 were \$8.9 million less than 2018-2019. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, all public schools in the Commonwealth were mandated to close on March 13, 2020 with remote instruction for the remainder of the school year. In response to the pandemic, the district instituted a hiring freeze and limited non-personnel costs to only those necessary for remote learning for the remainder of the school year. Savings from these expense reductions, combined with increases in revenue in excess of budget, allowed the district to set aside \$10 million to offset projected future reductions in revenues and COVID-related expenditures in future years as a result of the pandemic.

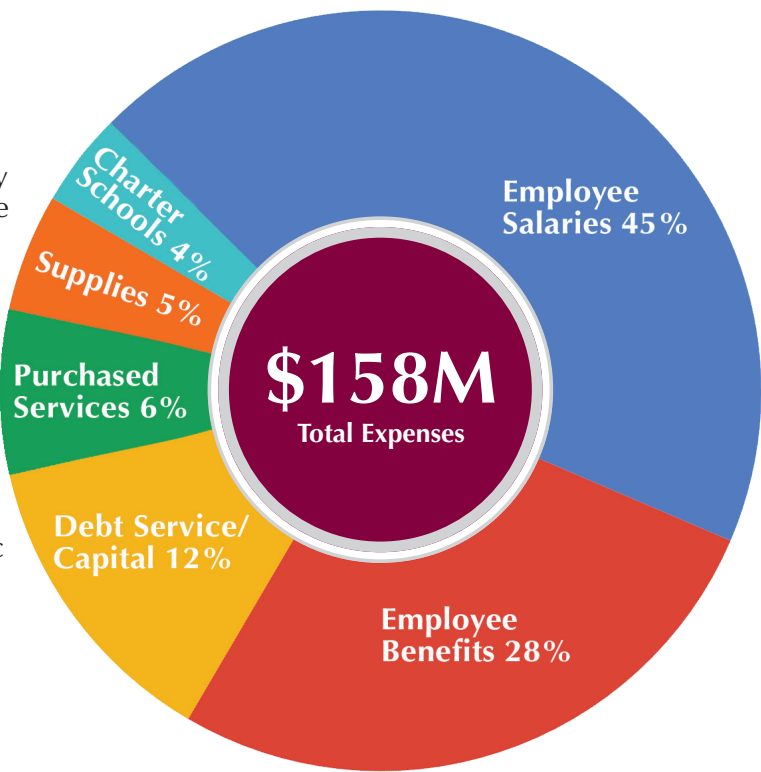
Revenue Sources

Local: \$135,482,211: **81%**
State: \$29,981,916: **18%**
Federal: \$2,454,158: **1%**

The district's Pennsylvania State Employees Retirement System expenses continued to rise because of increases in salary expenses and the state-mandated contribution rate. Debt service included payments on the \$85 million high school referendum borrowing and additional borrowing to fund the remainder of the high school project, Memorial Field Project and three elementary school projects with new playgrounds. The district continued setting aside resources for funding these expenditures as part of a long-term capital plan.

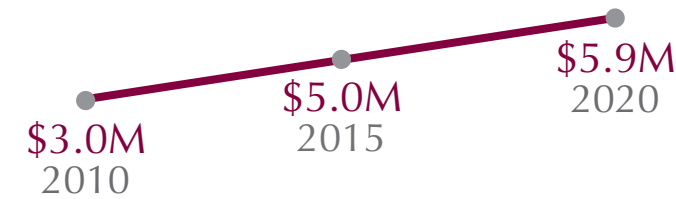
Centre County School Tax Comparison

District	Mills	Median Assessed Value	Real Estate Tax	Earned Income Tax*	Total Tax
SCASD	46.0875	\$72,560	\$3,344	\$574	\$3,918
Bellefonte	50.2131	\$46,460	\$2,333	\$634	\$2,967
Bald Eagle	58.9800	\$34,785	\$2,052	\$1,238	\$3,290
Penns Valley	48.0995	\$44,458	\$2,138	\$785	\$2,924



Charter School Expenses

The district's payment of \$5.9 million to charter schools for 325 students represented 4 percent of the budget. The amount was based on a state formula calculated using the district's actual per capita costs. While the district funds charters as required, it maintains no financial, academic or operational supervision, nor evaluative authority over them.



Payments to charter schools rose from \$3.0 million in 2010 to \$5.9 million in 2020, while enrollment over that span ranged from 309 to 325. During 2019-2020, charter enrollment dropped by 22.

*EIT Based on Centre County median income of \$60,403

Awards & Recognitions



The State High Little Lions football team played at Penn State's Beaver Stadium for the first time, beating Cumberland Valley 33-21 on Oct. 26, 2019.

Faculty & Staff



Director of Transportation Van Swauger and the transportation staff led a campaign called "Stuff the Bus," which collected bus loads of food for the State College Food Bank.



Teachers Lisa Pazak and Jim Robinson were named State College Magazine Teachers of the Year.

Arts

Junior Fiona Mulley won the Central PA Branch Shakespeare



Competition sponsored by the English Speaking Union ESU National Competition.

State High junior Wenjun Leng received a Scholastic Art National Gold Award for his painting.



Delta Program senior John Michael Rosenblum competed in the Pennsylvania Poetry Out Loud State Finals in Harrisburg as one of 14 regional winners.



The State High Chamber Singers performed at Governor Tom Wolf's residence, Dec. 8, 2019.

Academics

Senior Sydney Assalita took first place at a regional PA Junior Academy of Science conference and the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium.



Park Forest Middle School student Isabelle McSweeney won the Prepared Speech category at the Technology Student Association Region 8 competition.

Mount Nittany Middle School students Josh Carlson, Vlad Roiban and Josh Wang won the Technology Bowl category at the Technology Student Association Region 8 competition. Roiban and Trevor Martin won the Coding category, and Wang won the Delta Dart category. Evan Lepine won the Logo Design category.



State College Quiz Bowl member Albert Zhang earned a top 10 individual performance in the WAIT Online Knowledge Event as he and teammates Ananya Tadigadapa, Kyle Hynes, Jupiter Ding and Allen Farabaugh placed 11th against teams from across the nation.



State High team of Sam Ikenberry, Max Katsouros, Daniel Liu, Grace Shang and Christina Wang placed second at the National Ocean Sciences Chesapeake Bay Bowl.

Facilities



Radio Park Elementary Open House, Oct. 15, 2019.

A trio of elementary school openings kicked the year off on a high note for the district.

Corl Street and Radio Park students, faculty and staff finally had the full run of their updated buildings after two years of phased construction. The Spring Creek community returned from summer break to a brand-new building that replaced the former Lemont and Houserville schools.

In celebration, the district held ribbon cuttings, in-school dedication programs, and evening open houses for the public at each of the elementary schools in September and October. The open houses drew large turnouts from the community.

Also in October, the district commemorated the completion of the four-year, \$140 million State High Project to rebuild the high school and grounds, including a building for a relocated Delta Program. In addition to ribbon cuttings and an open house, the public was invited to a dedication program in the high school auditorium. Students had moved into classrooms 18 months earlier during the phased project.

In December, Corl Street, Radio Park and Spring Creek again were the center of attention. Final designs for new playgrounds were approved by the SCASD Board of Directors after an 18-month master planning effort that included community input. The designs mixed nature-

based items and traditional equipment, the anticipated template for updating all of the district's elementary and middle school playgrounds. As the district's newest buildings, the three schools received first priority. Bids were accepted in April and work began soon after with the goal of finishing in time for the 2020-2021 year.

Throughout the year, work continued on the \$14 million Memorial Field Project to improve the stadium for student-athletes and spectators. The stadium remained closed during the construction, but for alternative venues, the district added lights to the high school's South Track to accommodate football in addition to using the new North Field.



Principal Dr. Todd Dishong leads the ribbon cutting with students and teachers at the Spring Creek Elementary dedication, Sept. 25, 2019.



Board member Jim Leous celebrates Spring Creek Elementary's dedication.



Corl Street Array

District building earned top marks from the U.S. Green Building Council and its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design ratings program (LEED).

The State High and Delta Program buildings were deemed LEED Gold Certified, but bragging rights went to the elementary schools. Each became LEED Platinum Certified, the highest level shared by only three other schools in Pennsylvania.

Sprawling rooftop solar arrays helped Delta and the elementary schools achieve the distinction. The panels supply 10 percent of Delta's power and 20 percent for the elementary schools. Alternative and Clean Energy program grants of \$1.7 million to \$2 million from the state for each building helped fund the panels and other environmentally-friendly features such as cool white roofs that prevent rising site temperatures, energy-efficient materials and water-conserving restrooms and equipment.



Principal Dr. Kelly Mark, left, and Board President Amber Concepcion, right, watch teacher Kate Hooper and student Eliza Krasowitz cut the ribbon at the Corl Street Elementary dedication, Oct. 24, 2019.

Student Engagement K-8

At the elementary level, students receive language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and STEM instruction. Language arts focuses on reading and writing, with differentiated instruction at each individual student's reading level. Mathematics utilizes structured investigation, exploration, workplace games to practice learned skills, and independent practice experiences to ensure mastery of concepts. The science curriculum is being updated using the Next Generation Science Standards to focus on developing in-depth understanding of science through collaboration, inquiry and problem-solving.

Middle level students in grades 6-8 are introduced to French, Spanish or German while taking a rigorous blend of English, mathematics, science, social studies, art and general music courses. Social studies provides civics and economics instruction. Academic Literacy courses help students build critical thinking skills to analyze texts as well as develop extensive reading and metacognitive conversations through inquiry-based learning.

As our students join their classrooms at the start of each year, our teachers work to create a positive learning environment where students collaborate and support each other. We teach lessons about how to get along, share, deal with conflict, follow rules and be good citizens. All of



Using the Lucy Calkins curriculum, kindergarteners in Lisa Harrington's class at Ferguson Township Elementary School made their own books, and eventually turned their classroom into a bookstore.

our teachers and staff have been trained in the Restorative Practices approach, which emphasizes repairing relationships in handling conflict.

Classroom community is important to our elementary and middle school programs, and teachers work hard to sustain the positive communities they build with their students throughout the year. We know that social and emotional learning is key to supporting academic learning, which is why we make these efforts a priority across our district.

Growing all Learners

SCASD's commitment to all students is reflected in our district-wide Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment results. In addition, the district uses several other assessments to evaluate students' performance in order to continually adapt instruction.

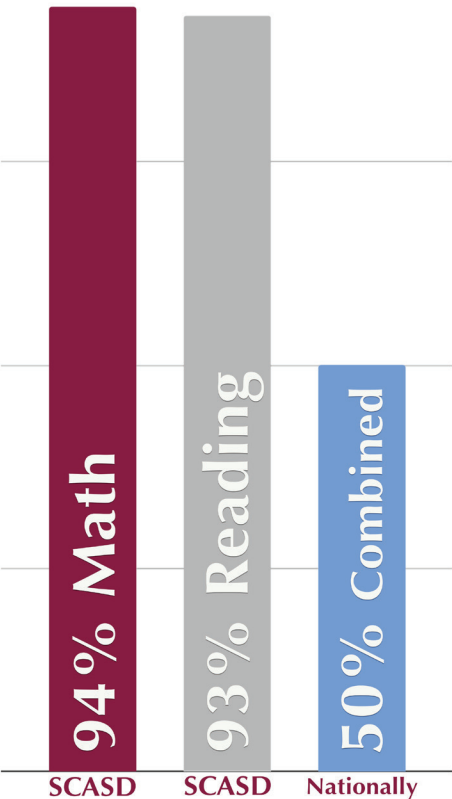
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, year-long MAP assessment results were unavailable. In 2018-2019,

each of our quartiles of elementary and middle schools students demonstrated an average of a year or more worth of growth in math and reading.

Right: Overall, students in grades 2-8 performed at the 94th percentile nationally for math and at the 93rd percentile for reading, compared to the national average of the 50th percentile for both.

Elementary Curriculum

Weekly library, health and physical education, art, STEM, and music classes.



Secondary Learning 9-12

State College Area High School provides challenging academic courses, comprehensive vocational/technical programs, and diverse extracurricular activities. Niche.com ranks it 18th out of 675 high schools in the state. SAT scores annually surpass state and national averages, ranking in the top 5 percent of schools statewide, and athletic teams, music ensembles and clubs consistently garner honors. The 2020 graduating class of 564 had 216 Faculty Scholars (GPA of 4.00 or 3.75 unweighted).

During 2019-2020, nearly 63 percent of students took rigorous courses, compared to the statewide average of 58 percent. Learning also occurred outside classrooms. Dozens of students received off-campus enrichment opportunities beyond the scope of the traditional curriculum, including Learning Enrichment, Advanced Option, independent study, research, lab experiences, Penn State courses, mentorships and internships.

State High consistently places graduates in the nation's top universities and colleges. From the Class of 2020, 343 were accepted at Penn State.

SAT Scores	Reading and Writing	Math
SCASD	594	594
State Average	543	534
State High ranks 23rd in the state out of 675 high schools for SAT scores		



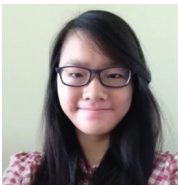
State High had 16 National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists.

564 Graduates

» 84% Attended college



Jupiter Ding, left, earned valedictorian and Silu Shen, right, was salutatorian.



State High

- » 2,350 Total students 9-12
- » 96.75% 5-year cohort graduation rate
- » 25 National AP Scholars
- » 74 Activities and clubs
- » 19 Bands, orchestras, choirs, string ensembles and rock ensembles
- » 30 Athletic teams
- » 64 Advanced Placement and advanced courses
- » 22 International Baccalaureate World Campus courses
- » 13 Career and Technical Center programs

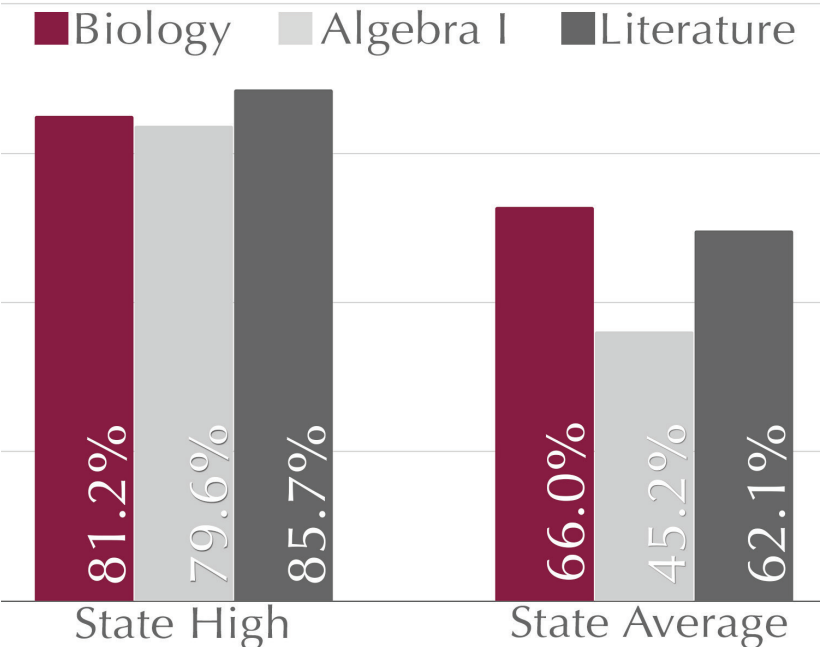
Advanced Placement

1,180 AP tests were taken with a maximum score of 5

- 81% Scored a 3 or higher
- 209 AP Scholars with an average score of 4.22

The Keystone Exams

State High students annually outperform the state average on the Keystone Exams. The chart below shows a comparison of State High students vs. the PA state average for Keystone test scores in 2018-2019. Note: Previous data shown because the exams weren't offered in 2019-2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



COVID-19 Pandemic

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the district decided to pause classes for the week of March 16-20 out of caution, and to provide time for preparing elementary and secondary remote learning plans. After a March 13 statewide order shut down schools for two weeks, the district began a daily free meal distribution program for families, which eventually moved to weekly and ended up a shining success, providing more than 100,000 meals.

On March 23, while schools remained closed, the district implemented optional elementary and secondary remote learning plans. The district's IT Services department worked to provide families with Chromebooks and Internet access as the shutdown was extended for two weeks. When the shutdown stayed in place for the rest of the school year, the district continued its remote learning plans, meal distribution, and support for families needing assistance. Athletics, performances and class trips had to be cancelled, but alternative events filled some of the voids.

A parade across the State High campus replaced the traditional senior visits to their former elementary schools in graduation caps and gowns. Along the route, students in cars enjoyed the cheers and applause of physically distanced teachers and administrators. A virtual musical showcase featuring short performances by students, faculty and staff in a variety of styles helped offset the loss of indoor concerts. Each was a bright moment during a difficult spring before the district held a virtual commencement to cap the year.



In the spring of 2020, the Food Services Department was packing more than 1,000 bags of food per week, which contained over 10,000 meals for the children in our community.



Left: In lieu of its usual graduation ceremony on the Penn State campus, the LifeLink PSU transitional program for young adults ages 18-21 with special needs organized a celebratory caravan that traveled to each graduate's home.



A high school choir class was one example of teachers and students adapting to virtual teaching and learning.

Board of Directors

- Laurel Zydney
- Gretchen Brandt
- Jim Leous
- David Hutchinson
- Amber Concepcion, President
- Dr. Dan Duffy
- Lori Bedell
- Dr. Amy Bader, Vice President
- Scott Fozard

Pictured left to right

Email: all-board@scasd.org



Administration

- Dr. Robert J. O'Donnell
Superintendent of Schools
- Vernon Bock
Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education
- Randy Brown
Finance and Operations Officer/
Open Records Officer

- Linda Pierce
Director of Human Resources
- Dr. Will Stout
Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education



Radio Park Elementary School ribbon cutting ceremony Oct. 15, 2019.

Directors

- Deirdre Bauer, Director of Curriculum K-5
- Dr. Seria Chatters, Director of Equity and Inclusivity
- Justin Hetrick, Director of Technology
- Jonathan Klingeman, Director of Gifted, Learning Enrichment, and Title 1 Services
- Jeanne Knouse, Director of Student Services
- Christine Merritt, Director of Curriculum 6-12

- Dr. Sharon Perry, Director of the CTC
- Edward Poprik, Director of Physical Plant
- Chris Rosenblum, Director of Communications
- Dr. Sharon Salter, Director of Special Education
- Megan Schaper, Director of Food Services
- Van Swauger, Director of Transportation
- Chris Weakland, Director of Athletics

Registration

The district's registration office is open year-round to accept new students. Each spring, we host registration events for the next school year, including kindergarten. For the latest information please call our office at 814-231-1017 or visit our registration website. We look forward to welcoming your child.

www.scasd.org/Registration



240 Villa Crest Drive
State College, PA, 16801
814-231-1011
www.scasd.org





The first classes of students at the new Radio Park Elementary School pose with employees on the playground.

6,702

Student Enrollment

2,065

People Employed

4th

Largest County
Employer

\$158M

Total Expenses



2019-2020 Annual Report

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