



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24 / 5784



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Carmel School Board and Board Sub Committees

Chairman Jonathan Zeman	Finance Committee Jason Budovitch Jonathan Zeman Anna Wong Rachel Friedmann Seth Fischer Frederick Mocatta Russell Davidson Shay Razon	Premises & Facilities Committee Daniel Livingstone Adam Fingrut Anna Wong Jonathan Zeman Kyle Ford Rachel Friedmann
Executive Committee Jonathan Zeman Shay Razon Russell Davidson Jason Webber Jason Budovitch Rachel Friedmann	STEAM Committee Nahum Shemesh Jonathan Zeman Kyle Ford Nitsan Segev-Levi David Srolovitz Michal Mor Shtorch Adam Fingrut Rachel Friedmann	Marketing Committee Anna Berman Alasdair Ong Jonathan Zeman Kyle Ford Rachel Friedmann
Board Members Jonathan Zeman Atara Sivan Deborah Maghnagi Frederick Mocatta Jason Budovitch Jason Webber Nahum Shemesh Russell Davidson Seth Fischer Shay Razon Tara Diestel Anna Berman (PTA Representative) Rachel Sebban (PTA Representative)	PTA Committee Anna Berman Rachel Sebban Emma Lavin	Curriculum & Oversight Committee Atara Sivan Jonathan Zeman Nitsan Segev-Levi Rachel Friedmann
	Development & Fundraising Committee Tara Diestel Maggie Guan-Golan Rachel Sebban Jonathan Zeman	Enrolment Committee Deborah Maghnagi Anna Berman

Board Goals

EXCELLENCE Continue to provide an outstanding level of personalized education to Carmel students & the HK Jewish Community.

JEWISH STUDIES & STEAM Support the development of overall student "Journey" in Jewish Studies & STEAM throughout students' time at Carmel.

ENROLMENT Encourage enrolment and maintain student retention in post-pandemic Hong Kong.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY Further enhance the current business model of the school for future sustainability.

Board Chairman's Report

Dear Carmel Community,

A challenging year has passed for the Jewish people – especially those living in the State of Israel. The atrocities of October 7th have rocked the Jewish world and antisemitism has reared its ugly head yet again. These events have impacted Jewish communities around the globe. Hong Kong is a safe place with a respectful society, so thankfully we as a community have not faced direct abuse.

In the meantime, Carmel School has used this time to rally together the Carmel Community for learning, solidarity and growth.

STEAM

As Chairman of the Board, this past year we strategically established a new STEAM Committee supporting the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics. This committee forms part of the Carmel Board's overall support for the leadership and faculty teams' enhanced emphasis on STEAM and technology.

As a Jewish school, Carmel has access to the best of the Jewish world, and this includes the best in technology education. The STEAM Committee is headed by Board Member and parent, Nahum Shemesh. There are a number of professionals contributing to this important committee and my thanks goes out to all of them for their invaluable contributions of time and effort this past year.

A notable success in the area of STEAM was the Carmel STEAM Week Challenge. This was held across all campuses and allowed students of all ages to get hands on and competitive while learning about technology, project management and teamwork in a fun and exciting environment. A BIG thanks to faculty members Mr Micah Donnoli, Mr Kyle Ford, Mr Robin November, among others, for making this a huge (technological) success!

Another notable technological success this year was the Carmel Robotics Team who entered the First Robotics Competition in Ventura, California – the only HK international school to compete – winning the 'Rookie Award' and the 'Wild Card' to participate in the Championship finals in Houston, in which they successfully went on to compete. The Carmel Robotics Team was even featured with a full article in the China Daily. A big thanks to teachers Mr Ma and Mr November for all their hard work and dedication to make this team a huge success.

JEWISH STUDIES

Jewish Studies also had an exciting year with various activities centred around spirit, heritage and celebrations. This really helped to foster a spirit of solidarity with the challenging situation in Israel. A special thanks goes to the JS teachers in each section for their dedication to inspiring and teaching Carmel students.

PTA

Also worth highlighting is the leadership of the PTA this year. The three PTA Campus Representatives this year, have gone above and beyond in helping to make this year a huge success. A huge thanks to Rachel Sebban (SKW), Anna Berman (BRC), and Emma Lavin (JCC) for their dedication and hard work with all the events, projects and activities that have been held this year. They have gone above and beyond and have maintained efficient and clear communication between parents and faculty.

DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

As always, we are forever thankful to our Carmel Board Development & Fundraising Committee, headed by the dedicated Tara Diestel. This year has seen Tara add some new blood to the committee and as ever, Tara has done an amazing job in raising the necessary funds for the Annual Budget and various programmes. There are a number of projects in the coming year that will be looking for funding. I encourage you to enquire and consider funding those that are meaningful to you.

ENROLMENT

The coming year will see the establishment of a new Enrolment Committee to focus on improving enrolment numbers in post-pandemic Hong Kong. The goal of the committee is to encourage enrolment through promotion of the school to key areas of the market.

THANKS

The Carmel Board is structured with a chairman, and various committees and committee chairs to provide guidance and resources to school principal, Mrs Rachel Friedmann and her leadership team. Special thanks to all Board members, sub-committee chairs and members, Rachel Friedmann, Nitsan Segev-Levi Anna Wong and faculty members for their dedication and passion in maintaining the highest of academic standards and care for Carmel students. Thank you also to all generous donors, stakeholders, and the OLS Charity Trust for your involvement and ongoing support of Jewish education in S.E. Asia.

Carmel is the "Little School That Could!" and this year has proven across the board that we continue to achieve success at a very high level!

I would like to wish the whole Carmel Community and safe, peaceful and fulfilling summer break. I look forward to further exciting success in the coming school year!

Yours Faithfully,

Jonathan Zeman
Chairman



Principal's Report

Dear Carmel Parents and Stakeholders,

After a proactive and energetic start to the 5784/2023-24 academic year across Carmel School campuses, our hearts were pierced by the devastating news of the 7th October terror and slaughter of men, women and children at the Nova concert and in kibbutzim on the Gaza border in Israel. It stopped us in our tracks - as it did the whole of Israel and the entire world - and we struggled to resume meaningful learning at School. Yet resume we did, albeit forever changed by these events. The writings of Rabbi Sacks OBM, provided inspiration by telling us that we must "...fight assimilation, the demonisation of Israel and the intimidation of [Jewish] students on campus." Perhaps most importantly, and key to this fight Rabbi Sacks tells us, "...we must never let ourselves be intimidated - and the Jewish way to avoid this is marbim b'simcha - to increase our joy."

Marbim b'simcha is indeed the best way to describe all that has gone on at Carmel this year - increasing the joy of learning - as experienced firstly and most importantly by our students, and also by our faculty, parents and stakeholders. Examples of the extracurricular joy of learning abound across the school sections: the weekly shabbat party where our JCC L3 and L4 children take on the roles of abba and ima (father and mother) and all the children welcome shabbat each Friday with songs, lighting the candles and enjoying the challah together; ELC (Early Learning Centre Afternoon Class) "Around the World" theme party; the impressive three Elementary winners of this year's Hong Kong Art Symposium Art Competition - led to Elementary 'first', the Summer Open Art Gallery exhibiting the artistic achievements of our accomplished students; the glorious and inspirational ISSFHK Championship win for our 'unbeaten' U12 Girls'

football team; the annual eagerly awaited Elsa musical and (for only the second year) the Elsa in Concert evening, once again showcasing incredible talent as well as execution at the highest level; the emotional Elsa High School section Graduation of the Class of 2024.

The common theme is the constant increase of joy. The shared philosophy of our Jewish values and ethos with the mission and vision of International Baccalaureate form the stable and strong base of the inclusivity, joy and high academic attainment and achievement visible at Carmel School.

This year, all sections were able to celebrate Succot by gathering, learning, eating and dancing in the SKW succah. Purim was celebrated with gusto and full engagement across the campuses, with a breathtaking Purim Circus and performances by Nursery and Pre-K, and joyful parent and child interaction in the Ganeynu and Tzutzik Purim activity morning; Pesach saw impressive Pesach sedarim in High school and Elementary sections, demonstrating students' knowledge as well as the joy of participation - with visible emotion from participating parents who all joined in the Carmel Elementary seder. Educational visits, one day for Grade 3 (a first), one night for Grade 4 and two nights for Grade 5, left the students begging for more whilst the High School visits to Poland, Nepal and Vietnam focusing on heritage and service are still a talking point with students and faculty alike. All increased the achdut, unity, of each grade, each section as well as the strong bond between students and teachers. This too is an added ingredient of the Carmel recipe for joy and success - our talented and fully engaged faculty, going above and beyond at every turn.

Another key joyous element is the creative mindset and constant innovation that defines Carmel. This year, together with guest speakers introduced by the Board STEAM Committee, students from all campuses participated in a full whole school STEAM Week. L4 and Elementary students from Pre-K to Grade 5 took part in a challenge centred around disaster relief operations, in line with the Design Challenge of the High School. Their engaging activity empowered students to showcase their creativity, knowledge of technology and problem-solving skills. At the High school students designed, constructed, and marketed an airboat capable of navigating through floodwater and debris-filled streets to reach isolated areas, rescuing stranded individuals and delivering supplies. Great fun as well as learning of new skills were clearly visible in the slipping and sliding of the boats as they attempted to navigate the specially constructed track and float on water - with mixed success!

Our High School Senior Robotics team set off to Ventura in March, after 11 weeks of intensively building the Carmel Nexus Robot and preparing the robot to compete - the only Hong Kong school to compete in the FIRST Robotics competition! Our team was awarded the 'Rookie All-Star Award' which celebrates teams exemplifying a young yet strong partnership effort and also won a 'Wildcard' invitation to the FRC Championship in Houston, Texas. Out of the 4000 plus active teams which participate in FIRST every year, only around 600 make it through to the Championship. Thanks to generous donors, Carmel's Elsa High School team was able to participate and it was a motivating and inspirational experience - with valuable knowledge and skills gained by students in robotics and engineering.

The list goes on and on...and on...!

On a differently inspirational, if more sobering note, Carmel School joined the Hong Kong Jewish Community Alliance which elected to support Kibbutz Holit in the aftermath of October 7. Kibbutz Holit is a small agricultural community of around 200 members near the Israel-Gaza border. On October 7 they experienced horrors and lost parents, siblings and friends. The Alliance decided to embrace Holit, supporting projects that will sustain the community and help them rebuild the infrastructure of their kibbutz whilst establishing close relations with their members. The Holit community has been inspired by Carmel School's initiative to promote awareness of World Water Day by collecting sufficient funds to build a new greenhouse on the kibbutz which they will name the Carmel Hydroponic Garden. Just a couple of weeks ago we had the privilege of welcoming a Kibbutz Holit delegation to our school as part of their visit to the Hong Kong community. The delegation joined Elementary students for Friday assembly, experiencing a moving Kabbalat shabbat and subsequently interacting

with students in some fun social and teamwork games. They then joined the Elsa Friday assembly where each of the delegates introduced themselves. Grades 7 to 11 then interacted in classes with the 6 young members of the delegation, three of whom lost parents in the horrific attack. Our students listened and asked perceptive, probing questions with maturity, and sensitivity. The Holit members were inspirational and it was strengthening for us to hear how they are coping with the loss of loved ones whilst still looking to the future and to the return to their kibbutz - with hope.

Looking forward, we hope, together with Ohel Leah Synagogue, to be able to arrange a special Mission to Israel, after Succot, for community members together with grade 9-12 Carmel students. The intention is to show solidarity, to volunteer, to work and comfort where and as we can, and to meet up with our Holit friends. We would be happy for Carmel's parents to join in this mission. More information to follow.

I hope this brief review has given you an insight into the past year at Carmel. All we do is a team effort. My thanks to Mrs Levi, to Ms Annabel, Ms Hagit and Ms Dorothy, and to Ms Anna Wong and her dedicated admin team - without whom nothing could happen at the school - to our Carmel Board and my tireless Board Chair Mr. Jonathan Zeman, and to our amazing PTA Chairs, Rachel Sebban, Anna Berman and Emma Lavin. Thank you for all you do.

I must end as I started, with a message from Rabbi Sacks which pinpoints our essence and our mission: immortality is achieved Rabbi Sacks says, "...not by building pyramids or statues but by - engraving [our] values on the hearts of [our] children, and they on theirs, so that our ancestors live on in us and we in our children, and so on until the end of time."

I wish all our Carmel families and stakeholders a safe and enjoyable summer.

B'sorot tovot - may we share only good news.



Mrs. Rachel Friedmann
Principal



(Clockwise from top) Chinese New Year Assembly, STEAM week, PYP Exhibition, and the Grade 5 Stepping Up Ceremony



Head of Elementary Report

It is my pleasure to present our annual report for the 2023-2024 academic year. This past year has been marked by remarkable growth for our students, faculty, and the Carmel Elementary School as a whole. It is my honor to highlight the progress we have made and the milestones we have reached together. Our devoted teachers, motivated students, and engaged families have all played a crucial role in shaping another successful year at our school.

Our IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) continues to provide a strong foundation for learning that guides each student's educational journey. When combined with our Jewish Studies program, celebrations, and traditions, the Carmel Elementary experience becomes truly unique. We continued cherished traditions such as the Kindergarten Shabbat party, Grade 1 Siddur presentation, and Grade 2 Chumash celebrations, alongside Whole-School Sports Day, Unit of Inquiry events, and the Grade 5 PYP Exhibition. We also celebrated the Chinese New Year with parents and commemorated Jewish holidays, including the Tishrei holidays, Purim, and the highlight - a whole-school Passover Mock Seder.

On the academic front, we have successfully implemented a new STEAM-focused curriculum that has increased student interest and performance in science and mathematics. The highlight was the STEAM week that aligned with the annual design week at our Elsa High School section.

In Visual Arts, three Carmel Elementary students won awards in the Hong Kong Symposium competition, and we opened our first Elementary Art Gallery to showcase student work.

Experiential learning remained a central focus this year, with field trips to Safety Town, the Fire Station, the Biodiversity Museum, FutureTech experiments in Cyberport, the Tai Kwun Art Exhibition, the Africa Center, and the Hakka House, amongst others. The educational visits were a highlight, with Grade 3 enjoying a full-day trip to Cheung Chau, Grade 4 spending one night in Sai Kung, and Grade 5 embarking on a two-night adventure in Tai Mong Tsai.

Our Co-Curricular Activities and After School Activities programs were extended this year with different types of classes; Yoga, Athletics, Badminton and Drama, all this along with our current offerings which include Chess, Table Tennis, Cross Country, Capoeira, Football, Art, homework club and Social games classes.

Collaborative initiatives with other schools were also part of our efforts this year, as Carmel Grade 2 students participated in joint assemblies, exhibitions, and teamwork activities with The Harbour School.

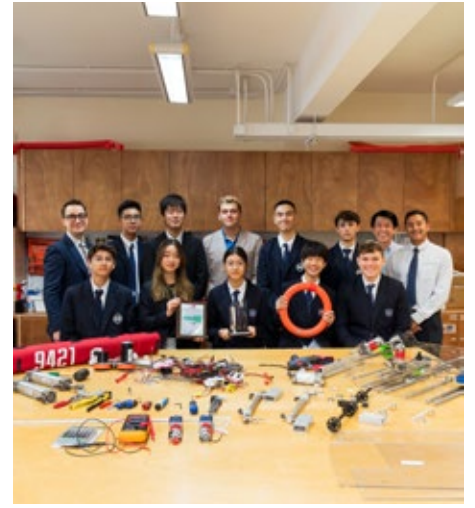
As always but strongly since October, our school has supported Israel in different age-appropriate ways for elementary students. We created card games, participated in the international Koululam song and in the Wall of Hope project, donated Tzedakka from World Water Day and Israel Independence Day, and welcomed members of Kibbutz Holit into our Friday Assembly. From here we send our prayers and hope for better days in Israel.

As we look back on the year that's passed and ahead to the year to come, I'm confident Carmel Elementary will continue to soar to new levels of achievement. The steadfast dedication of our teachers to providing an exceptional educational experience, coupled with our vibrant community spirit along with parents and Board members, will drive us ever forward.



Mrs. Nitsan Segev-Levi

Head of Elementary



(Clockwise from top) The enhanced playground at the Carmel Elementary campus, Book Cafe held at the Holly Rofé Early Learning campus, the Senior Robotics Team, The Addams family musical



PTA Report

This academic year started with a PTA breakfast to greet new Carmel parents and to welcome back existing parents as well as our annual Cocktail Evening to meet and greet with Elsa High School section faculty members in a relaxed atmosphere.

With the help of dedicated parents Carmel PTA collaborated with students and teachers during The Addams Family Musical providing help with costumes, makeup and organizing and manning a food and beverages stand on the performance days.

A huge thank you to our parents who planned and took part of this year Careers Fair! It was a big success and Grade 9 to 12 students greatly benefited from the opportunity to interact in small groups with a large range of professionals.

During the course of the academic year, PTA has organised valuable events ranging from support workshops for parents to help them deal with the unprecedented tragic events of October 7th, to elementary school Tuck shops and second hand uniform sale.

Celebrations were also a year landmark, with special Crewkies distributed to students during Hannuka assemblies, a joyful CNY lunch for parents with a special performance from our talented elementary students as well as a Purim fundraising campaign where curated gift boxes (mishloah manot) were specially prepared by our Jewish Studies team and parents. Half of the proceeds were sent to support Kibbutz Holit reconstruction in Israel.

Parents also generously donated books for our PTA Book Cafe where Carmel students enjoyed choosing second hands books

This year also marked the return of Elsa High School PTA luncheons where parents are invited to lunch with our Principal Mrs. Friedmann and gain an insight into the campus life.

PTA would also like to congratulate students and supporting faculty who have worked so hard participating in school, national and international academic, art, STEAM, Robotics and Upcycling projects and competitions. Well done everyone!!

Your PTA representatives,

Anna Berman, Emma Lavin, Rachel Sebban

Development Report

This year our donors' generous support contributed to significant improvements in both our facilities and our offerings. Due to the impactful contribution of a single family, the Carmel Elementary campus playground underwent a significant enhancement that revitalised the area, making it more educationally functional for our students. Moreover, the school's Robotics team was enabled to partake in two prestigious competitions as a result of effective fundraising efforts, granting them the invaluable opportunity to gain experience and recognition within the competitive robotics field.

We are profoundly appreciative of the steadfast support provided by The Ohel Leah Synagogue Charity, whose generosity has consistently motivated us to strive towards achieving our school mission. We wish to convey our sincere gratitude for their benevolent contributions and we remain committed to utilizing these resources to their fullest potential in order to make a positive impact.

In the coming year, we are committed to introducing innovative fundraising strategies that will enable all members of our community to actively participate and contribute towards achieving our shared objectives. By leveraging these new approaches, we aim to maximize our fundraising potential and create a more engaging and inclusive experience for all.

Tara Diestel

Development Committee

Financial Report

Carmel School continues to move forward from the challenges facing the Hong Kong economy in the post COVID era. The descending rate of Jewish families immigrating to Hong Kong, as well as increase in families emigrating from Hong Kong have created a sustained impact on overall student enrolment.

Promisingly, the Hong Kong Government has been promoting and developing the Greater Bay Area (GBA) with the aim of bolstering economic development and enhancing social cooperation between cities in the region. Likewise, the school continues to develop marketing and media strategies to publicize itself to a greater number of demographics and communities in the wider region. Word of mouth and an open immigration policy have driven a notable increase in enquiries and admissions from the GBA. The expanded enrolment has helped to diversify the student population and the future looks promising.

To further strengthen our financial position, we have been actively managing our surplus cashflow where possible and have benefited from an increase in income derived from

favorable deposit rates. Meanwhile the much appreciated and valued ongoing support of the Ohel Leah Synagogue Trust is key to our educational offering and to the financial stability at the School. We are also grateful for our parents and stakeholders who have been generous in both donations and involvement with school projects. Through effective cost management solutions and the support of our community, we are confident that we can continue to offer the unique Carmel world-class education whilst maintaining a resilient financial position.

Wishing you all a wonderful summer.

Jason Budovitch

Board Treasurer

Financial Highlights

	Audited 2022/23 ¹	Actual 2023/24 ²	Variance
Total Enrollment ³	329 students	361 students	9.7%
Teacher:Student Ratio	1:4	1:4	
	HK\$m	HK\$m	
Total Revenue (Excluding Subvention and Fundraising)	61.2	68.1	11.3%
Total Expenses (Including Capex and Provision)	71.2	76.4	7.3%
Regular OLS Trust Subvention	6.6	6.6	-
Emergency OLS Trust Subvention	-	-	
Government Grant	-	-	
Breakdown for Fund Raising (Actual Received)			
Annual Fund	2.6	2.4	
Purim Basket Programme	0.1	0.1	
Other Donations	-	-	
Total Fundraising	2.7	2.5	(7.4)%
Net Surplus / Deficit	(0.7)	0.8	

Notes

1. 2022-23 Extracts from the Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2023
2. Figures are subject to year-end adjustments
3. Enrollment includes Tzutzik to G12 & ELC classes

Actual (2022-23)

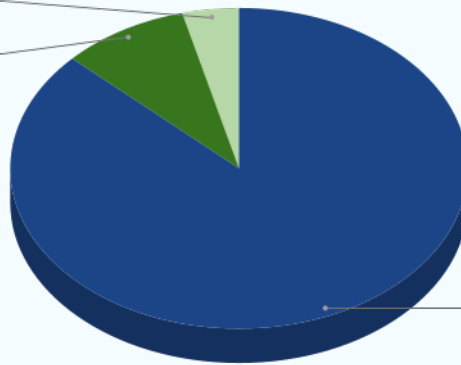
Income

Donations

4.0%

Subvention

9.0%



Tuition and fees

87.0%

Expenditure

Fee subsidies

4.0%

General and

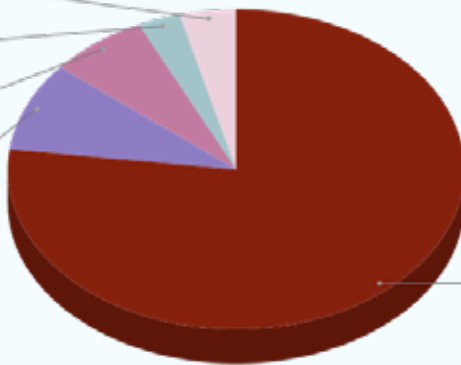
3.0%

School Facilities,

7.0%

Educational Supplies

9.0%



Staff Costs

77.0%

2022-23 extracted from the audited accounts for the year ended 31 July 2023
Enrollment includes ELC and Tzutzik to G12 classes

Forecast (2023-24)

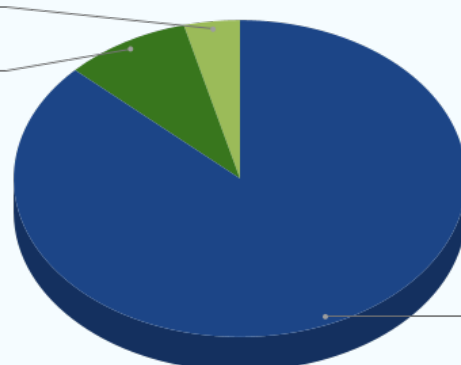
Income

Donations

4.0%

Subvention (including

9.0%



Tuition and fees

87.0%

Expenditure

Fee subsidies

4.0%

General and

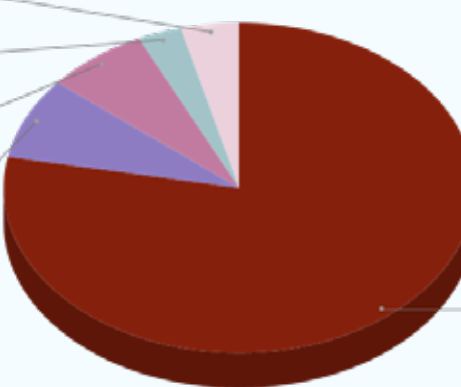
3.0%

School Facilities,

7.0%

Educational

8.0%



Staff Costs

78.0%

"The seeds of knowledge are in
learning; and in all your learning,
strive for understanding"

ראשית חכמה, קנה חכמה; ובכל-קנינה,
קנה בינה משלי ד', ז'

知识的种子是埋在学习中的 · 在学习过程
中要尽力去理解而发现种子。

Les germes de la connaissance sont
dans l'apprentissage; et dans tous vos
apprentissages, efforcez-vous de comprendre.

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Excellence, Community, Tradition

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