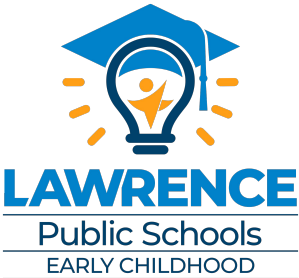


# Lawrence Public Schools

## KENNEDY EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

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# FAMILY HANDBOOK



KENNEDY EARLY  
CHILDHOOD CENTER  
1605 Davis Rd | Lawrence, KS | 66046  
Phone: 785-832-5760 | Fax: 785-832-5762



# 2024-2025

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

## Welcome to Kennedy Early Childhood Center's programs and services



We are excited to begin a new school year and look forward to working together with you and your child(ren).

We offer a variety of opportunities for children, ages birth to five years, and their families.

Our programs include: Parents as Teachers (Birth- age 5 ), Douglas County Early Childhood Developmental Services (Birth-age 3), Early Childhood Special Education Services (3-5 years), Peer Model Program, and Pre-K classrooms funded by KSDE.

Please contact us for more information.

Esther Kottwitz, Principal  
785-832-5760 ext. 1793  
[Esther.Kottwitz@usd497.org](mailto:Esther.Kottwitz@usd497.org)

### **PURPOSE STATEMENTS:**

Mission: Striving to serve young children with high quality learning and play through programs and services that meet their individual needs.

Vision: Serve as a community of Birth-5 professionals working in concert to identify and meet the needs of young children.

# KENNEDY EARLY CHILDHOOD PRE-K CLASSROOMS

## FULL-DAY PRE-K CLASSROOMS

Kennedy Early Childhood Center offers full-day Pre-K classrooms for students who qualify according to KDHE grant guidelines. Pre-K classrooms are taught by **certified teachers** and provide rich early learning opportunities in the areas of math, literacy, art, science, and social-emotional learning.

- Kennedy Pre-K classrooms are in operation:

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (KSDE grant)**

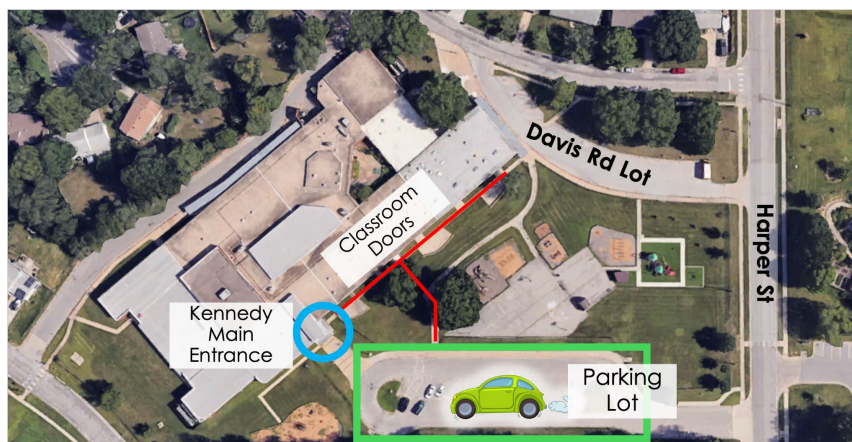
- Specific schedules are followed for all of our classrooms at Kennedy Early Childhood Center. These schedules are very important to the routines and planned learning activities provided for children on a daily basis. It is important that children feel the security of routines, and it is important that teachers are able to focus on teaching and instruction.
- Unless there is a pre-planned appointment or an unanticipated emergency, children should arrive no later than 10 minutes past the start time of their classroom.
- Follows USD 497 calendar: [2024-2025 Student Calendar](#)
- Students receive breakfast and lunch: [Kennedy Early Childhood Nutrislice](#)
- Tuition: For families who meet eligibility qualifications, **there are no fees. These are grant-funded classrooms.**

# ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL GUIDELINES

## ARRIVAL: FULL-DAY PRE-K CLASSROOMS

- Drop-off for Pre-K classrooms begins at **7:50 a.m.** and students should arrive no later than **8:10 a.m.**
- Park in the main lot off of Harper Street. **\*see map below\*** The Davis Road lot may **not** be used for child arrival or dismissal.
- Students must be delivered to the teacher and classroom by an adult. Students may not be dropped off in the parking lot to enter the building on their own.
- Please wait until your child has completely entered the classroom and staff has verbally acknowledged physical custody of your child before walking away.
- Say goodbye to your child before leaving, but do leave promptly.
- In the event that your child needs to arrive later than 8:00 a.m. for exceptions due to an appointment or other unusual factors, please enter through the front office.

An efficient drop-off routine allows your child the opportunity to transition into the classroom setting independently or with support from staff! 💜



*\* The alley that connects Maple Lane and Davis Road is used for bus arrival and dismissal. This area is not to be used for car arrival or dismissal.*

## DISMISSAL: FULL-DAY PRE-K CLASSROOMS

- Pick-up for Pre-K classrooms begins at **2:50 p.m.** and students must be picked up by **3:00 p.m.**

Similar to arrival procedures, your child must be picked up by an authorized adult. Students may not leave the classroom without an accompanying adult.

*There is no staffing for late departure.*

# SAMPLE FULL-DAY PRE-K SCHEDULE

7:50	Arrival / Check-in
8:00	Breakfast
8:40	Morning Meeting / Whole Group
9:00	Stations #1
9:45	Recess / Outdoor
10:15	Theme-based Storytime
10:30	Theme-based Centers
11:05	Lunch
11:30	Stations #2
12:00	Rest
1:15	Recess / Outdoor
1:45	Journal Writing
2:15	Theme-based Read Aloud
2:30	Puzzles / Books
3:00	Dismissal



# KENNEDY SPECIAL EDUCATION INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

## HALF-DAY SPECIAL EDUCATION INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

Kennedy Early Childhood Center provides half-day sessions (AM and PM) for students who qualify according to their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

We also enroll peer models in our half-day sessions. These children (ages 3 - 5 years old) complete a developmental screening. Three year olds can be enrolled in the AM session, four year olds will be offered either a half-day session (AM or PM) OR full-day enrollment.

- Specific schedules are followed for all of our classrooms at Kennedy Early Childhood Center. These schedules are very important to the routines and planned learning activities provided for children on a daily basis. It is important that children feel the security of routines, and it is important that teachers are able to focus on teaching and instruction. Therefore, it's critical that all children arrive and depart on time.

- Kennedy half-day sessions are in operation

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 8:00am - 11am and 12:00pm - 3:00pm.**

Students are enrolled in a half-day session from 1-4 days per week, according to the services in their IEP.

- Follows USD 497 calendar: [2024/2025 Student Calendar](#)

- Students receive a snack each day: [Kennedy Early Childhood Nutrislice](#)

## PEER MODEL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The peer model program provides students with rich learning opportunities for growth in pre-academics, language, and social skills, in an inclusive classroom setting.

- Specific schedules are followed for all of our classrooms at Kennedy Early Childhood Center. These schedules are very important to the routines and planned learning activities provided for children on a daily basis. It is important that children feel the security of routines. And it is important that teachers are able to focus on teaching and instruction. Therefore, it's critical that all children arrive and depart on time.

- Peer Model Tuition: \$150 per month

- Half-day peer model students receive a snack each day.

- Full-day peer model students receive a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack each day:

[Kennedy Early Childhood Nutrislice](#)

**PEER MODELS DEVELOP FRIENDSHIPS  
WITH  
CHILDREN WHO DEMONSTRATE A  
DIVERSE RANGE OF DEVELOPMENTAL  
SKILLS AND ABILITIES.**

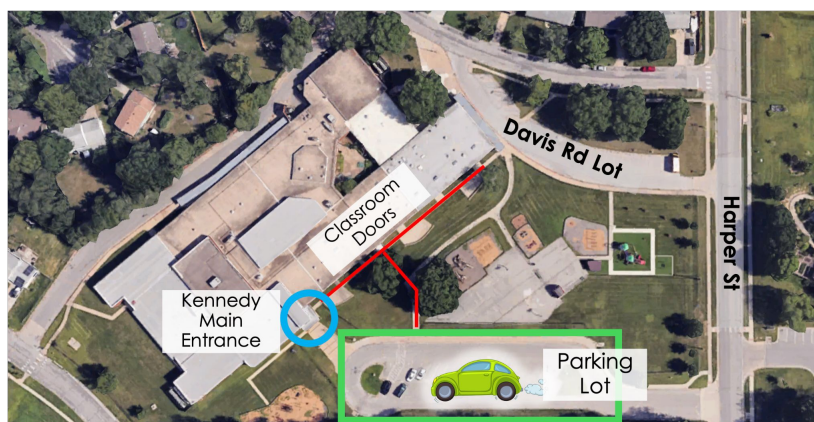
- For more information about the Peer Model Program or to schedule a screening, please contact Marielle at [MMonteau@usd497.org](mailto:MMonteau@usd497.org) or 785-330-1985.

# ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL GUIDELINES

## ARRIVAL: HALF-DAY SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS AND PEER MODEL PROGRAM

- Drop-off for early childhood special education classrooms begins at 8:00 a.m. (morning session) and 12:00 p.m. (afternoon sessions). AM students should arrive no later than 8:10 a.m., and PM students should arrive no later than 12:10 p.m.
- Park in the main lot off of Harper Street. The Davis Rd. lot may not be used for child arrival or dismissal.
- Students must be delivered to the teacher and classroom by an adult. Students may not be dropped off in the parking lot to enter the building on their own.
- Please wait until your child has completely entered the building and staff has verbally acknowledged physical custody of your child before walking away.
- Say goodbye to your child before leaving, but do leave promptly.
- In the event that your child needs to arrive later than 8:10 a.m. or 12:10 p.m. for exceptions due to an appointment or other unusual factors, please enter through the front office.

An efficient drop-off routine allows your child the opportunity to transition into the classroom setting independently or with support from staff! 💜



\* The alley that connects Maple Lane and Davis Road is used for bus arrival and dismissal. This area is not to be used for car arrival or dismissal.

## DISMISSAL: HALF-DAY SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS / PEER MODEL PROGRAM

- Dedicated windows of time and locations for departure will be specified by each teacher, according to building needs.
- Similar to arrival procedures, your child must be picked up by an authorized adult. Students may not leave the classroom without an accompanying adult.
  - Students in half-day AM classrooms must be picked up by 11:00 a.m.
  - Students in half-day PM classrooms and full-day peer models must be picked up by 3:00 p.m.

*There is no staffing for late departure.*



## SAMPLE HALF-DAY SCHEDULE

8:00	12:00	Arrival / Check-in Stations / Whole group
8:45	12:45	Recess / Outdoor
9:15	1:15	Snack
9:35	1:35	Theme-based Storytime Restroom
10:15	2:15	Centers Independent Work Time Small Groups
10:45	2:45	Closing / Whole Group
11:00	3:00	Dismissal



# PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR THE SCHOOL DAY

## AT HOME

- Talk positively with your child about Kennedy and what they can expect throughout the day. Use the teacher's name and photo so your child can become familiar with them.
- Acknowledge and validate your child's feelings ("I know you are feeling nervous, and that's okay.").
- Talk with your child about what the drop-off and pickup experience will be like ("I'll leave, but I'll be back," or, "You'll ride the bus to Kennedy, and then you'll ride the bus back home when you're dismissed.")

## WHAT TO WEAR

- Learning, experimenting, and playing is fun, but can get messy! Daily activities include water, paint, markers, glue, play-doh, and other potentially staining materials.
- ***Please send your child dressed in comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing, suitable for active play.***
- Outdoor play happens daily except during extreme weather conditions. Please dress your child in clothing and shoes that will allow them to fully engage in play and exploration.

## WHAT TO BRING

- A full-size (NOT toddler-size) backpack
- A complete set of extra clothing to remain at Kennedy for emergency use
- A small blanket for rest time (full-day PreK and peer model students only)
- Diapers/pull-ups and wipes (if necessary)
- Breakfast and/or lunch, if your child will not be eating district-provided meals (full-day PreK and peer model students only). A menu can be found on the USD497 district website. Link [HERE](#).

***\* Please do not send gum, candy, money, or toys from home. (Toys may be sent for special occasions - your child's teacher will inform you of the appropriate time.)***



# COMMUNICATION

## REPORTING ABSENCES

- If your child will be absent, please call to notify the front office at 785-832-5760 by 8:30 a.m.
- Student attendance is monitored by the teacher and entered into PowerSchool as determined by district policy.

## PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

- Conferences are held three times per year, following the district calendar (August/family contact, October, and March).
- To ensure that all students enrolled in our programs are making sufficient progress in all areas of development, teachers and staff utilize a variety of observational and assessment methods. Data collected is then used to plan and modify developmentally appropriate learning experiences and activities in the educational setting.

## NEWSLETTERS

- Your teacher will specify how they communicate regularly with families. Typically, there will be a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly form of communication to keep families up-to-date and informed with classroom and program information.

## DAILY INFORMAL COMMUNICATION

- Teachers and related service providers can be reached by phone, email or the TalkingPoints app. <https://talkingpts.org/families/>
- **Please keep in mind that during the school day, when students are in attendance, teachers will not be available to answer calls or respond to messages.** If you have an urgent need, please call the front office.

## FACEBOOK

- Please visit and follow our facebook page by clicking the button below. We post updates and fun activities often!

[Lawrence Public Schools Early Childhood Program](#)

## IMPORTANT LINKS TO BOOKMARK

- [Lawrence Public Schools Website](#)
- [Lawrence Public Schools Student Calendar](#)
- [Lawrence Public Schools Menu](#)

Parents and caregivers are a child's first and most influential teachers. Our teachers and staff hold your family's insights and feedback about your child's needs in high regard and consider you an essential partner in supporting your child's success in our programs.

Responsive and timely communication from parents and caregivers, both to advise staff of any concerns or in response to outreach from the teacher, is necessary to ensure every child is adequately supported in the classroom.

We encourage you to inform your child's teacher of anything (e.g. significant changes at home, health issues) that may affect their success at Kennedy. Parents can be assured that any private information shared with teachers or other staff will be kept confidential and only shared as necessary with those who will provide additional support to your child.

# MEALS AND SNACKS

## FULL-DAY EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS:

- Full-day early childhood students receive two full meals each day.
  - Breakfast is served at 8:05 a.m.
  - Lunch is served at 11:00 a.m.
- \* A similar meal from home may be sent in place of a district-offered meal (e.g., sandwich, applesauce pouch, carrots, water bottle - no fast food).

## HALF-DAY EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS:

- Half-day early childhood students receive snacks provided by the district each day.
- Examples of the snacks that will be provided on a rotating basis include:

*Annie's Graham Mix w/Milk;  
Fish Shaped Crackers w/ Fruit Juice;  
Applesauce Cup with Raisins and Milk;  
Cheese Sticks w/ Fruit Juice;  
Whole Grain Bagel/Cream Cheese w/ Fruit Juice;  
Munchies Snack Mix w/Milk;  
Whole Grain Cheez-Its w/Fruit Juice;  
Orange Wedges and Craisins w/Milk;  
Yogurt (assorted) w/Fruit Juice*

# BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

## BIRTHDAY TREATS:

- Birthday treats can be sent for classroom birthday celebrations. Families may provide store-bought, individually-wrapped items from the following list:
- Little Debbie/Hostess bakery items
  - Pre-packaged individually-wrapped fruit and vegetables (e.g., bags of sliced apples or carrots, applesauce cups or pouches, yogurt tubes)
  - Pudding/Gelatin Cups
  - Individually-wrapped crackers/cookies (teddy grahams, goldfish, etc.)
  - Fruit snacks

## CLASSROOM PARTIES & SPECIAL OCCASIONS:

- For classroom parties and other special occasions, please speak with your child's teacher about acceptable items to provide for the class to enjoy.



# APPOINTMENTS, SCREENINGS AND EVALUATIONS

## APPOINTMENTS AT KENNEDY WITH RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- Park in the main lot off of **Harper Street**. The Davis Rd. lot may not be used for by-appointment services.
- Enter through the main entrance, sign in, and wait in the vestibule for your service provider to greet you and your child.
- Parents and caregivers should wait in the vestibule during their child's therapy appointment.
- Please be sure to sign out before leaving the building.

## APPOINTMENTS AT KENNEDY FOR SCREENINGS:

- Park in the main lot off of **Harper Street**. The Davis Rd. lot may not be used for by-appointment services.
- Enter through the main entrance, sign in and get a visitor badge to wear for the duration of your child's screening appointment. Wait in the front office for staff to greet you and your child.
- Please be sure to sign out before leaving the building.

# VISITS/APPOINTMENTS WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

## OTHER PROGRAMS LOCATED AT KENNEDY EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER:

- *Parents as Teachers (PAT)*
- *Kansas Early Childhood Developmental Services (Birth-3 ECD) - Douglas County Infant Toddler Services*
- *Early Childhood Special Education Services (3-5 ECSE)*
- *Head Start*
- *Community Children's Center*

## BUILDING PROTOCOL FOR VISITS/APPOINTMENTS

- Park in the main lot off of **Harper Street**. The Davis Rd. lot may not be used for by-appointment services.
- Enter through the main entrance, sign in and get a visitor badge to wear for the duration of your time in the building. Wait in the front office for staff to greet you and your child.
- Please be sure to sign out before leaving the building.

# POSITIVE BEHAVIORS AT KENNEDY

All Kennedy Early Childhood Center programs focus on teaching skills for social/emotional growth and positive behavior.

## Building-wide key positive behaviors:

- *Hands, feet, and mouth to self*
- *Walking feet*
- *Inside voice*
- *Listening ears*
- *Looking eyes*
- *Stay in your area*
- *Follow directions*



Teachers and related service providers will work with families to provide consistency in strategies at home. Consistent routines and positive reinforcement (individually determined) are strategies for teaching new social behaviors and maintaining desired behaviors across all environments.

# FROM THE KENNEDY NURSE

Below is some important information from the Kennedy Early Childhood Center Nurse.

- **MEDICATIONS** – New forms are required each school year.

If a student requires medication during the school day, a parent/guardian must arrange a time with the nurse to bring the medication to Kennedy. Medications **may not** be sent to Kennedy in backpacks and **may not** be given to teachers upon arrival.

## ***PRESCRIPTION (RX) MEDICATION***

1. Permission form on file from a parent or guardian.
2. Current RX label must adhere to the medication bottle provided to the school that includes the student's name, the strength of the medication, and accurate prescription information.
3. Inhalers used for acute asthma symptoms must include a spacer for administration. We cannot provide nebulizer treatments at school at this time, so ONLY metered dose inhalers will be accepted.

## ***NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION***

1. Permission form on file from a parent or guardian.
2. Children's strength only. Must include directions appropriate for the child's age, and in the original manufacturer's container.
3. Over-the-counter/non-prescription medication can be given to students no more than ten times per school year.

- **ALLERGIES** - New forms are required each school year.

If a student has allergies that require accommodation, please complete the Allergy Intake form (provided by the nurse). If this allergy requires rescue medication, please see the above sections on medications.

- **DIET MODIFICATION** - New forms are required each school year.

If your student has any dietary allergies or intolerances that will require meal modification, please complete the Meal Modification Form (provided by the nurse). Please note that it requires a doctor's signature.

- **HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND VACCINATIONS**

The state of Kansas requires that all early childhood students attending school have certain vaccinations and a current (within the last year) physical. The required vaccinations are based on age and grade level and parents should submit updated records every time their child receives new vaccinations. Physicals do not need to be submitted each year. Vaccination records must be received within 30 days of enrollment, and physicals must be received within 90 days of enrollment.

# KENNEDY ILLNESS POLICIES

Parents/guardians must keep ill students at home. If your child was ill the night before or has complaints of sore throat, stomach ache, headache, fever, or appears ill in the morning, please keep them at home. A child should be symptom-free (without medication) for 24 hrs before returning to Kennedy. We are not able to care for sick children. If your child becomes ill during his/her time with us, we will contact you so that you may pick up your child (**sick child pick up is within 30 min. of notification by either parent or other authorized adult**). It is important that the center has up-to-date and current emergency telephone numbers and alternative pick-up contacts. Examples of illnesses that require that a student stay home, include, but are not limited to:



1. Contagious diseases – such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, pink eye and influenza.
2. Skin rashes – especially if the cause is unknown or if accompanied by fever or drainage. (May require doctor's note to verify that the student is not contagious)
3. Head lice infestation that has not yet been treated with an anti-parasitic shampoo. One day of absence will be excused. See more about head lice under Health Office Policies.
4. Fever – students with an oral temperature of 100.0 or greater should be kept home until they have been fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
5. Vomiting/Diarrhea – students who are vomiting or having diarrhea must stay home for 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting/diarrhea.

YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO STAY HOME IF.....						
Your child has a fever	Your child has vomited	Your child has diarrhea	Your child has a rash	Your child has head lice	Your child has an eye infection	Your child has been in the hospital
						
Temperature of 100.0 or higher	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours	Body rash with itching or fever	Itchy head, active head lice	Redness, "crusty" drainage from eye	Hospital stay and/or ER visit

YOUR CHILD IS READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL WHEN.....						
Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication i.e. Tylenol; Motrin	Free from vomiting for at least 2 solid meals. At least 24 hours from the last episode of vomiting	Free from diarrhea for at least 24 hours	Free from itching and has been evaluated by a doctor	Treated with appropriate lice treatment at home and proof is provided to the nurse. Must see nurse upon return	Evaluated by doctor and has note to return to school	Released by a medical provider with a note to return to school. The nurse needs to be made aware if there are medications to be given or restrictions on physical activity.



# ANIMALS AND PETS

Animals and pets are not to be brought on campus during school and/or community events. Many children have allergies and some children are terribly fearful of animals.

Therapy dogs and classroom pets will be permitted only when specific guidelines have been completed and with approval of the principal. Approved animals may be restricted from specific activities.

The safety and wellbeing of all children is the first priority at Kennedy Early Childhood Center.



# EQUITY (ALL SCHOOLS)

Lawrence Public Schools recognizes the importance of making and supporting significant shifts in mindset and practice to provide and sustain equitable outcomes for all students. Children, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, and/or other minoritized identities, will be able to access freely the resources and supports necessary to reach their fullest potential. Current and past federal, state, and local failures to act urgently in the pursuit of educational equity contribute to reduced access to academic opportunities, and to disparities in graduation outcomes and disciplinary actions for students from historically marginalized communities. These disparities contradict the beliefs and values the Lawrence Public Schools community articulates about what students can achieve and the adults' role in ensuring conditions for success. To disrupt systemic racism and other forms of injustice that profoundly impact students' current and future quality of life, the board commits to advancing educational equity by applying a systemic change framework to school governance and resource allocation.

The board, district administrators, certified and classified staff will work together to aggressively and efficiently eliminate inequitable practices, systems, and structures that create advantages for some students and families while disadvantaging others. School and district staff at all levels are encouraged to raise issues of inequity and offer solutions to remedy them. Lawrence Public Schools employee behaviors shall contribute to a school district 1) where students' educational outcomes cannot be predicted by race, socioeconomic status, and/or other historically marginalized identities; and 2) where all students and staff are engaged in a positive and academically rigorous environment where educational equity is woven into every single department or division.

Lawrence Public Schools Equity Policy CBA, C - General School Administration

***Kennedy Early Childhood Center follows all policies of Lawrence Public Schools:***

[Lawrence Public Schools District Elementary and Early Childhood Handbook](#) needs an update - i changed it to 2023-2024. Newest version is not yet available.

**WE ARE LOOKING  
FORWARD TO A  
GREAT  
YEAR WITH YOU!**

