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Loudoun County School Board, Specialized Programs and Centers Meeting, Tuesday, August 15, 2023

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[00:00:32] All right. Good evening. Today is Tuesday, August 15th, 2023. This is Brenda Sheridan. I'm calling to order the Specialized Programs and Centers Committee meeting. I am joined tonight by Mr. Morse, and hopefully Mr. Beatty will join us shortly. We're going to start with public comment.

[00:00:50] We'll offer two minutes. We have one speaker this evening, Andrea Weisskopf, and because you know the drill probably better than I could recite it, you turn your mic on and go ahead. Good evening.

[00:01:07] I know you're looking at charter schools, the two charter schools today, and I have some concerns that even though it's under the LCPS umbrella, the principal, as far as I can tell, is not an LCPS employee and is not taking part in training from pedagogy to trauma-informed practices.

[00:01:33] There are financial issues. i can't find online any information about the free or reduced lunch numbers so i don't know how they reflect the community at whole and those are my questions and concerns black lives matter thank you that is it for public comments we're going to move right to item three approval of the draft minutes for the june 20th 2023 meeting mr morse would you like to make a motion so moved and I will second it any discussion or changes to the minutes

[00:02:09] all right all in favor of the motion to approve the draft minutes please raise your hand and say aye aye that will carry 2-0-1 with Beattie absent for the vote I'll move to item 4 information items 401

guidance for the Middleburg Community Charter School and Hillsborough Charter Academy Charter agreements that is my and before I say that I like to give Mr. Vickers 60 seconds because we have a tell me something good from HCA that just swooped in. So go right ahead.

[00:02:41] We will never dissuade good. So go ahead, Mr. Vickers. And I don't even know if I need the full 60 seconds, but I do want to say something that's really important. And that is that our Dean of curriculum, Megan Tucker, she's also, by the way, she's got several hats that she wears. She's our IFT. She is our gifted instructor. She is our STEAM teacher, and more the latter is what I'm addressing, but she was just named across the entire nation. She is the 2023 A. Scott Crossfield

[00:03:14] Aerospace Educator of the Year, so we have that person right here in Loudoun County, and I do know that Mr. Byard contacted me today, and I think he is going to be doing a story that will be on the website um but I did want to make sure that this was announced thank you very much and please offer her our congratulations on behalf of the whole school board not just the committee is this something that will come to the full board as an item to celebrate yes that's what we're planning wonderful thank you very good the rest of what I was going to say was I need to I'm

[00:03:50] seeking some guidance from the committee because as I've been reviewing the charter agreements for both Middleburg Community Charter School and Hillsborough Charter Academy. There are a number of things in the agreements that maybe we haven't addressed in a number of years, and so I'm compiling some kind of charts to help us with our organization, and I didn't want to surprise you with those tonight.

[00:04:10] I wanted to get your guidance for next month to see if you'd like me to continue with that. There's just a number of things like maybe that we used to do when the charters were first established, like presented an entire school board meeting, their accreditation data, things like that. So I would like to get your guidance on whether we continue their practice and establish a time to do it, whether we amend the agreement, what we do.

[00:04:31] There are several areas on both. Mr. Morse has a comment? No, I think I would like to revisit that. I think it's important for us to revisit all of our policies. So certainly this would be something we'd be interested in doing. And I agree.

[00:04:47] Anything to simplify the process and align the two schools as much as possible without treading into your domain I think would be really great. And certainly as this term ends to make it as easy a process for the incoming school board, I think would be valuable as well. Thank you. Excellent. Thank you. So whenever you're ready, that can go on the agenda.

[00:05:05] Thank you. All good stuff tonight. That's great. Thank you. Item 402, consideration of special programs in high school design, and that's Parkview High School and HS14.

[00:05:23] Mr. Slevin. Thank you, Ms. Sheridan. So Dr. Ellis will be presenting the slide deck tonight. So, this evening we have two separate presentations on special programs. We pulled out the first topic specifically to talk about just because we do want it to get the attention it deserves.

[00:05:40] Then following this presentation, we'll give you an update on special programs in general. So just a reminder, as always, that our special programs are directly tied to the LCPS strategic plan, specifically Action 1.1, providing a rigorous and culturally responsive instruction to ensure deeper learning, and Action 1.2 to develop accessible specialized programming.

[00:06:04] The next slide includes information about programs that we have under consideration, programs currently in the proposal phase, the planning phase, and then what is currently implemented. And this is a nice visual of showing the progress over time in terms of where we've been and where we're going when it comes to special programming.

[00:06:26] One thing we want to talk about tonight is LCPS new construction and the opportunity that affords for us when it comes to special programming in LCPS as you know a lot of attention has been given to new schools over the years in Latin County Public Schools and now that we're focusing on special programming as we're building new schools or redesigning schools it offers us an opportunity to pause and take a moment to say what can we do through this process to think about the unique instructional programming offered to our students at the school that could potentially be accessible from other students across LCPS. In particular we

[00:07:05] want to call out two projects that are happening right now. First is the design and rebuild of Parkview High School slated to open in school year 27 and then the design and construction of high school 14 opening in school year 28.

[00:07:20] These are two great opportunities for us to get input from the community and to work with construction on any necessary design features in the Department of teaching and learning when it comes to instructional opportunities. All that being said we know that we want to have strong two-way relationships with LCPS families by offering inclusive inclusive opportunities for community conversations and expanded opportunities to have community stakeholders in the process when making key decisions like this in LCPS. We know that's a priority for the board and it's a priority for us as well going forward in the Department of Teaching and Learning and the Department of School Leadership and

[00:08:00] support services this may be through engaging directly with students family and community members looking at what the data is telling us as you know in the past we've shared information about a survey that we've sent out many times you could look at what students are requesting at the school level in terms of where the interest is and also cool school course enrollment trends over time looking at their home school also at other opportunities across the division when it comes to interest in special programs and then of course there's a collaboration between division leadership and the local school leadership is the principal in a position that they are interested and think the community is ready for a certain

[00:08:39] type of special programming. We do have a number of programs under consideration that would be in the realm of possibility and some are closer than others. And so, while none of these specific programs, no decision has been made in terms of placement at any particular school right now these are the programs we feel would from the department of teaching and learning perspective would make the most sense moving forward in terms of interest we've gauged from the Loudoun County community and also opportunity in terms of readiness to support

[00:09:15] these programs in in the near future this includes one possibility of a future special program is an information technology academy this could include two possible pathways data center operations or somewhere in the realm of information technology.

[00:09:34] These pathways would empower our students to excel in the evolving landscape of IT where there are many opportunities and many community partners that are willing to work with us and provide work-based learning experience for our students. Another possible program would be to expand IB with the inclusion of the career-related program, or CP for short.

[00:09:55] The IB Career-Related Program is an educational framework designed to combine academic rigor with particular skills and real-world experiences. It's tailored for students who want to pursue a specific career path while also gaining a strong academic foundation.

[00:10:11] The program integrates academic subjects with a career-related study, language development, and reflective projects, fostering skills like communication, critical thinking, and intercultural understanding all very closely aligned to our profile of a graduate through partnerships this would also include partnerships with local organizations and students can gain hands-on experiences preparing them for higher education or the workforce or a combination of both where there are many opportunities for that we also have opportunities to possibly expand access to or relocate existing programs programs from acl specifically mata we've

[00:10:50] We've talked about that in this committee before in terms of thinking about what's happening at the Academies of Loudoun, and we also, of course, recognize the community may have perspective that could impact the instructional program at a school at Parkview, for example, through the rebuild.

[00:11:06] For example, this may include looking at expanding the ability to offer certain course offerings where there's a particular interest or potential to grow at the local school, not necessarily related to a special program.

[00:11:23] As we have announced before, we do have plans to hold multiple community sessions with the Parkview High School community. The design of High School 14, of course, is ongoing, but the Parkview community exists, and we know that they want to be a part of that process. The Department of Teaching and Learning is working with the Department of Support Services and school leadership to determine a date to be shared regarding the first round of information and provide the community an opportunity to give input with the architect of the building.

[00:11:52] We recognize that the instructional program or any kind of specialized program is one piece of the overall conversation at Parkview High School, but we definitely wanted to take advantage of that and participate with the Department of Support Services and have the opportunity to have a specific conversation about what that might look like.

[00:12:11] At the time of the posting of this presentation, we didn't have a date. We still don't have an exact date confirmed, but we're targeting the week of September 4th, some night that week, once we have a final date, work with school leadership at Parkview to communicate the specific date and we really do look forward to collaborating with the Parkview community in terms of the opportunity we have here to do amazing things with that with that campus. So that's the conclusion of the presentation about design and redesign and special programs and so I'll pause here to see if there's any questions or discussion before we move on to an update. I would just like to extend my thank you

[00:12:51] and gratitude for making sure we do include the Parkview community they were very vocal about wanting to be a part of the planning of what goes into that building outside the regular curriculum so thank you for making sure that happens and being a part of it too it isn't just about the structure it's about about the instruction that goes on as well so thank you for collaborating with the with the other department Mr. Morse and I completely agree I think that this is going to be an opportunity we've never had before because you have a existing staff you have a existing core, and the community is very engaged, and there are some unique needs in that community

[00:13:31] that we can address, and I think that this is really going to be an opportunity for us to dive more than just a surface of a new school, but of actually bringing a lot of new ideas into that school, into that community, so I'm looking forward to that. I do have one concern with the proposed IB expansion, and that is, I would like to see the IB expansion, but I'd like to see it expanding to additional schools before we go down a second path. I think that the opportunity to gain some

[00:14:07] insights into that first round of IB schools, the two that we have, is going to be important for us to multiply that and to provide additional opportunities for other schools. So before we get down a second career path or path for instruction, different instruction, I really would like to try to do what we're going to do, do it well, increase the number of students that have that opportunity, and then we could look at other additional opportunities. So Ms. Clark may provide more detailed information than I would, but I'll give it a try. So the CP program, the career

[00:14:44] related program, comes after the diploma program. So in order to pursue that program you first have to go through the process to be authorized for the diploma program and so for example heritage and latin valley are currently going through the authorization process we're optimistic that we're getting close to that following that the career related program is an add-on and so those schools may decide to pursue that as well and so any assumption of adding at a ivy program at either high school 14 at parkview high school would start with the the expansion of opportunity for the diploma program,

[00:15:21] and then we would follow with the career-related program soon after, knowing full well that that's our intention at the end of the day. Would you add anything? I think you did a great job explaining that. So I agree. It's pretty much an add-on.

[00:15:37] So just to be clear, the career component is a sequential course taken junior and senior year in a chosen career-related field of study with the opportunity to earn industry-recognized certification. So there's not necessarily extra training there. It's course CTE sequential elective there.

[00:15:57] They do, students, if you offer the career-related program, they do have to take two of the DP courses as part of the program, junior and senior year. That's why the DP needs to be in place so that you're offering those IB courses. And then there's a personal and professional skills course, the language development, and then, as Mr. Slovin already said, the reflective project.

[00:16:18] So that kind of sums up. But it is an add-on that we can look into if we want to pursue that for current schools. Or we could, I believe, do it at the same time. If we're going for DP candidacy, you can also do the CP at the same time.

[00:16:34] So that's an opportunity we can look into. Thank you. That's helpful. The other topic is the movement of programs into or out of the Academy's campus. There are specific designs that we went through to bring in the CTE element into the Academies of Loudoun.

[00:16:56] And I would be a little concerned if we start to pull those out of those design spaces. I mean, we have an automotive facility that is state-of-the-art, and we have other facilities. There is a reason why we built that school the way we did, and I would hate to see us pull that out.

[00:17:15] What I would like to see in the future, somewhere down the road, is the opportunity to take some of the CTE back into our community schools, back into the high schools. So I think that opportunity is still very exciting to a lot of our students and families.

[00:17:31] Whether or not they can, they apply to the academies of Loudoun or not, or the CTE programs, we could still try to bring those, some of that coursework back to the local schools. - I would share that our thinking is aligned there, And we're also, we're not doing any of this in isolation, but we're definitely having conversations with the school leadership at the Academies Loudoun, with Dr. Priddy, with the high school office, in terms of if we were to move something, what makes sense in terms of programming.

[00:18:01] It's much harder to move a auto mechanic lab, as opposed to maybe an administrative justice class. And these are some things that we've talked about previously. So any movement, we would definitely be considering what would make the most sense.

[00:18:22] - So just to clarify, it's really an expansion of being able to offer it to more students across the county when we put them back into high schools, yes? - It would be a combination of yes, more students having an opportunity, but also that it would afford us the opportunity to take a look at what's going on at the academies allowed in terms of space.

[00:18:39] Is there something new, an expansion of something currently? - Great, thank you. Thank you for forecasting ahead. I think that that's really great. And it certainly answers some of the requests that are coming from our families. That's great. All right. Are you good with that one? All right. We'll move to 403, update on special programs. Who's taking that?

[00:18:59] So at this time, I'd like to turn it over to Ms. Katie Clark, our special program supervisor. Good evening. Thank you for allowing us some time tonight to give you an update on some of our special programs. As Mr. Slevin already stated, our special programs are directly aligned with our strategic plan, specifically 1.1 and 1.2.

[00:19:22] This is our status chart that you've already seen this evening, but for this presentation we're going to specifically focus on our programs that are currently in the planning phase. We will start this evening by providing you an update on the LCPS pre-IB program.

[00:19:46] We are excited to announce that the application for authorization is complete for both Loudoun Valley and Heritage High Schools, and our verification visits have been scheduled. Loudoun Valley will be in late September and Heritage in early October.

[00:20:02] The purpose of the verification visit is to confirm that the school has taken all necessary steps to meet the authorization requirements and is prepared to offer the relevant IB program with fidelity and will be able to sustain and improve program implementation once authorized.

[00:20:20] During this authorization visit, the visiting team will gather evidence to confirm that the school has met all of the necessary requirements for authorization. The verification visit is truly about celebrating our journey and celebrating the efforts of our educators and administrators at both Loudoun Valley and Heritage.

[00:20:42] Once the verification visit has been completed, the visiting team will provide its feedback to IB and the school will enter the next phase, which is the decision on authorization. I will give a quick update on enrollment. All of our out-of-zone students who have expressed interest have been offered a seat in the program at both Loudoun Valley and Heritage High School.

[00:21:05] And we've been in constant communication with transportation to ensure that those students are ready to go next Thursday and all have that transportation provided from those hub bus stops. And

then lastly, the IB curriculum development encompasses a rigorous process of designing educational programs that emphasize international mindedness and inquiry-based learning, catering to students' academic and personal development.

[00:21:33] The content offices are currently working with the trained staff from both Heritage and Loudoun Valley regarding curriculum development, including looking at possible textbooks for these courses. I also just want to add that our content supervisors or someone from the content office has also gone through training so that our teachers can feel supported through this process.

[00:21:56] That concludes our update about the LCPS pre-IB program. And now I'll turn it over to Suzette for an update on the dual language immersion program. Good evening. DLI program is ready to go.

[00:22:11] We had our DLI Instructional Institute earlier this month with our teachers and our aides and our principals. Over a three-day period, they studied the DLI program and put forth all the guidelines necessary to kick off the best program we can have.

[00:22:30] The DLI Parent Institute is scheduled at each of the schools, and we have three days in which we will be meeting with the community of parents to kind of give them a background on what to expect in a DLI program. And as far as our content, we have all of our resources in place.

[00:22:51] We have Discovery Ed in Spanish, Dreambox comes in Spanish, Imagine Learning comes in Spanish. So all of those resources will be available to our schools, and our teachers visited the Think Big Space at Simpson earlier this week in order to prepare for the computer science component in Spanish for the DLI program.

[00:23:15] The enrollment is an ongoing process as families continue to choose to go back to their homeschools, but we continue to fill those seats with the wait-listed families. The curriculum is in place. We have a kindergarten interdisciplinary curriculum that includes math science and computer science in Spanish, along with Spanish language arts, and English language arts and social science will be taught in English.

[00:23:40] And starting next month, we will begin working on planning the first grade curriculum. This concludes the update on the Dual Language Immersion Program, and now I'll turn it over to Renee Dawson for an update on the Health and Medical Sciences Academy. Good evening. We will be providing updates this evening regarding the LEF follow-up newsletter to the Health and Medical Sciences Industry Roundtable event, the hiring of the Health and Medical Sciences resource teacher, the status of our Health and Medical Sciences coordinator hiring, and an update on our school site selections for our Health and Medical Sciences academies.

[00:24:20] First, we'd like to share the Specialized Programs and Centers Committee with the committee how our LCPS HAMSci team, along with the Loudon Education Foundation, have remained committed to engaging the health and medical sciences industry partners that have supported our work for HAMSci.

[00:24:38] In June, LEF shared a newsletter with updates regarding the school board approval to continue planning of HAMSci, the LCPS HAMSci team's continuous engagement with health and medical sciences industry partners, including Athari Biomedical, the wonderful news of our first hire of our health and medical sciences resource teacher, and we'll be sharing information about Dr.

[00:24:57] O'Connor on the next slide, A showcase on the tremendous partnership between Claude Moore Charitable Foundation and LCPS.

[00:25:13] And lastly, a spotlight on Bloom, our middle school event supported by one of our great partners, Inova Health Services. The newsletter further provided a roadmap of the work we are doing to successfully support our Health and Medical Sciences Academy, also known as HAMSci.

[00:25:31] Next slide, Pete, please. And now I have the privilege of introducing Dr. Jane O'Connor. Dr. O'Connor completed her undergraduate, postgraduate, and medical school education at the Johns Hopkins University, Rowan University, and the American International Medical University, respectively.

[00:25:58] Following graduation from medical school, Dr. O'Connor went on to pursue surgery, training in plastic and reconstructive surgery at Providence Hospital, then orthopedic surgery at Howard University Hospital. While she was at Providence Hospital, she founded a formal research fellowship program for plastic surgery focusing on surgical wound healing and management.

[00:26:24] I know, it's impressive, and I'm not finished. At Howard University Hospital, she developed another formal research fellowship and served as the academic research coordinator for the Department of Orthopedic Surgery in conjunction with Howard University College of Medicine.

[00:26:42] Dr. O'Connor, as I shared, is here with us now tonight, and I will now turn it over to Mr. Slevin to share about our school selection process. Thank you, Ms. Dawson. Tell you a little excited about this? Just a little bit. She's jumping out of her chair.

[00:26:59] She's very excited. So prior to sharing the decision related to the placement of the program, we wanted to talk a little bit about the process that we went through for the placement of HAMSci. So here's the process that was used in making the school decisions for two health and medical science academies in LCPS.

[00:27:20] First, the LCPS interest survey related to special programs gave us data to gauge the community inclination towards the academy. A principal information section was conducted and all principals were invited. Information was shared, providing insights into the initiative details and what the school would be signing up for.

[00:27:39] The school interest form enabled principals to express their commitment subsequently a dedicated committee gathered to analyze the collected information employing a decision made decision matrix to evaluate various aspects this systematic approach ensured a well-informed and collaborative choice for these academies the school decision was guided by a thorough assessment of four key criteria these included alignment with the community survey ensuring the academy's residents with the needs and preferences of the local population. School leadership interests played a pivotal role ensuring commitment

[00:28:17] and support from those at the helm. Building capacity was considered to guarantee the academy's feasibility within within the existing resources and lastly transportation and location were way to ensure accessibility and convenience for all students. We are excited to announce that our two sites for the health and medical science academies will be at Briarwoods High School and Tuscarora high school tonight we are joined by the principal of briarwoods sheila azate thank you for being here and i have had conversations with her and i know that her and her team are so excited to be

[00:28:51] partnering with us on this work and we look forward to supporting her and her leadership team that concludes our update and we're open to discussion and any questions you may have what a great update thank you all so much all good news and first i'll start with our two new programs that are ready to go and all the work that has gone into doing all of them in some many years. Many years. Just really want to thank you for getting it off the ground and the implementation and everything that goes into it that we're not even aware of on a daily basis and how hard you've all worked to get

[00:29:28] those programs off to a start for the students this year. I also want to welcome Dr. O'Connor. Great to see you join LCPS with great credentials. Happy to have you here. I'm not sure anybody's more excited than Ms. Dawson, but we'll try. We'll try to live up to that. And congratulations to Tuscarora and Briarwoods. Super happy to see those programs put in our schools and serve the students in those communities. And Mr. Morris, did you want to say anything? I'm taking up all the glory here. Thank you. Yes, I'm very excited as well. I think that new opportunities, a new day in Loudoun with some new opportunities, which is great.

[00:30:07] You mentioned some of the students coming out of the program and filling with the backfill. Can you talk a little bit about that? How many students are not coming to the program that had originally signed up, and do you know why? So, Katie, Ms. Clark, or Ms. Weiss may add more in, but I think it just comes down to decision time, the recognition that they would be moving their homeschool, And now is the time where they're going to be sending their student on the bus or not on the bus or dropping them off.

[00:30:41] And so I think part of it just came down to this was the last opportunity to make a decision. In terms of numbers, I'm not sure if we have that right in front of us, but we could definitely get that for you. But are you hearing any particular anecdotal information from families? Were you asking about both programs or a specific program or dual language?

[00:31:06] Yeah, the DLI mentioned the rotation of the students. That's what drew my attention. Yeah, absolutely. So, you know, even today we've had some families that have decided, you know, schedules went out on Monday. So they got their information and then they've decided that maybe they can't provide the transportation.

[00:31:25] I think that's the number one thing for our dual language program. And so due to some transportation concerns, they've not been able to commit and some are just deciding. So we are working fast and furious through our wait list to get that program to capacity for the start of school.

[00:31:42] I mean, obviously, it's a week away, so we're trying to work hard to, as a decline comes in, we're ready to offer that next student off the wait list. Okay. Are we also experiencing anything like that with the IB program? Are people, are we, are students backing out of commitments for the IB program?

[00:32:00] Yeah, so same type of thing, transportation. Obviously, we're providing that, but I think some of it is definitely the commitment for, like, for example, they want to maybe participate in after-school activities. And there is no transportation home from that, so that requires a parent to be able to pick up.

[00:32:20] So, yeah, we definitely had some students and families decide not to join that program. That's unfortunate. How many school interest forms were received for the HAMC? How many different schools were interested in hosting that program? My understanding is we had six schools, five schools.

[00:32:44] Do we think that it's a program that eventually we could move into five schools? I mean, and I'm talking down the way. Potentially a future conversation is the ultimate vision for the special

programming in terms of different types of programs, available space, regional placement.

[00:33:08] So if there is a large interest, we could potentially look at doing additional schools, but we also need to be thoughtful about providing other opportunities that students may be interested in pursuing. - Okay. - And so while some schools weren't selected, they may be very viable opportunities for other academies or programs like expansion of IB.

[00:33:31] I do wanna say one thing about IB, if you don't mind, just in terms of what makes IB a little bit different than just a special program with a set number of seats is IB is really about the culture of heritage and Loudoun Valley as a whole. And so while we wanted to open that experience to outside students attending, there are a large number of students that are Loudoun Valley and heritage students that will be benefiting from what we're doing with that IB program.

[00:33:59] And so it's not so much an academy with a cap, it's the school's instructional approach and the training that teachers are getting. And so while, of course, we want to see students going towards these opportunities, it's also about the students that are in the school that are going to be benefiting from the work that is being put into the IB program.

[00:34:18] Okay. Thank you. Thank you all very much. Really appreciate all the great news as we start a new school year. All right. Was there anything else from staff? All right. Mr. Morse, anything else? All right. So you know I don't really like new business, but I do want to answer the question that was brought up during public comment so that we can close that out.

[00:34:40] The person isn't here any longer. But I can think I can answer two of the questions that were raised And I just in the context of the same meeting want to answer the question so anybody listening would hear it So I believe the principal since the beginning of our charter schools has never been an employee of LCPS And that was original to both charter schools and that is correct And that hasn't really been an issue, but if miss layman you want to speak to that that is correct both charter agreements there was an option of being an LCPS employee or a charter school hired by the board of the charter school and both hire their own principal. Right. Thank you for confirming. And then the

[00:35:18] training piece, I think originally they were invited to training, but now is the word required a more appropriate word for the principals that they're required to attend LCPS training or is it still just an invitation? They are invited to every principal's meeting and everything we provide at that meeting. And then they're also invited to all other trainings as well, not required. Can you speak to their attendance, even if it's anecdotal?

[00:35:43] Yes. Mr. Vickers generally attends all principals meetings in elementary forums, and Mr. Robinson does not. Thank you. And I think the last one was on free and reduced attendance.

[00:36:01] I think that's something that if we could just in the next report, if we can just answer those questions when they're brought up by a member of the public, I think it's best to put the information out there if it isn't something that's easy to find. So, thank you very much. Anything, Mr. Morris? Great. Seeing no other business, we are adjourned. Thank you all very much.



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