



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

# Post-School Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

2018

Authorizing legislation: [RCW 28A.155.220](#)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary ..... 3

Introduction ..... 4

    Definitions..... 4

    Process ..... 4

    Overview of Findings ..... 7

Conclusion and Next Steps ..... 11

Acknowledgments ..... 12

References ..... 12

## List of Tables

Table 1: Response Rate Calculation ..... 5

Table 2: NPSO Response Calculator: Representativeness..... 6

Table 3: 2016 Performance Indicators: Target and Actual ..... 12

## Executive Summary

The Education Research and Data Center at the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) reports on outcomes for special education students after they leave high school. This report summarizes the data currently available to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) that aligns with Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.155.220.

Results from 2015–16 show:

- Percentage of respondents enrolled in higher education for at least one full term decreased by 0.3 percentage points from 2014–15.
- Percentage of respondents enrolled in other postsecondary education or training decreased by 0.4 percentage points from 2014–15.
- Percentage of respondents competitively employed increased by 1.9 percentage points from 2014–15.
- Percentage of respondents engaged in some other employment increased by 0.5 percentage points from 2014–15.
- Percentage of respondents not engaged (not in any of the above categories) decreased by 1.7 percentage points from 2014–15.

Some of the data the legislature asks for are not collected by OSPI. These data include:

- How employment affects state and federal benefits for individuals with disabilities.
- Information about the types of places former students are living.
- Indicators of improved economic status and self-sufficiency.
- Information about young people who continue their education or get a job more than one year after leaving school, including:
  - Information on the reasons the desired outcome has not occurred;
  - the number of months the student has not achieved the desired outcome; and
  - the efforts made to ensure the student achieves the desired outcome.

## Introduction

This report analyzes data for secondary students with an individualized education program (IEP) who left high school during the 2015–16 school year. These data were reported by all 253 districts with high schools (251 districts, Washington State School for the Blind and Washington Center for Deafness and Hearing Loss) starting on June 1, 2017.

Completion of the Post-School Survey is a requirement of state and federal statutes, specifically [20 U.S.C. § 1416\(a\)\(3\)\(B\) of IDEA](#), [WAC 392-172A-07015](#), and [WAC 392-172A-07020](#). OSPI must report annually on Washington State’s progress for each performance indicator and must report publicly each district's progress for Indicators 1-14. Post-school outcome data are part of the application for Federal Funds for Special Education as one of four performance indicators. In addition, results of the Post-School Survey inform districts of areas of programmatic improvement to develop strategies and action plans that impact positive post-school outcomes for their students.

## Definitions

**Competitive employment:** A youth who has worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others without disabilities for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

**Higher education:** A youth who has enrolled on a full or part-time basis in a community college (2-year program), or college/university (4 or more year program) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school.

**Some other employment:** A youth who has worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services).

**Other postsecondary education or training:** A youth enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, or vocational technical school, which is less than a 2-year program).

**Engagement:** A youth meeting above criteria for competitive employment, higher education, some other employment, or other postsecondary education or training.

**Respondents:** Youth or their designated family member who respond to the survey.

**Leavers:** Youth who left school by graduating with a regular or modified diploma, aging out, leaving school early (i.e., dropping out), or who were expected to return and did not.

## Process

### Census Procedure

School district staff conducted a census to collect post-school outcome data from all 2015–16 school-year leavers who had received special education services one year after they left high school. School districts used administrative records to generate a list of all 7,566 leavers (who had not re-enrolled in school and were alive at the time of data collection). District staff viewed online training modules and used resources from the Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS) to conduct and record results of the 2015–16 Leavers Post-School Outcomes Phone Survey in the secure, online data collection system. The districts attempted to contact all 7,566 leavers using student exit survey information and student records. Districts recorded at least three attempts to contact each of their leavers and reported any reason for being unable to conduct the survey with each former student or their family member (e.g., parent or grandparent).

### Census Questions

The questions asked in the Post-School Outcomes Phone Survey are in accordance to the [Indicator 14 Data Collection Protocol from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition \(NTACT\)](#) which is funded by the US Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The questions include:

- Did you work within one year of leaving high school?
- Where were you working at that time?
- Did you work at least 90 days within one year of leaving high school?
- How many hours a week did you work on average? If multiple jobs or hours vary, select the closest average
- What was your hourly wage?
- Did you attend any type of school or training within one year of leaving high school?
- School name
- What type of school or training program did you attend?
- Were you enrolled full or part time?
- Were you enrolled for at least one complete term?
- Did you contact an adult service agency such as DVR, DDA, DSS, WorkSource, a mental health provider, Job Corps or other agency?
- If yes, which adult service agency?

### Response Rate

The overall response rate was 80.4 percent ( $n=6,081$ ) (see Table 1). This means that of the 7,566 students who left school last year, 19.6 percent are missing post-school outcome information ( $n = 1,485$ ). Thirty-seven of the 1,485 leavers not included in the response rate had incomplete

surveys and are not considered non-responders. Therefore, the number categorized as non-responders is 1,448 (1,485 less 37). Educators reported a variety of reasons for non-response, including poor or no contact information (31.9 percent), unable to reach after 3 attempts (53.7 percent), declined interview (11.5 percent), and other reasons (2.9 percent).

**Table 1: Response Rate Calculation**

	<b>Number</b>
Number of eligible leavers in the state	7,566
Number of youth contacted	6,247
Number of completed surveys	6,081
Response rate: $(6,081/7,566)*100$	80.4%

**Source:** Center for Change in Transition Services (2017). [Washington state 2015–16 Post-School Outcomes for Students with IEPs]. Unpublished raw data.

**Representativeness**

After the census survey was conducted, the National Post-School Outcomes Center (NPSO) Response Calculator was used to measure the representativeness of the respondent group. Calculations were made on the characteristics of disability type, ethnicity, gender, and exit status in order to determine whether the leavers who responded to the interviews were similar, or different from, the total population of young adults with an IEP who exited school in 2015–16 (see Table 2).

**Table 2: NPSO Response Calculator: Representativeness**

	Overall	SLD	ED	ID	AO	Female	Minority	EL	Drop out
<b>Target Leaver Totals</b>	7,566	3,711	401	433	3,021	2,744	3,174	0	1,500
<b>Response Totals</b>	6,081	2,936	292	360	2,493	2,214	2,465	0	968
<b>Target Leaver Representation</b>		49.0%	5.3%	5.7%	39.9%	36.3%	42.0%	0.0%	19.8%
<b>Respondent Representation</b>		48.3%	4.8%	5.9%	41.0%	36.4%	40.5%	0.0%	15.9%
<b>Difference</b>		-0.8%	-0.5%	0.2%	1.1%	0.1%	-1.4%	0.0%	<b>-3.9%</b>

**Source:** Center for Change in Transition Services (2017). [Washington state 2015–2016 Post-School Outcomes for Students with IEPs]. Unpublished raw data.

Notes on Table 2 from the National Post-School Outcomes Center: Positive difference indicates over-representation, negative difference indicates under-representation. A difference of greater than +/-3 percent is highlighted in red. We encourage users to also read the Westat/NPSO paper [Post-School Outcomes: Response Rates and Non-response Bias](#).

SLD = Specific Learning Disability, ED = Emotionally/Behaviorally Disability; ID = Intellectual Disability; AO = All Other; ELL = English Learners. Data were not disaggregated by EL leavers.

Minority column includes all race/ethnicity categories except White (non-Hispanic).

According to the NPSO Response Calculator, differences between the Respondent Group and the Target Leaver Group of  $\pm 3$  percent are important. Negative differences indicate an under-representativeness of the group and positive differences indicate over-representativeness. In the Response Calculator, red is used to indicate a difference exceeding the  $\pm 3$  percent interval.

As seen in Table 2, Washington state was able to gather data from a representative group meeting the recommendations provided by NPSO for all groups excluding leavers who dropped out of school. Non-graduates (“Dropout”) continue to be slightly under-represented in the current response group (-3.9 percent).

### Selection Bias

The post-school outcome data collection continues to show representativeness in areas of disability, gender, and ethnicity. The under-representativeness of youth in the category of Dropout may be attributed to the fact that this group of youth, in general, is a difficult population to reach. Reaching this student population is a continuing need. Strategies that proved effective will continue to be implemented in future data collections to ensure representation of all groups of leavers. In addition, targeted on-site and online trainings have increased and are being held at the educational service districts (ESDs), concentrated in areas where there is a high dropout rate. Additional questions were included in the most recent

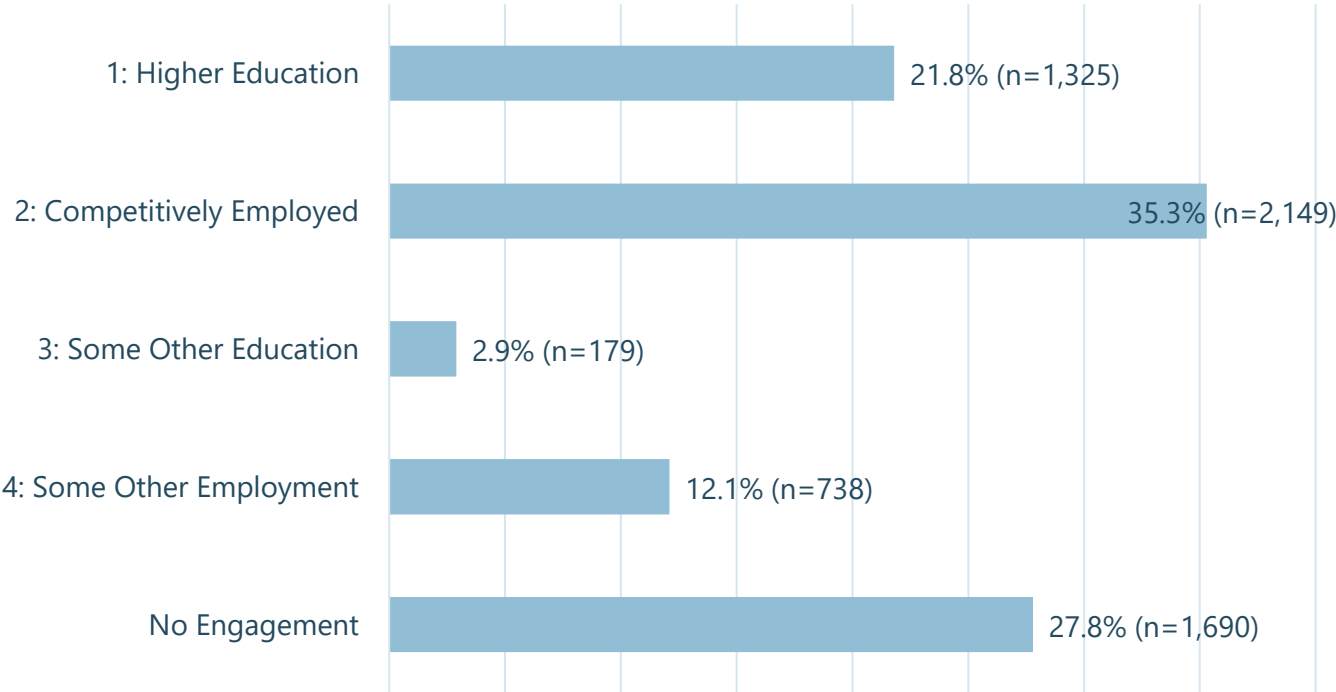
survey of the 2016–17 leavers to gather information from youth who dropped out to better understand their reasons for doing so. This information will further inform training with school district personnel in strategies to increase graduation rates.

**Overview of Findings:**

As seen in Figure 1, Post-School Outcomes, Washington state 2015–16, there were 6,081 total respondents falling into the following categories:

- (1) = 1,325 respondent leavers (21.8 percent) were enrolled in “higher education”.
- (2) = 2,149 respondent leavers (35.3 percent) were engaged in “competitive employment” (and not counted in 1 above).
- (3) = 179 of respondent leavers (2.9 percent) were enrolled in “some other postsecondary education or training” (and not counted in 1 or 2 above).
- (4) = 738 of respondent leavers (12.1 percent) were engaged in “some other employment” (and not counted in 1, 2, or 3 above).
- Not Engaged= 1,690 of respondent leavers (27.8 percent) were not engaged in any of the above four categories.

**Figure 1: Post-School Outcomes for Washington State, 2015–16**



**Source:** Center for Change in Transition Services (2017). [Washington State 2015–16 Post-School Outcomes for Students with IEPs]. Unpublished raw data.



This chart shows the percentages of respondents in each of the five Post-School outcome categories: Higher Education, Competitive Employment, Other Education/Training, Other Employment, and No Engagement.

Data for the three measures under IDEA Indicator 14 (Post-School Outcomes) combine the outcome categories above (and in Figure 1) into 3 indicators: 14A, 14B, and 14C. These are as follows (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)):

A = 21.8 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school

B = 57.1 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.

C = 72.2 percent of respondent leavers were enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education/training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

To better understand the post-school outcomes of Washington's leavers, three additional analyses were conducted: an examination of the outcomes by (a) graduation status, (b) gender, and (c) disability category. Detailed analysis that includes an examination of outcomes by graduation status, gender, and disability category can be found in the [OSPI Annual Performance Report](#).

### **Employment**

There were 4,258 respondents reporting that they were employed within one year of leaving school. Of these 4,258 respondents, 2887 (67.8 percent) worked at least 90 days and met the criteria for competitive employment or other employment.

### **Competitive Employment**

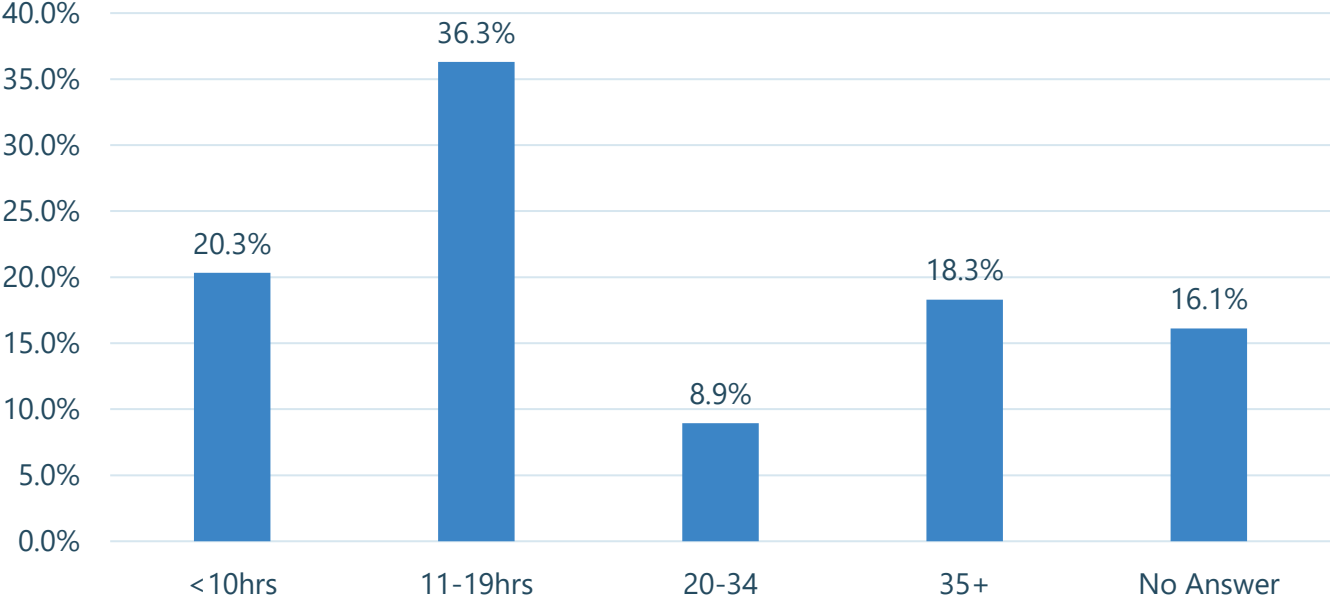
The competitive employment numbers in Figure 1 show the number of students who were (a) not enrolled in higher education, (b) employed for at least 90 days, (c) for at least 20 hours per week, (d) making at least minimum wage, and (e) working in an integrated employment setting. This represents 2,149 (35.3 percent) respondents. The percentage of respondents who were competitively employed increased by 1.9 percentage points from the previous year.

### **Some Other Employment**

There were 738 respondents (12.1 percent) employed for at least 90 days but who did not meet all of the above criteria for competitive employment. Figures 2 and 3 show the percentage of these respondents and their reported average weekly hours and wages. The percentage of

respondents who were engaged in some other employment increased by 0.5 percentage points from the previous year.

**Figure 2: Some Other Employment by Hours per Week**

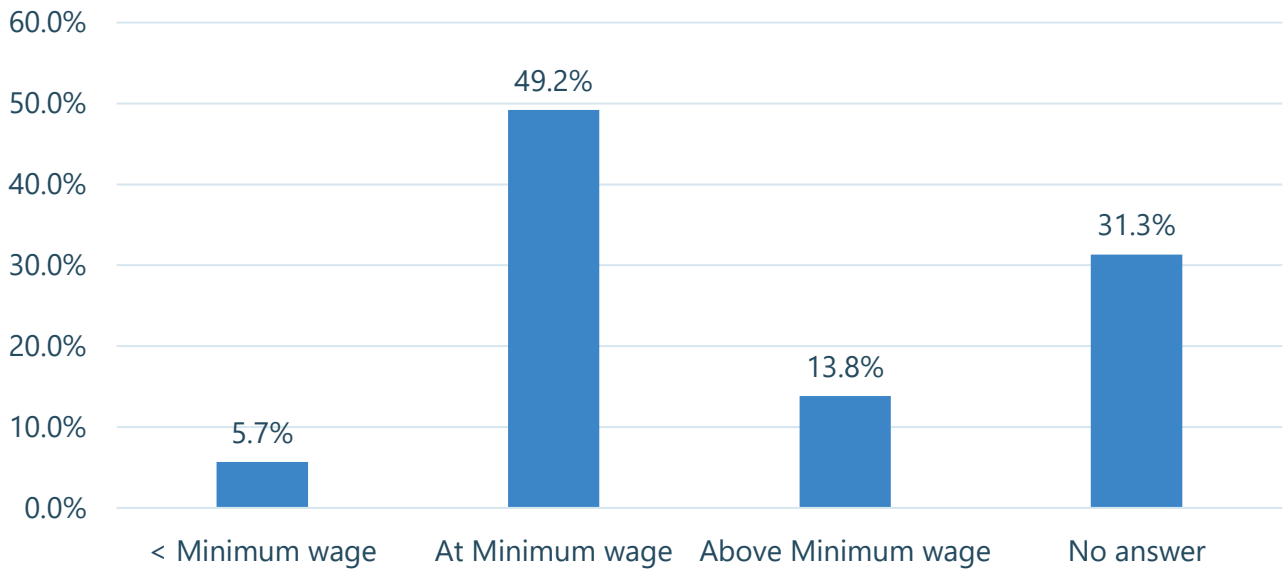


**Figure 2 Data Table: Some Other Employment by Hours per Week**

	N Size	<10 hours	11-19 hours	20-24 hours	35+ hours	No Answer
<b>Some Other Employment</b>	738	20.3% (n=150)	36.3% (n=268)	8.9% (n=66)	18.3% (n=135)	16.1% (n=119)

**Source:** Center for Change in Transition Services (2017). [Washington state 2015-2016 Post-School Outcomes for Students with IEPs]. Unpublished raw data.

**Figure 2: Some Other Employment Wages**



**Figure 2 Data Table: Some Other Employment Wages**

	N Size	< Minimum Wage	At Minimum Wage	Above Minimum Wage	No Answer
<b>Some Other Employment</b>	738	5.7% (n=42)	49.2% (n=363)	13.8% (n=102)	31.3% (n=231)

**Source:** Center for Change in Transition Services (2017). [Washington state 2015-2016 Post-School Outcomes for Students with IEPs]. Unpublished raw data.

**Employment and Post-Secondary Education**

Of the 4,258 respondents who reported being employed, 1,224 respondents (28.7 percent) reported also being enrolled in higher education or other education/training. Of these respondents, 916 (74.8 percent) were working at least 90 days and enrolled in education programs for at least one term.

**Postsecondary Education or Training**

There were 1,902 respondents reporting that they were enrolled in higher education or other post-secondary education/training within one year of leaving school. Of these 1,902 respondents, 1,504 (79.1 percent) were enrolled for at least one term and met the criteria for engagement in Higher Education or Other Education/Training Programs.

## Higher Education

As seen in Figure 1, Post-School Outcomes for 2015–16 Leavers, 1,325 (21.8 percent) of respondents were enrolled in higher education for at least one full term, a decrease of 0.3 percentage points from the previous year. Of the 1,325 respondents enrolled in Higher Education, 19.2 percent were enrolled in a 4-year college, 65.4 percent were enrolled in a 2-year/community college, and 14.7 percent were enrolled in a vocational/ technical college<sup>1</sup>. All of the students completed one term and 71.7 percent were enrolled as full-time students.

## Other Education or Training Programs

There were 179 respondents (2.9 percent) enrolled in some other education and training programs after high school, representing a decrease of 0.4 percentage points from the previous year. These included Job Corps (21.8 percent), certificate programs (17.9 percent), adult/continuing education (16.2 percent), GED programs (12.8 percent), short-term education (7.8 percent), and apprenticeships (2.8 percent)<sup>2</sup>. The majority of students were enrolled full-time (69.8 percent) and all had completed at least one term.

## Not Engaged

There were 1,690 respondents (27.8 percent) who did not meet criteria for engagement in any of the employment or post-secondary education outcome categories. Of these, 545 respondents (32.2 percent) were attempting employment or education. The respondents falling into this “attempted engagement” category were working less than 90 days (82.9 percent) and/or enrolled in post-secondary education/training for less than a term (20.7 percent). The remaining 67.8 percent of respondents who were “not engaged” did not report any employment or post-secondary enrollment since leaving high school. This represents a decrease of non-engagement from 2014–15 of 1.7 percentage points.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

For respondents who left high school in 2015–16, overall engagement (those meeting employment and post-secondary education criteria) increased by 1.7 percentage points as compared with 2014–15 leavers. The majority of this increase was due to an increase in employment, with Competitive Employment increasing by 1.9 percentage points and Other Employment increasing by 0.5 percentage points. Engagement in Higher Education decreased

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<sup>1</sup> .75% responded “College degree program, but don’t know which one”

<sup>2</sup> 20.7% responded “Education or training program, but don’t know which one”

by 0.3 percentage points and engagement in Other Education/Training decreased by 0.4 percentage points.

Overall engagement targets set by the state performance plan stakeholder group were met (see Table 3), with the exception of target 14-A (percent enrolled in higher education). We continue to work towards increasing overall engagement rates, as well as specifically focusing on increasing enrollment in higher education.

**Table 3: 2016 Performance Indicators: Target and Actual**

Indicator	Target	Actual
14-A: Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school	25.90%	21.79%
14-B: Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school	49.55%	57.13%
14-C: Enrolled in higher education or some other postsecondary education training program or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school	67.33%	72.21%

**Source:** Center for Change in Transition Services (2017). [Washington state 2015–16 Post-School Outcomes for Students with IEPs]. Unpublished raw data.

## Acknowledgments

We thank all the school district personnel who make census survey calls yearly to all leavers. Their time and commitment to their students’ post-school success is greatly appreciated.

## References

Center for Change in Transition Services (2017). [Washington state 2015–16 Post-School Outcomes for Students with IEPs]. Unpublished raw data.

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