# What We Know...

- While there have been modest gains in high school student performance during the last 15 years, still everyday 7,000[1] students drop out of high school. [1]*"Partnering for Education Reform." U.S. Department of Education*

- The vast majority of these dropouts are low income students of color, primarily African-American and Latino students.

- Roughly one in 10 high schools is considered a dropout factory by the US Department of Education. 60% or less of the students who enter high school as freshmen graduate.

- Only about half of African-American and Latino students who attend college graduate.

- Over the next 20 years, roughly half of the projected job growth will be concentrated in occupations requiring higher education.

- The result is a growing population who is denied the opportunity of achieving the American dream, and the nation's economic and social well being is put at great risk.

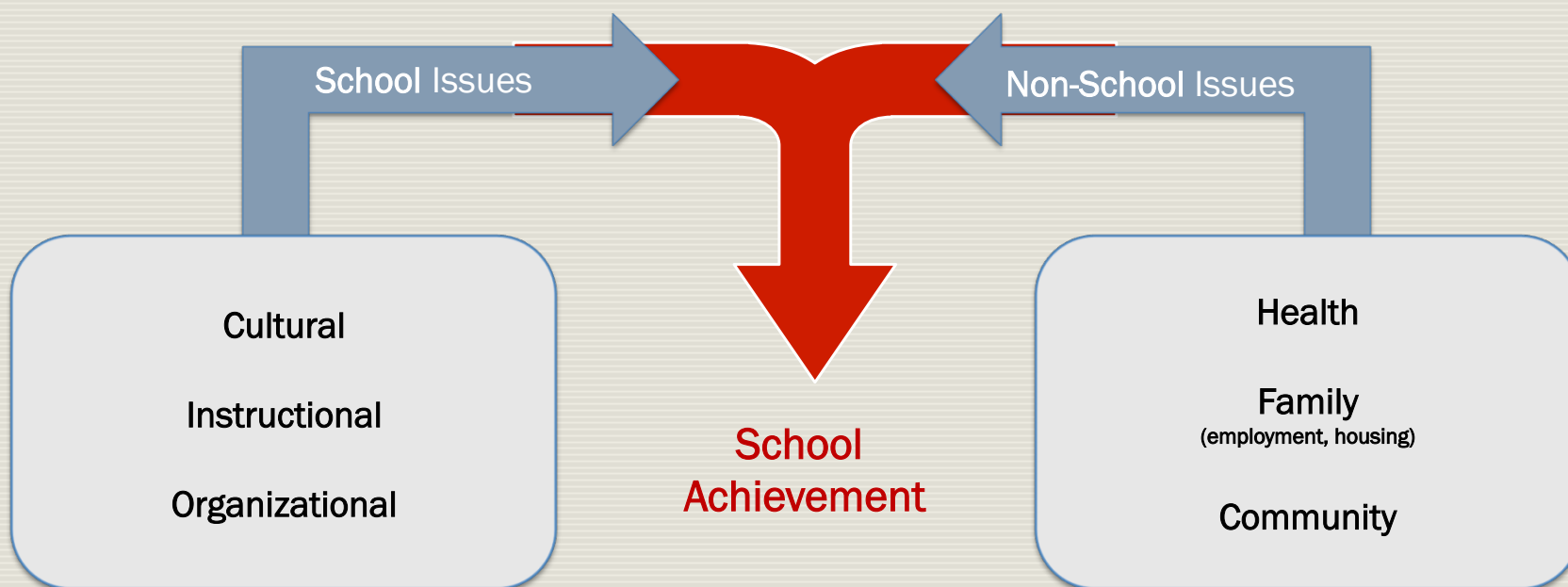*But – High School is NOT Too Late!*

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To help underserved and underperforming students succeed, the School is the major unit of change...
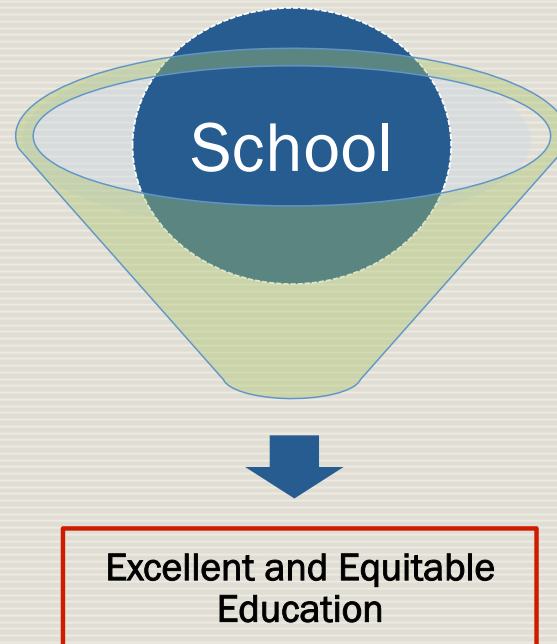
School

Excellent and Equitable Education

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The Issues of Chronically Low Performing Schools are Complex...

Cultural

- Low expectations for students
- Low sense of agency and efficacy
- Mistrust at all levels
- Lack of urgency ("tried this before and it didn't work...")

Instructional

- Dominated by test prep and remediation
- One-shot workshops with little follow-up
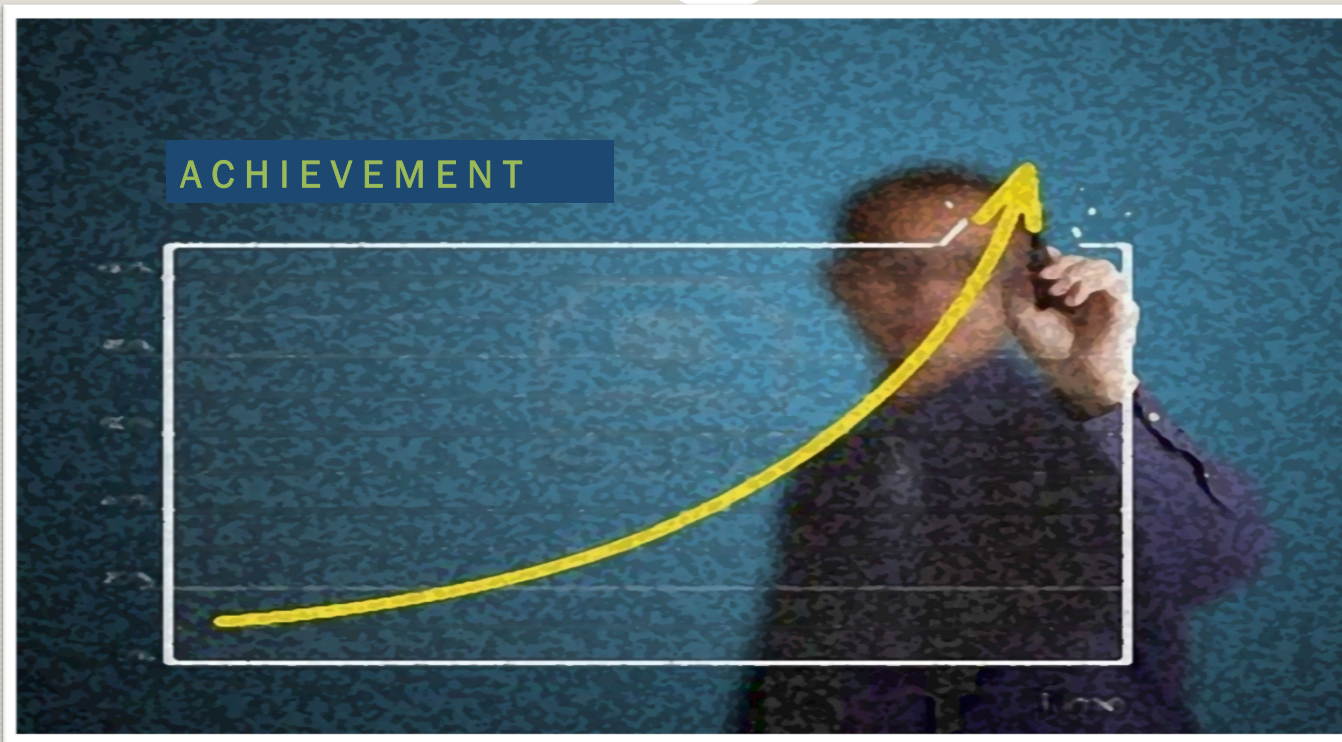- Little focus on students' intellectual growth

Organizational

- Tinkering around the edges
- Single strand and off the shelf solutions
- Top-down policies and practices
- Lack of goal and results oriented culture

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The Goal is to turn low performing schools into high performing schools, NOT merely to make them less low performing...

The ISA Approach

"The Institute for Student Achievement (ISA) partners with schools and districts to transform high schools so that students who are traditionally underserved and underperforming graduate prepared for success in college and careers."

- ISA Mission Statement

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ISA's partner schools serve students who have significant economic and educational challenges...

- Three-quarters of students are eligible for free lunch.

- Two-thirds of students start ninth grade with significant deficits in mathematics and reading.
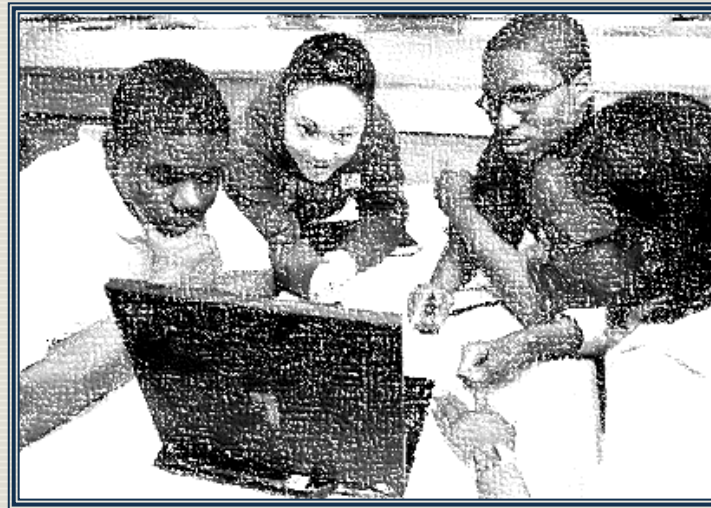
- 36% of students scored proficient in math on 8th grade state tests.

- 31% of students scored proficient in reading on 8th grade state tests.

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http://www.studentachievement.org/results/research/

Theories of Action

The School is the unit of change in order to provide all students access to an excellent and equitable education.

A comprehensive approach is required to address the cultural, instructional and organizational issues.

Actively engaging school staff in problem solving and identification of strategies and solutions helps reclaim their sense of agency and develops ownership of the process and the results.

Customized solutions that respond to the individual needs and local context of each district and school, develop stakeholders' ownership of the process and the resulting changes.

When ISA's seven research-based principles are adopted as the school's framework, and when practices that embody them are implemented synergistically and with fidelity, students graduate prepared for success in college and careers.

Implementing a collaborative and capacity-building approach ensures that:

- transformation strategies map onto the outcomes schools aim to achieve,

- school stakeholders have ownership of the process and resulting changes,

- schools have the capacity to independently sustain the reforms once the partnership has concluded.

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The Research-Based Principles

Results are achieved when the principles are implemented synergistically...

THE ISA APPROACH

COLLEGE PREP TEACHING & LEARNING

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS & PERSONALIZATION

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

COLLEGE PREP TEACHING & LEARNING

College-preparatory instructional program provides all students with a rigorous, inquiry-based curriculum and instruction aligned with the Common Core State Standards and Danielson Framework.

Extended day/extended year provide additional opportunities for student enrichment and remediation.

Continuous professional development ensures a collaborative learning community in which teachers and school leaders participate in individual and team coaching.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS & PERSONALIZATION

Distributed counseling leverages trusting adult/student relationships to increase achievement and provide a safety net of care and support.

Dedicated team of teachers and counselors provide a consistent, four-year support network.

Parent involvement is strongly encouraged, as it has been proven to positively influence student learning and achievement.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Continuous organizational improvement is facilitated by the use of data to monitor program implementation and student performance outcomes.

The ISA Network allows school leaders, teachers and counselors to connect with a larger community of ISA educators to promote sharing and collaboration.

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What Implementation Looks Like: Examples of Practice...

Instructional

- Inquiry/Higher Order Thinking Skills
- Strengthening Basic Skills
- Literacy and Numeracy Across the Curriculum
- Multiple Forms of Assessment
- College Preparatory Teaching & Learning

Personalization

- School as Safety Net of Care and Support
- Every Student with an Adult Advisor/Advocate Who Knows the Student Well
- Case Management System to Ensure Students Have the Interventions They Need
- Redefined Role of School Counselor

Organizational

- Distributed Leadership
- Grade Level Teams
- Content Area Teams
- Extended School Day and School Year
- Use of Data to Monitor Progress and Inform Decision-Making
- Joint Accountability for Outcomes

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The Evidence:
External Evaluations Validate ISA's Positive Impacts...

...more likely than comparison peers to **graduate from high school in four years**.

...**considerably less likely to drop out** from high school.

...more likely to **move to the next grade level** and to **accumulate more credits** after four years.
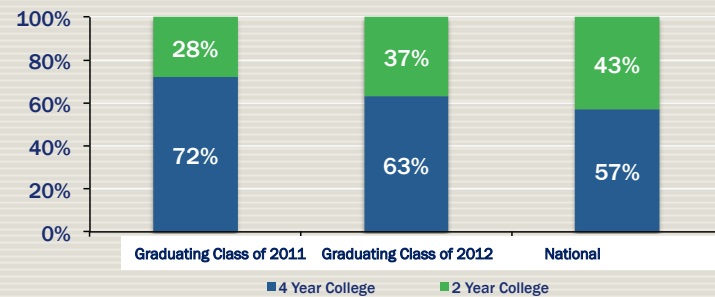
African American male students had **higher student outcomes** in key achievement areas versus a comparison group.

http://www.studentachievement.org/results/research/

The Evidence:
ISA Has **A** Proven Track Record of Sustainable Results...

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College Enrollment

	Graduating Class of 2011	Graduating Class of 2012	National
2 Year College	28%	37%	43%
4 Year College	72%	63%	57%

■ 4 Year College ■ 2 Year College

College Persistence
(fall of first year to fall of second year)

Graduating Class of 2011	Graduating Class 2012	National
89%	88%	77%

College Success

	Graduating Class of 2011	Graduating Class of 2012
No longer enrolled	19%	20%
Graduated or still enrolled	81%	80%

■ Graduated or still enrolled ■ No longer enrolled

Source: IMPAQ, Incorporated

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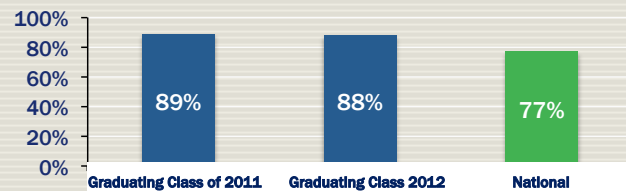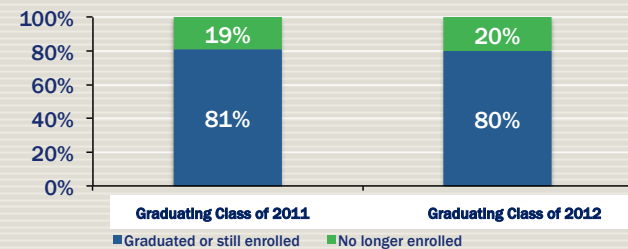
The Evidence:
ISA's Model Meets the *What Works Clearinghouse* Standards...

ISA's Model has been endorsed by the US Department of Education as an evidence-based whole school reform model, which requires that there is at least one study that meets the *What Works Clearinghouse* standards, which, in itself, is a high bar to achieve.

Implementation Path

Schools and district commit to the ISA approach as their strategy for turning around low performing schools.

District assigns a top-level/ cabinet leader--one who has decision-making authority-- as the liaison and advocate for the restructuring schools.

An experienced and expert external coach works with the principal and school team to define the vision and the desired outcomes using ISA's seven principles as the framework.

The school coach continues to work with the principal and the school team to implement the strategies and to use ISA tools and resources.

Experienced and expert content coaches (i.e. math, science, social studies, English, ELL) work closely with teachers individually and in groups to implement practices that support the rigorous instructional program.

Schools use ISA tools and resources to engage in ongoing monitoring and assessing program implementation, student progress and performance outcomes.

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Conditions Necessary For Success

Supportive District Office: *Top-down support for bottom-up change...*
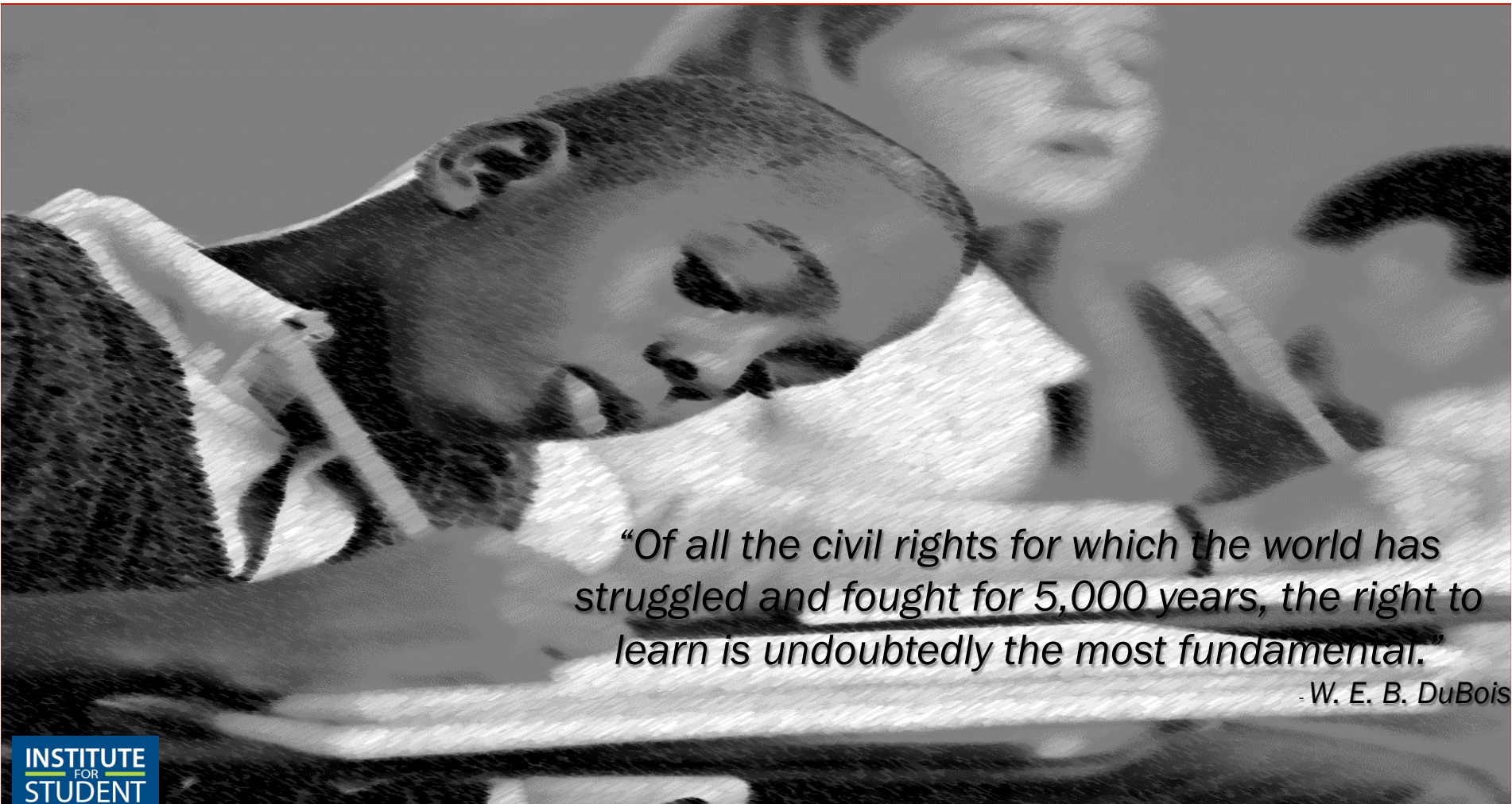
- Schools are given autonomy over key decisions regarding people, time, budget and programs and are held accountable for student outcomes.

- Policies, practices and people at the district office are aligned with strategic direction of schools.

- Adequate resources for high quality professional learning opportunities (coaching, curriculum development, extended day/year for students, etc.)

Human Capital Capacity: *Well-prepared school leaders and teachers...*

- Who are committed to the academic, social and emotional development of their students.

- And who take responsibility and accountability for student success.

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"Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental."
- W. E. B. DuBois

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