



State Tribal Education Compact Schools

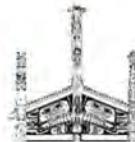
Tlingit & Haida



HB 59



INUPIAT COMMUNITY OF THE ARCTIC SLOPE



Ketchikan
INDIAN COMMUNITY

January 28, 2026

What does Success in Education look like when operated by Tribes



CITC Video:

[Our Future Ancestors: A Story of Education in Alaska](#)

What is Compacting?

- A contractual agreement between 2 or more sovereign governments.
- Through compacting, the State and Tribes choose to participate in the requirements of the compact that honors the interests of both parties.
- Tribes have long-term experience with compacting, this is new to the state for education. Tribes are leading the way as to how to conduct negotiations and be in partnership.



How this Bill came to be

- Federal school policy - Boarding schools & BIA (1878-1983)
- Statewide efforts - AK Rural Systemic Initiative (1995-2000)
- AK Education Challenge (2016) led to SB 34 (2022)
- Successful negotiation process & outcomes (2022-2023)
- STEC Schools Demonstration Legislative Report (2024)



Key Highlights from Negotiations

- Innovation and Collaboration
- Alaska Cultural Standards
- Self-Determination
- Language and Culture
- Teacher recruitment & retention
- Strength-Based Delivery
- Family/Community Engagement
- Holistic Impact & Success



High Level Overview of the Bill

- Establishes process for government-to-government agreements between State of Alaska and Tribes to operate public schools
 - Stand-alone Demonstration Pilot Project
 - Uncodified and limited in scope - test, revise, evaluate
 - Appropriates funds in the same manner as an REAA
 - Must be in effect by June 30, 2028
 - Compact Agreement for Education Services
 - Maintains statewide standards and accountability
 - Creates a limited Tribal Teacher Certification opportunity
 - Outlines provisions for Tribal operations and shared services

Tribally Compacted Public Schools (TCPS)

Local control of public education that centers the tribes and communities.



Why This Matters to Education in Alaska



Tlingit & Haida



Tlingit and Haida's Mission: *Preserve our sovereignty, enhance our economic and cultural resources, and promote self-sufficiency and self-governance for our citizens.*



Rendering of a conceptual design of Tlingit and Haida's Education Campus in Juneau, Alaska.



Panoramic photo of Delegates at the 89th Annual Tribal Assembly



Tribal Education Expertise



Mary Daaljini Cruise
Yanwaasháa - Jilláat Kwáan
B.A. Social Sciences;
M.A.T. Elementary Education



Ethan Qanglaagix | Daayóosh Petticrew
Unangax | Kiks.adi - Gagaan Hít
B.A. Elementary Education;
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Ben K'uyáang Young
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B.A. Secondary Education;
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B.S. General Biology;
M.A.T. Secondary Education;
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Mischa Chookangee Tláá Jackson
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B.A. Psychology; M.Ed Sports &
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B.A. Elementary Education;
Head Start Director



Michael Aak'wataatseen and Gashx Hoyt
Teeyhittaan - Wrangell
M.A.T. Secondary Education;
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Education Programming

Early Education

- Head Start Centers & Classrooms (Southeast)
- Little Eagles and Ravens Nest (Juneau)
- Haa Yoo X'atángi Kúdi (Juneau)
 - Lingít language immersion nest for children between 3-5 years old
 - Recent pilot study reveals that Nest graduates are testing higher than peers

- Wrap-around services and supports through Family Services and Youth Engagement
- Community & Cultural Heritage Education through Generations Southeast & Indigenous Trades program



Community and Family Engagement

- Protect and expand teaching of Tlingit language, culture, and history in schools
- Emphasis on academic, social-emotional supports; cultural identity, knowledge, and tribal values
- Intergenerational learning and engagement needed

Sources:

Southeastern Conference on Native Education (1983)
Juneau Community Conversation (2024)
Tribal Education Department Project (2025)



[T&H Family Engagement Video](#)



Opportunities

Pathways for Student/Family Choice:

- Language immersion
- Service-Based Learning
- Career and Technical Education
- Pre-apprenticeship
- College Preparation
- Dual-credit (PK-14)



Structural Transformation in Education

Dennis Demmert (1983) “when Native education is bad and people get upset about it, all kinds of corrective programs are spread, like nets over the educational grounds. Each program snags Natives, just as we used to snag humpies, puts them on tally sheets, and justifies its existence. Bad education, like good fishing, is good business: everybody's busy and everybody's happy, but it's the poor fish that get caught.”

Eve Tuck (2009) warns that damage-centered research documents pain and brokenness in ways that ultimately reinforce one-dimensional narratives of communities and calls for a reimaging of research that is conducted *by, for, and with* communities.



King Island Native Community & Native Village of Solomon



Our Mission: Revive and restore our Inuit language and culture for the strength of our people.

KINC & VOS Tribal School Goals



Qaġnuzikut Saviġnatitkaattit
Our Language is Our Strength 16



KNIK TRIBE

Carl Chamblee

*Michael Tucker Learning Center, Campus Director
Knik Charter School, Co-Founder*



[Knik Charter School](#)

Our Mission

Our children and youth receive a world-class education through exceptional Alaska Native culture and values-based learning opportunities preparing them for success in their future endeavors.

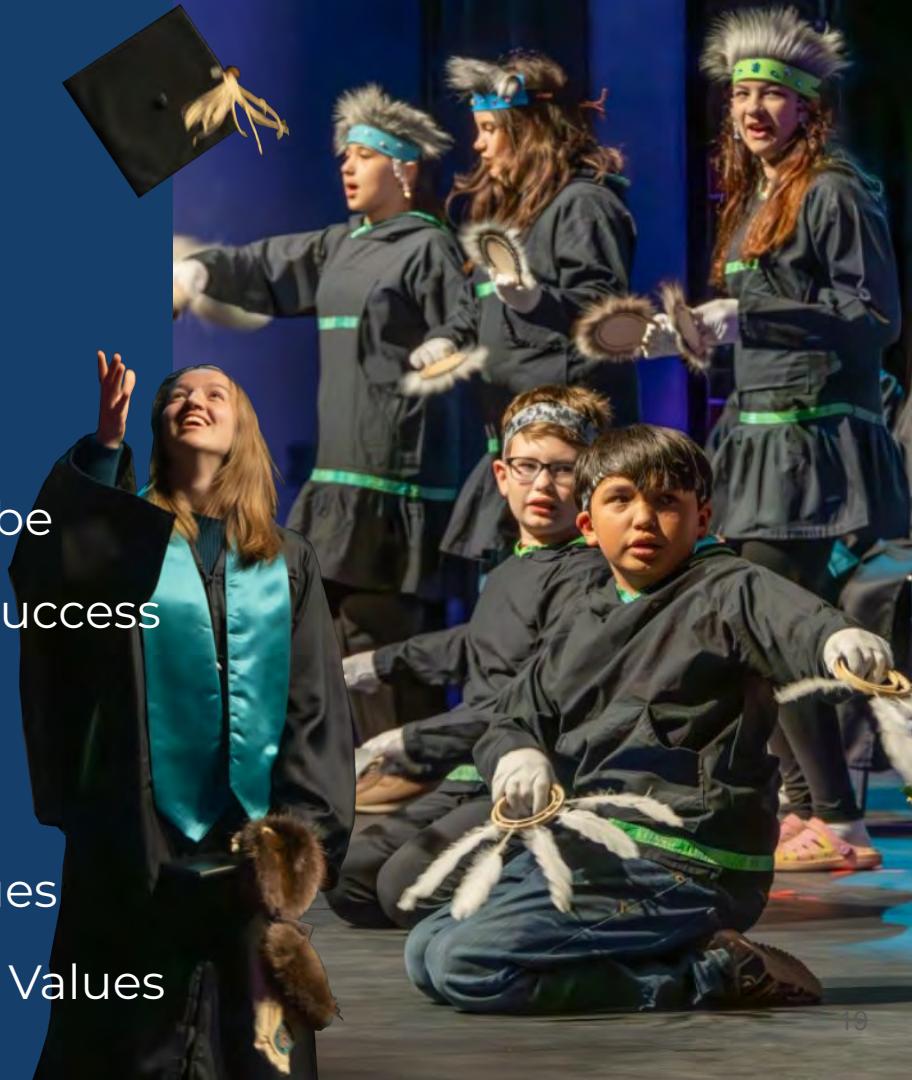
Our Vision:

Our children and youth become lifelong learners and are successful in their chosen path.



School Goals

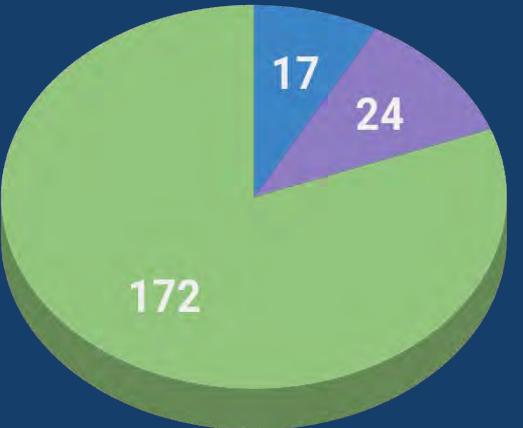
- Honor the First Peoples of the Knik Tribe
- Create a School Culture of Academic Success
- Provide World-Class STEAM Education
- Build Strong Community
- Instill Indigenous Knowledge and Values
- Prepare Youth to Carry On Indigenous Values





Serving **over 200+** Students

- Blended Learning
- Correspondence
- Full-Time

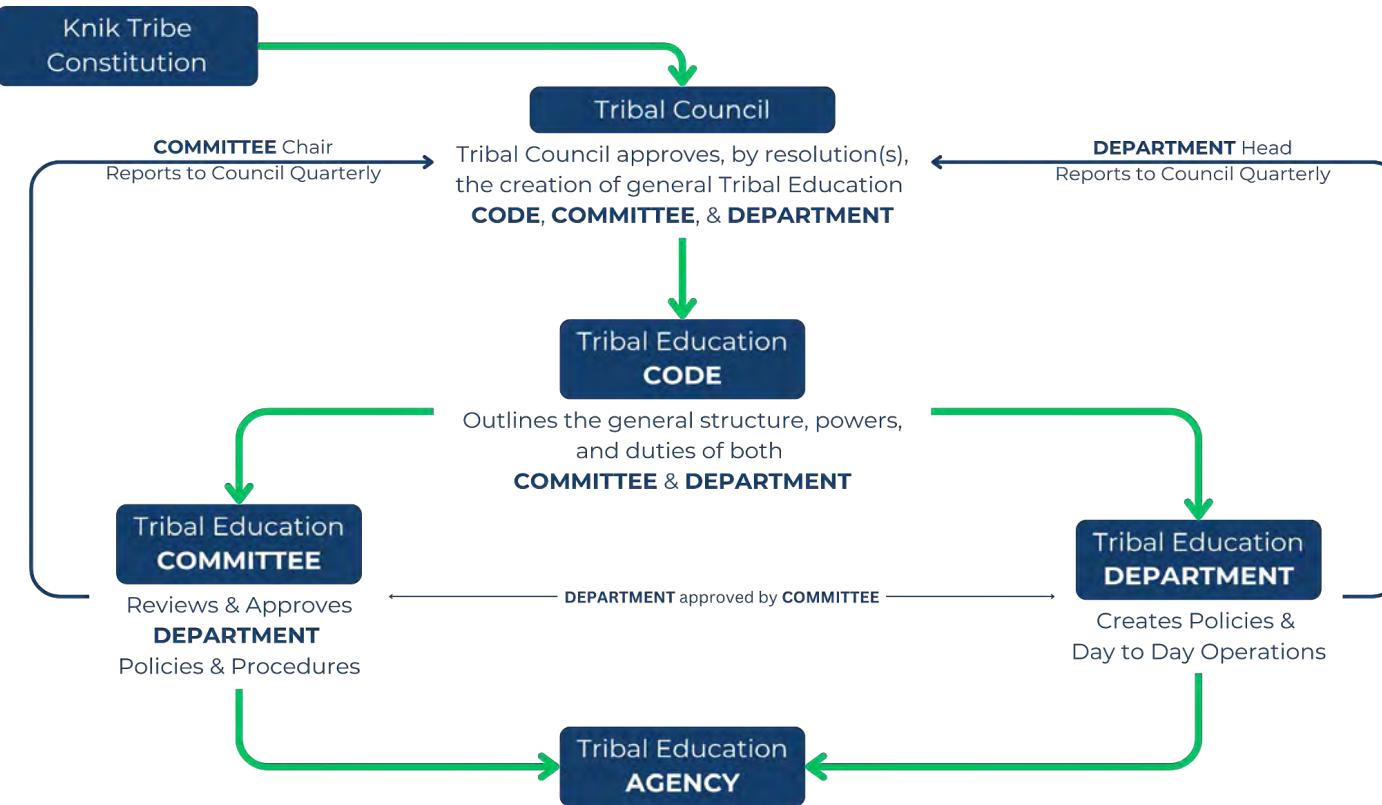


Currently operating in **year 3**
of a 10 year Charter approved by the MSBSD





Our path to Tribal Education Compacting





STEC School Organizational Chart

STEC Application &
Agreement

Academic Policy
Committee

APC Bylaws
Administrative
Policies &
Procedures

Operations

Appointed by the
Tribal Council
and elected by
the parents.

APC bylaws

-Principal
-Budgeting
-Curriculum
-Programs

-School
Administration

-School Staff

Authority to Provide Education Services

(A) The General Council of the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS), after thorough review of tribal history, Inupiat language and culture, the educational needs of tribal members and resident Indians, and trust duties of the United States, find and declare that

1. ICAS is a sovereign Indian tribe, and the United States Government has repeatedly recognized the inherent sovereignty of the Tribe.
2. The United States has a sacred trust relationship with and corresponding responsibilities to the Indian nations and tribes, including the duty to provide for the educational needs of the Inupiat people.
3. In recent years the United States Congress has reaffirmed and recognized its trust duties in the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act of 1975, the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988, and related federal statutes; and
4. To realize the full potential of its sovereign authority and the benefits of the trust relationship with the United States, to preserve tribal languages and cultures, and to provide its people with a full and fair opportunity to develop their ideas, skills and personal potential, the ICAS hereby implement its own tribal standards of education which equal or exceed state or federal standards and at the same time serve to promote the traditional values of the Inupiat.



Qargi

ACADEMY

TRIBAL SCHOOL

www.QargiAcademy.org

Our Story



Starting a Tribally Controlled school

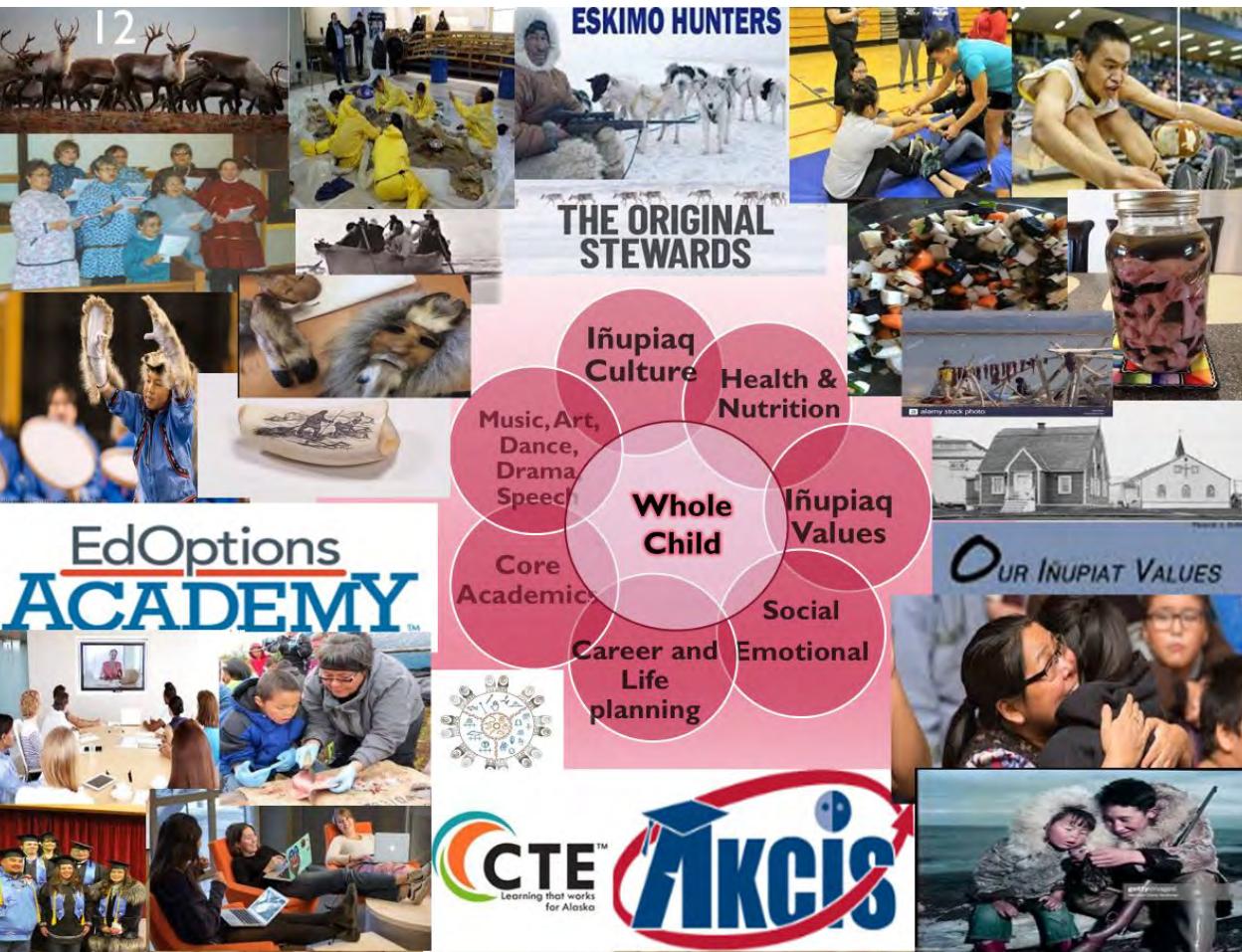
- How we began
- The Process
- What Makes Qargi Academy so Different
 - Conventional School Model
 - Qargi Academy Tribal School model

Qargi Parent Testimonial



Stella









Ketchikan Indian Community



Ketchikan Indian Community

Tribal Scholars Reading	Test Date	Grade	Scale Score	Grade Equivalent	Percentile	Latest Test Date	Scale Score	Grade Equivalent	Percentile
Student A	10/27/2023	12	1043	5.9	7	4/1/2025	1199	>12.9	91
Student B	10/27/2024	10	1121	11.9	41	3/20/2025	1120	11.8	57
Student C	10/12/2024	11	1212	>12.9	95	3/20/2025	1200	>12.9	91
Student D	11/6/2024	9	926	3.1	3	3/20/2025	1205	>12.9	96
Student E	9/5/2024	11	1084	8.2	36	1/13/2025	1034	5.5	16
Student F	9/5/2024	9	1076	7.6	42	4/1/2025	1127	12.5	67
Student G	3/22/2024	11	1103	10.1	24	3/20/2025	1131	12.9	60
Student H	1/18/2024	10	1093	9.1	24	3/26/2025	1072	7.2	31
Student I	10/27/2023	11	1013	1/4/1900	4	1/13/2025	1027	5.3	14
Student J	27-Nov	10	1112	11	35	3/20/2025	1091	9	41
Student K	11/13/2024	10	1087	8.7	47	4/1/2025	1125	12.3	66
Student L	9/5/2024	10	969	3.9	7	3/20/2025	1000	4.6	12
Student M	10/27/23	11	1144	>12.9	48	4/1/2025	1154	>12.9	74

Urgent Intervention

Intervention

On Watch

At/Above Benchmark





The Goals for the Tribal Scholars Program

- Engage students through personalized learning
- Increase testing competencies
- Create a learning atmosphere where **relationships, respect, and accountability** are paramount
- Correlate education to students' lives and future aspirations





What Works for Tribal Scholars Students

One of the primary goals of the TSP is to prepare students for success in both traditional and contemporary cultures. Historically, the “curricula, teaching methodologies, and assessment strategies associated with mainstream schooling are based on a worldview that does not adequately recognize [indigenous knowledge]” (Kawagley, Norris-Tull & Norris-Tull, 1998). Our program adapts the KGBSD provided curriculum with additional culturally-based adaptations that parallel traditional Native learning styles, such as the many hands-on STEAM projects and cultural field trips. By offering various courses, such as Formline Art, Language Skills, and Money Matters, conducting various extended field trips/marine expeditions to remote Native historical sites in Southeast Alaska, and attending the annual statewide Elders & Youth Conference, students have access to many meaningful cultural interactions. Therefore, instead of a philosophy, the program has more of an identity based on what is being completed rather than thought about.

Rigor: Education and schools must build a culture of high expectations with identified career and postsecondary pathways to success (Bangser, 2008). **Students are monitored for academic and social/emotional progress**, and have had opportunities to complete licensing and certifications, we work with partners and students to create internships, as well as other summer employment opportunities. However, the true rigor of the Tribal Scholars program is found with the staff. Advanced training supplied to the teachers, paras, and admin staff give them the tools to provide the specified assistance program participants need. Taking that training further by providing a path towards teaching certification creates an even stronger bond between staff. Advanced training allows for staff to adopt a mantra of owning failure; we don’t want staff to say “I’ve told that student 100 times and they just don’t listen.” Instead, staff will accept that the students needs an additional level of support, and it is up to that staff member to keep working in order to find the best methods. **Taking that kind of ownership creates staff engagement that goes beyond education; once students see and feel that success from their adult role models, they themselves will push the academic standards so that the ones set by staff will not be good enough.**

Pilot: Transformation in Action

Premise: Public schools that are open to all students and funded through public dollars.

Mechanism: Government-to-Government agreement (State-Tribe) to establish Tribally Compacted Public Schools for the purposes of Tribal self-governance and a funding mechanism that integrates with the Department of Education and Early Development with the Tribe functioning as a school district.

Operation: Teachers that are certified through a Tribal training process that the Department of Education and Early Development verifies and issues state licenses for Tribally Compacted Public School Teachers.

Accountability: Background checks, audits, and assessments are required. Under the State Board of Education for the purposes of state-wide regulation and maintaining one system of education in Alaska.

Evaluation: Tribes provide annual progress reports, and DEED provides a summary alongside the Tribal progress report to the legislature.

Findings: Governance

Policy Summary:

Tribal Compacted Public Schools (TCPS) would be established through the creation of a **Tribal Compacted Public School District (TCPS district)**. This would allow Tribes a level of local control and self-determination needed to operate TCPS while interfacing within the parameters of Alaska Statute Title 14.

Findings: Funding

Policy Summary:

To start the initial pilot Tribal Compacted Public School (TCPS), the Tribes need to have start-up funds. The TCPS would be **funded per the foundation formula** under AS 14.17.410, using the same student count period, formula multipliers, and considerations as other school districts that do not have a local contribution.

Finding: Teachers and School Personnel

Policy Summary:

Tribes may not employ teachers in a Tribal Compacted Public School (TCPS) unless the teacher holds a valid Tribal Compact (TC) teacher certificate. TCPS Tribes are responsible for establishing their own system of training, certifying, and evaluating the staff employed in a TCPS. Tribes are responsible for putting their **TC teacher certification credentialing process on file with DEED**. DEED will issue licenses to a teacher who demonstrates that they have completed a TC teacher certification program, met the background check requirements under **AS 14.20.020(f)**, and paid the department the required fee. TCPS staff licensed by DEED shall be under the Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC). For these reasons, DEED is requesting updates to PTPC to incorporate TCPS. TCPS staff are not state employees but are subject to the hiring and employment process established by the TCPS district. Certificated TCPS professionals are eligible to join the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) retirement systems.

Tribal Partner Contact Information:

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