



College Planning for Students with IEPs and 504 Plans

Autism Society of Greater Akron



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TONIGHT'S AGENDA



- Campus Support for Students with Disabilities
- How to research colleges for students with LDs/NDs
- Considerations with respect to disclosing a disability
- Q&A
- Have your phone available for free downloads
- Slides will be sent if you request them: **michelle@thecollegespy.com**



How Colleges Support Students with Disabilities



**College is a
time when
expectations
increase
while
supports
decrease. →**

COLLEGE VS HIGH SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL

- Attendance is mandatory and monitored
- If a class is missed, teachers will provide information on the missed content
- Teachers will intervene if a student is struggling
- Reminders of due dates
- Extra credit
- Make up tests
- Information presented clarifies the textbook

COLLEGE

- Attendance policy is listed in the syllabus
- If a class is missed, the student is responsible to initiate assistance
- Struggling students must initiate and advocate if they need assistance
- Due dates are listed in the syllabus
- Extra credit is unusual
- Make up tests are not typical
- Information presented often supplements the textbook



ACCOMMODATIONS

Section 504

“Section 504 is a federal law originally passed in 1973 which forbids organizations from excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to have **access to and participate in** programming which is supported by federal funding.”



COMMON ACCOMMODATIONS

Extended time on exams

Testing in alternate location

Note taker

Scribe

Access to calculator

Access to laptop

Audiobooks

Accessible housing

Breaks during exams

Allowed to record classes

Preferential seating

Priority registration

ASL interpreters

Tests/directions read aloud

Reduced courseload

Course waivers

Speech to text

Text to speech



WHICH ACCOMMODATIONS?

- Students should request the accommodations they use at school and any others they feel might help.
- *Remember that some accommodations might be offered to your child informally.
- Anticipate what your child might need considering responsibilities and expectations are increasing while support is decreasing.



HOW TO GET ACCOMMODATIONS

Register with the Office of Disability/Accessibility
Provide Documentation of disability
Do NOT need a 504 or IEP.

ASK AT EACH COLLEGE:

What documentation do you accept for accommodation requests?
How recent must the documentation be?
When do first-year students apply for accommodations?
Do I need to reapply for accommodations each semester or year?
What happens once the accommodations are approved?



2

FEE-BASED SERVICES

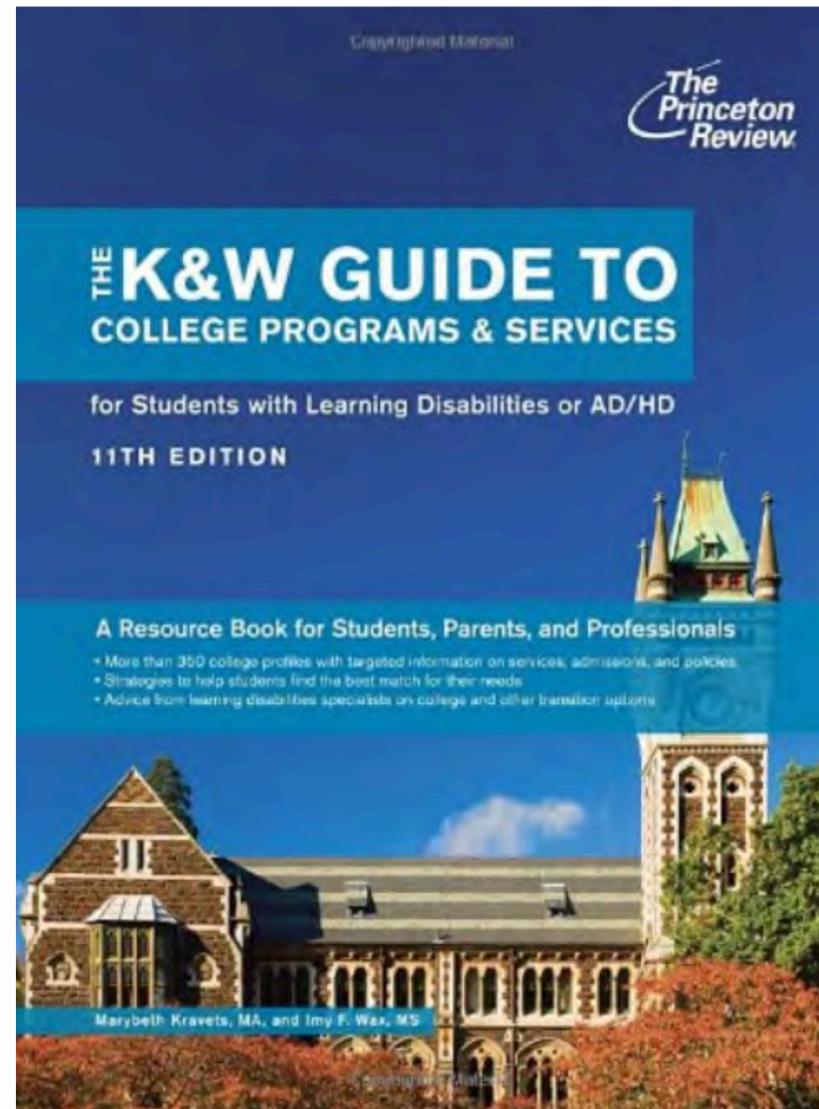
May include:

Academic coaching/mentoring, EF coaching, tutoring, social skills support, peer mentor, study skills courses, course selection advising, support with time management, organization, communicating with professors, self advocacy training, assistance with dorm life, peer engagement, counseling, group therapy, special housing options, workshops, social events, case managers.

- **Need to apply separately from admissions to the college**
- **Can be competitive**
- **Need to meet their criteria so their program is successful.**

2

FEE BASED SERVICES





3

HELP FOR EVERYONE

- Academic Coaching/Mentoring
- Tutoring
- Math Center
- Science Center
- Writing Center
- Counseling Center

4

LANDMARK COLLEGE



These two colleges are specifically for students with LDs, ADHD and ASD

BEACON COLLEGE





5

HIRE OUTSIDE SUPPORT

- CIP (College Internship Program)
- CLE (College Living Experience)
- Mansfield Hall
- Executive Function Coach **(We have one!)**
- Tutor



College Research

ANY COLLEGE CAN BE A GOOD FIT FOR A NEURODIVERGENT STUDENT

The right colleges will meet a student's needs and preferences academically, socially, financially, personally and professionally.

Download The College Spy's
College Research Guide for
free with discount code:
AKRON



THE CHALLENGES

- 🔍 The needs of a student with learning challenges are often unique and complex.
- 🔍 It can be difficult to find colleges that check all the boxes. You may need to compromise on some of your criteria.
- 🔍 Start researching early but keep in mind your child will change, gain new skills and mature.

WHO TO ASK FOR INFORMATION

Office of Disability/Accessibility



**RESPONSIBLE FOR
ACCOMMODATIONS**

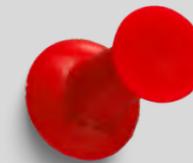
MAY BE RESPONSIBLE
FOR COORDINATING
OTHER SUPPORTS ON
CAMPUS



DOES NOT
COMMUNICATE
WITH
ADMISSIONS



RECRUITMENT
IS NOT PART OF
OF THEIR JOB



HAPPY TO
SPEAK TO
PROSPECTIVE
STUDENTS

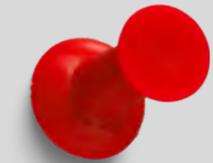
Call and ask questions. Schedule a visit when you are touring campus.

WHAT TO ASK ACCOMMODATIONS

Are the accommodations your child uses in high school **offered at the college?**

*Remember that some accommodations might be offered to your child informally.

COMMON ACCOMMODATIONS



- Extended time on exams
- Testing in alternate location
- Note taker
- Scribe
- Access to calculator
- Access to laptop
- Audiobooks
- Accessible housing
- Breaks during exams
- Allowed to record classes
- Preferential seating
- Priority registration

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DISABILITY OFFICE

BY THE COLLEGE SPY

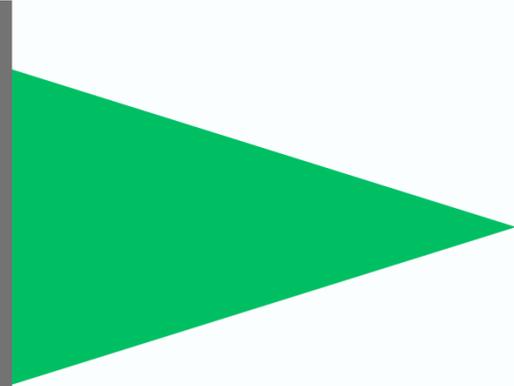
If you will be seeking accommodations or support services for a disability in college, it pays to research what is available at each college on your list before you apply. Here are key questions to ask disability staff if you are considering attending their college.

1. What documentation do you accept for accommodation requests?
2. How recent must the documentation be?
3. What is the process for communicating accommodations (e.g., extended time on exams) to professors?
4. What happens if a professor won't grant an accommodation?
5. How many staff members do you have? What is their background/training?
6. How many students do you serve?
7. What are the most common disabilities you serve?
8. Who has the most expertise in my disability?
9. What other specialized services or supports are available for students with disabilities (e.g., mentoring, coaching)?
10. What fees are involved?
11. What workshops do you offer?
12. Are waivers available for certain academic requirements (e.g., foreign language courses, minimum course load)?
13. What assistive technology do you offer?
14. Do you train students in how to use assistive technology?
15. Do you track outcomes (e.g., retention, graduation, employment) for students with disabilities and may I have access to this information?
16. Who provides tutoring? How are they trained?
17. Are there special scholarships for students with disabilities?
18. Is priority registration available?
19. Is special housing available (e.g., single rooms)?
20. Are there any support groups or clubs for students with disabilities?
21. Are there similar accommodations and services to the ones that have been helpful to me in high school?
22. Do I need to reapply for accommodations each semester or year?
23. How long does it take to have accommodations approved?
24. Are there campus organizations dedicated to students with disabilities?
25. Does the student counseling center have walk-in appointments?
26. Are short and long-term counseling services available?
27. Does the health center offer medication management?
28. Is there a disability cultural center?
29. Are professors trained in Universal Design principles?
30. How would you describe the culture on this campus in regards to disability?

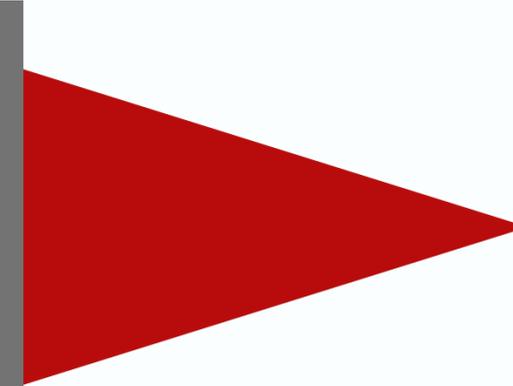
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The College Spy.
We know college.

EVALUATING THE DISABILITY ASSISTANCE ON CAMPUS



- Flexibility on documentation
- Knowledgeable and multiple staff members
- Philosophy of meeting student where they are
- Coordination with other services on campus
- Training for assistive technology
- New programs added to address needs
- Culture of problem solving



- Inflexible with documentation
- Understaffed
- Frustrated staff
- Sole use of peers (instead of professionals)
- Process to get accommodations approved is complicated
- No drop-in hours
- Needs of the whole student is not considered



HOW TO ASK

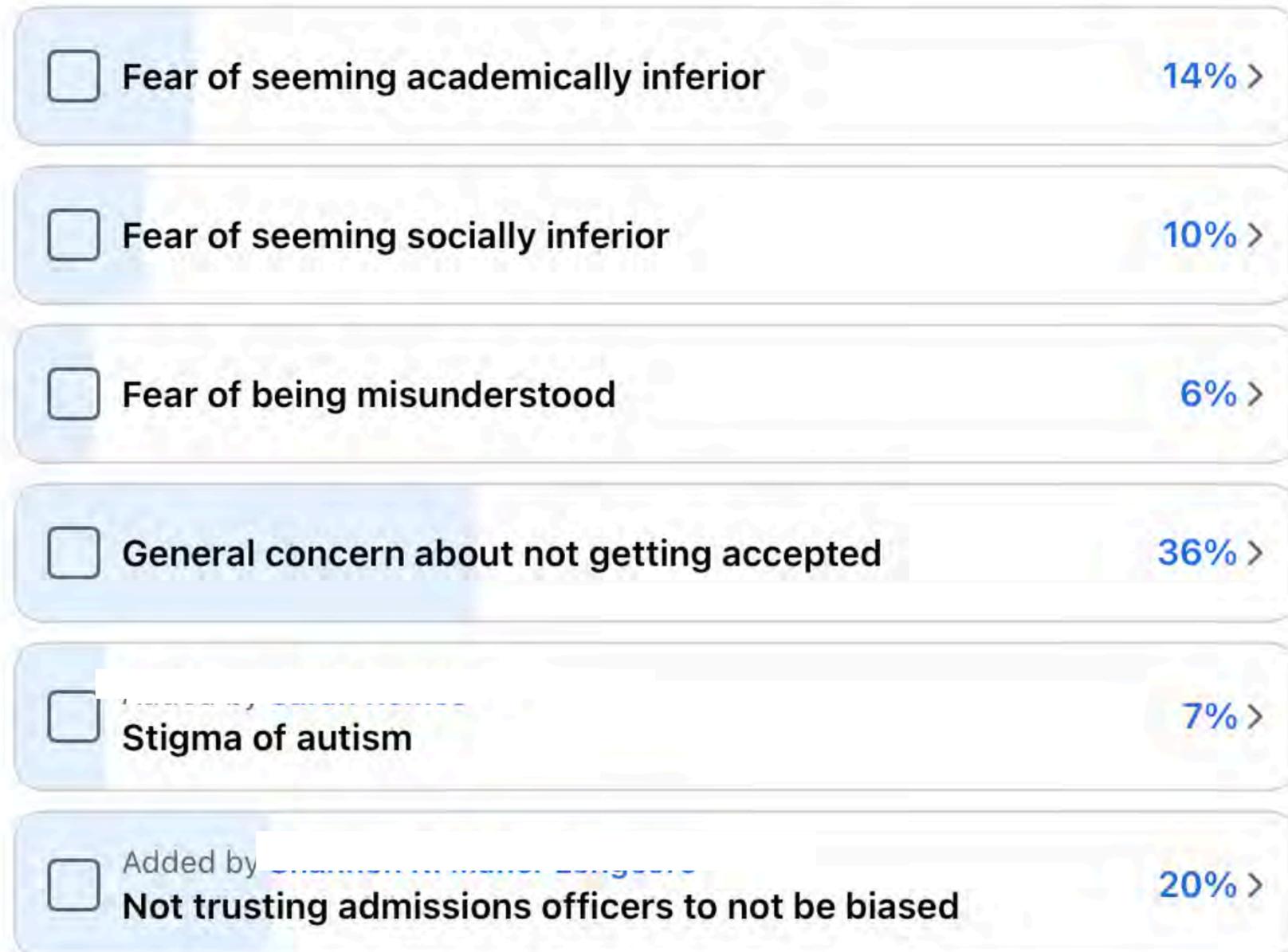
-  The college recognizes your child as an adult.
-  The staff of the office of disabilities will speak with you, but they prefer to speak with the students.
-  Your child will need to self-advocate in college A LOT.
-  Use the college search and admissions process to learn and practice this skill!

A photograph of the Wisconsin School of Business building, a large, curved, multi-story structure with a prominent clock tower on the left. The building's facade is light-colored with dark window frames. A large, semi-transparent white box with rounded corners is centered over the image, containing the text "Disclosing Disabilities on the Application". The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. In the foreground, several people are walking on the sidewalk and up the steps leading to the building's entrance. A street sign for "25" is visible on the right side of the image.

Disclosing Disabilities on the Application

WHAT WORRIES PARENTS ABOUT DISCLOSING

APPROX 200 PARENTS RESPONDED TO OUR SURVEY



WHAT WORRIES STUDENTS ABOUT DISCLOSING

Gen Z lives in a world more accepting of differences than the world Gen X grew up in.

They are taught that they have a learning "difference" and that this is nothing to be ashamed of.

After building their confidence, it is confusing (at best) for students to be told that disclosing their disability could mean they will not get accepted.

Plus, a lot of kids with LDs, ADHD and ASD have great grades and have worked REALLY hard! Accommodations and support should not be viewed as a negative that will keep them out of college.



COLLEGE IS DIFFERENT FROM HIGH SCHOOL

Differences are not just welcomed. They are **desired**.



WHAT ARE COLLEGES LOOKING FOR?

-  Ability to succeed academically
-  Protect graduation and retention rates
-  Likelihood of contributing to the campus community

If your teen is qualified, they are as likely to be accepted as a neurotypical student.

WHAT ELSE ARE COLLEGES LOOKING FOR?



- ability to think and reason in 3D
- creativity
- see connections, patterns and ideas from different perspectives
- good story tellers
- wisdom
- empathy
- hyperfocus
- spontaneity
- high energy
- resilient
- highly organized
- strong work ethic
- sense of humor
- ethical



STUDENTS WITH GOOD GRADES & TEST SCORES WHO ALSO HAVE ACCOMMODATIONS

You may attribute good grades and test scores to accommodations and support, but admissions counselors think...

- 🔍 the student is highly motivated
- 🔍 the student understands their learning profile
- 🔍 the student has persevered in the face of a challenge
- 🔍 the student is willing to ask for help

Colleges want to know applicants have the personal qualities to succeed.

BENEFITS OF DISCLOSING

- 🔍 Add context to the transcript; explain a low grade or course choice
- 🔍 Explain test scores that do not match grades
- 🔍 Highlight a student's resilience and persistence
- 🔍 Show ability to describe and explain learning challenges
- 🔍 Show how student will contribute to diversity on campus
- 🔍 Can assist in finding the right fit.

DRAWBACKS

- 🔍 None.

However, sometimes it isn't helpful to disclose especially when a student struggles to explain their learning challenge/disability.

(Need to work on this skill to be college ready.)

COLLEGES CAN OFTEN TELL WHEN A STUDENT HAS AN IEP/504 PLAN

- Transcripts list courses such as "Study Skills" or "Learning Strategies"
- Letters of recommendation might refer to the disability
- Discrepancies in standardized testing and grades
- Foreign language is missing from the transcript
- Obvious areas of strength and weakness on the transcript

HOW TO DISCLOSE

- 🔍 Write in a straight-forward way. Do not tell a story. The additional info section is not a second college essay.
- 🔍 The description should be written in the student's voice. It should not be written by the parent.
- 🔍 Include: accommodations, self-advocacy skills, perseverance, use of resources, resilience, lessons learned, struggles and triumphs.

QUESTIONS TO HELP STUDENTS STRUCTURE THEIR DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

- What is your disability?
- How does your disability affect you?
- What is challenging about having this disability?
- What are the positives of having this disability?
- What skills have you learned?
- What skills do you use regularly to make sure you are successful?
- What do you plan to continue to do in college to be a successful student?
- Is there anything you will do in college differently than in high school?

WATCH OUT FOR...

- Anger
- Resentment
- Blaming
- Failure to acknowledge support systems
- Instability and oversharing
- Evidence to the contrary
- Telling vs Showing (Give examples as proof!)

HOW TO GET UPDATES FROM THE COLLEGE SPY

Follow us on social for exclusive updates and specials for followers!

 @thecollegespy

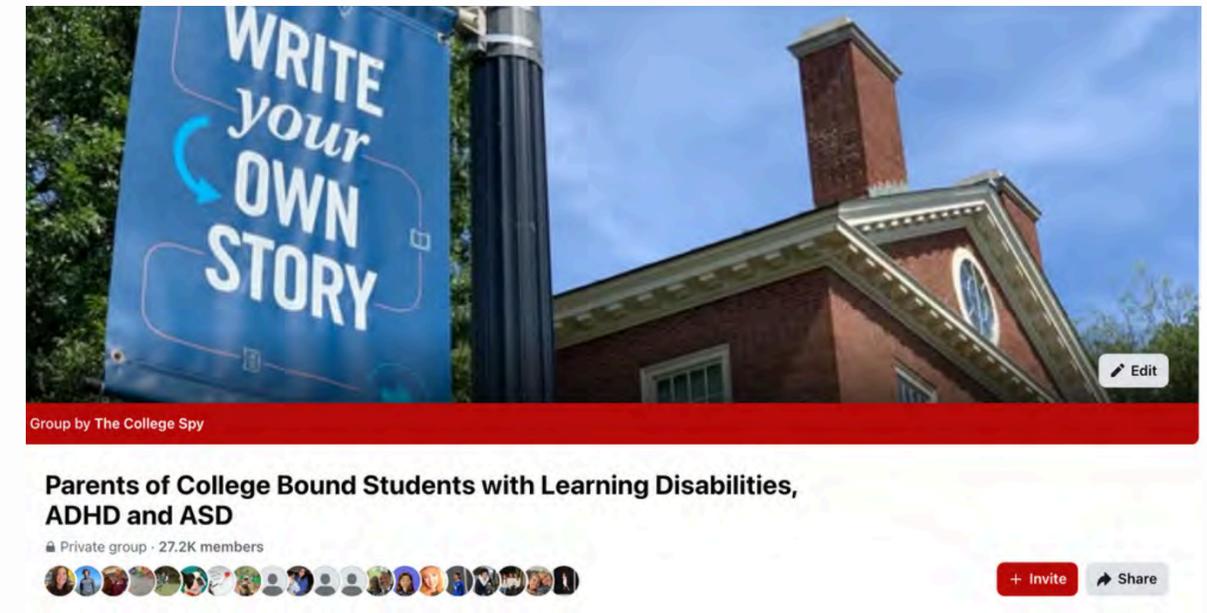
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 Group: Parents of College Bound Students with Learning Disabilities, ADHD and ASD

 The College Spy Podcast

 Group: ADHD Goes To College

 The College Spy
michelle-mcananey



 **NEXT FREE WEBINAR:** March 5th at 8pm ET
5 Things Colleges Want to Know About You...Before Offering an Acceptance



NEXT CLASS: April 14, 21 and 28 at 8 pm ET
College Admissions 101 for Parents of ND Students
Discount Code: HALFOFF



THANK YOU!



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