

Laurel Ridge Elementary School



Laurel Ridge A to Z

Laurel Ridge Elementary School
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This document is provided as an informal introduction to Laurel Ridge. It is updated in April and August of each year and can be found on the PTA website and on the school website.

Activities Fair - Held the evening of the first PTA meeting in late August or early September, Activities Fair showcases the classes, clubs, and activities students can join. Parents will also have an opportunity to learn about volunteering, purchase Spirit Wear items, and join PTA.

Advanced Academic Program - FCPS offers four levels of advanced academic services for all students. Students in grades 3 through 6 who have been found eligible for advanced academic services are given the opportunity to participate in a school-based program at Laurel Ridge. Special direct instruction is provided by an AAP resource teacher to support students' learning needs and provide differentiation and enrichment. More information may be found at <https://www.fcps.edu/registration/advanced-academics-identification-and-placement>.

Advanced Math - This FCPS initiative identifies fifth and sixth graders who have demonstrated superior achievement on a cumulative grade-level math test, received a positive recommendation from their teacher, and received a strong score on their Standards of Learning (SOL) spring test. The advanced math curriculum is a rigorous and condensed program that is designed to meet the needs of exceptional math students.

After School Enrichment Programs - PTA offers fee-based educational enrichment classes for students throughout the year. Classes take place after school directly after the final bell rings. More information and registration details will be sent home during the first week of school. Families can learn more at our Activities Fair. Limited financial aid opportunities are available for those who qualify. Please contact a school social worker or counselor for more information.

Amigos - A PTA-sponsored after school Spanish Club for students in grades 1-6. During Amigos sessions, students will have the opportunity to listen to a story, play games, and chat with friends, all in Spanish! We have additional language support planned for our beginning participants, so that they can be introduced to Spanish and gain confidence in speaking. Students **do not** need any Spanish language experience to participate. There are 2 sessions throughout the school year, and there is a fee for this activity.

Attendance - If your child(ren) will be absent or tardy, please notify the office by calling or emailing the attendance line, or filling in the online attendance form, or by using the PUP (PickUp Patrol) web app. Absences or tardiness should be reported by 9:15 a.m. Students who are not in their classrooms by 9:10 a.m.

are considered tardy and must report to the office before going to their classrooms. Please note, family vacations are considered an unexcused absence. Attendance Line Main Office: 703-426-3737.

Online form: <https://laurelridgees.fcps.edu/about/attendance-form>

Email Attendance Line: laurelridgees.attendance@fcps.edu

PUP: <https://www.pickuppatrol.net/>. See "PUP" for more information.

Band - Fifth and sixth grade students have the opportunity to take band class during the school day. Concerts and performance opportunities are multiple times a year. More information will be provided during the first few weeks of school along with details about how to rent an instrument.

Birthday Party Invitations - Party invitations may only be distributed at school if all classmates are being invited.

Birthday Treats - We celebrate student birthdays in the classroom with **non-edible** treats. Please contact your teacher for further information. **Cupcakes, candy, and/or any other edible food items will not be allowed or distributed.** This is a policy for the entire Robinson pyramid. If your child's birthday falls during a time when school is not in session such as the summer, simply coordinate with your classroom teacher for an alternative time to celebrate.

Book Fair - The Book Fair is held by our librarian to give students and families an opportunity to shop for age appropriate books and gifts and raise funds to support our library and reading programs. Volunteers are always welcome! Book Fair is usually held in early December.

Breakfast - A light breakfast is available for purchase in the cafeteria line every morning beginning at 8:45 a.m. Please refer to the cafeteria menu for each day's offerings.

Bus Loop - The parking area directly in front of the school is also the Bus Loop. Access to this area is closed from 8:40 - 9:15 a.m. and 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. Please do not enter this area in your vehicle during this time. It is also important to note that if you are parked in this area during these times your car will be blocked from leaving until the buses depart. Additionally, we ask that you do not pass buses loading and unloading in the Bus Loop. We appreciate your cooperation to keep our kids safe at arrival and dismissal time.

Bus Riding Procedures - Each family can check their assigned bus route (if available) in the ParentVue of SIS at <https://sisparent.fcps.edu/>. Under "Student Info," it will indicate whether the child's bus number and stop or indicate that they are a "walker," meaning no bus transportation is provided. Please call the school office if you have specific questions about bus transportation. For any concerns after hours, you will need to contact FCPS Safety and Security at 571-423-2000. Information about bus delays may be found by downloading the Here Comes the Bus Mobile App. Instructions can be found the FCPS website at:

<https://www.fcps.edu/resources/safety-and-transportation/transportation-services/here-comes-bus-mobile-app>.

Kindergarten students who ride the bus in the afternoon **MUST** be met at the bus door and asked for by name by a parent, parent designee, guardian, or a responsible middle school age or older sibling. Children will be returned to school if the driver has concerns for their safety. Additional information on FCPS transportation and safety tips to review with your children can be found at <https://www.fcps.edu/transportation-services/school-bus-eligibility-safety-and-routes>.

Cafeteria - Lunch menus can be found at <https://fcps.nutrislice.com/menu/laurel-ridge-elementary>. Students may choose to get lunch from school or bring lunch from home. Please remember to send utensils with your student if they are bringing lunch from home as extras are not available in the cafeteria. If your student wishes to purchase food from the cafeteria, breakfast is available for \$1.75 and lunch is available for \$3.25. There are

three ways to pay for your student's meals.

1. Online using www.MySchoolBucks.com or the MySchoolBucks app. This user-friendly service is free, convenient, private and secure. Once the account is open, parents can check the fund account anytime. You will need your student's FCPS ID number to enroll. These can also be used to pay for school items such as field trip fees and more.
2. Check - Make checks payable to "Laurel Ridge Food Services". The check can be provided to the school's food service manager or mailed to: Food and Nutrition Services, 6840 Industrial Road, Springfield, VA 22151. A local address and phone number are required to be printed or handwritten on the check. The student name and PIN number are required on the check memo line. Student cafeteria account PIN numbers are given out during the first week of school.
3. Cash - Cash may be brought to the food service manager's office for deposit on a student's account, or students may pay cash on a daily basis.

If at any time your student forgets or loses their cafeteria PIN, please contact their teacher or our cafeteria personnel. If a student's cafeteria account is empty or they have forgotten their lunch money, lunch will be provided to them and paid for by PTA. A note will be sent home asking parents to replenish the account and reimburse PTA for the meal. If you feel that there is a mistake with charges on your child's lunch account, please call the school and ask to speak with the cafeteria manager.

If your student has a food allergy, it's very important to communicate that to their teacher and the school health room aide. Policies will be put into place in the classroom and the cafeteria depending upon the severity of the allergy.

Calendars - The calendar of events for the school can be found on the LRES website, and upcoming events are listed in weekly "News You Choose" newsletters. The calendar of PTA events can be found on the PTA's website and in our Facebook group. The Fairfax County Public Schools calendar can be found online at <https://www.fcps.edu/calendars/standard-school-year-calendar>.

Chorus - Fifth and sixth grade students have the opportunity to take chorus during the school day. More information will be provided to your student during the first few weeks of school.

Counseling - Our school has two counselors who are available to work with students and who also teach guidance lessons during specified periods each month. Our counselors are always available to speak with parents and students who have concerns.

Directory - PTA publishes a student and family directory. Opting out of these publications is possible through a form sent home during the first few weeks of school. The directory is helpful for communicating with friends and getting in touch with other parents. The directory is available through the PTA webpage (individual log-in with personal password).

Doctor Appointments - If your student will be picked up early for an appointment, please use PickUp Patrol and select "Early Dismissal" to let staff know your student will be leaving early and come to the main office to sign them out. The office staff will call down to the teacher and the child will come meet you in the office. Upon returning from your appointment, you must sign your child back in. If your appointment is at the start of the school day and your student will be arriving late, please use the attendance email, phone line, or form to let staff know.

Dogs at Arrival/Dismissal - Per FCPS Reg 2125, with the exception of service animals, dogs are not allowed on school property at any time. This restriction is enforced at all times and is not limited to school

hours and school days.

Doors - The front door is Door #1, when looking at the building the door to the left is #2, and that numbering continues around the building. Door #6 is the back door. Large blue signs above the doors indicate its number.

Drills - The school will periodically conduct safety drills including fire drills, lockdown drills and shelter-in-place drills. Safety drills are led by a school administrator. Teachers make every effort to explain the necessity of each drill to students in age-appropriate language. If you have any questions about safety drills, please contact your child's teacher.

If you are in the school building during a safety drill, it is important to understand what action to take. During a fire drill you should exit the building through the nearest door and move away from the building. During a lockdown drill you do not leave the building. You should follow the instructions of the staff member nearest you, or go directly into an open classroom and follow instructions.

During a safety drill, you will not be able to enter the building through any door. If you are arriving to pick up a child for an appointment, you will need to wait until the drill is over before you will be let in.

Drop off/Pick Up Procedures - There are several ways for students to arrive and depart from school. The main front door (Door #1) and the door to the far right of the ramp/top of the steps (Door #11) open at 9:00 a.m. Students may also come to door #6 at the back side of the school if they are walking from the neighborhoods north of Commonwealth and take one of the trails through the back fields. Please do not drop your children off to any door before 8:45 a.m. If students arrive before 9:00 a.m., they may enter the cafeteria, which opens at 8:45 a.m., via Door 3, and wait in the cafeteria until being dismissed to classrooms at 9:00 a.m.

If you are driving your child and wish to drop them off in our **Kiss and Ride** drop-off loop, it is located in the parking lot to the left of the building. Students may be dropped off beginning at 8:45 a.m. Follow the loop around slowly and please do not drop off your child until you reach the designated area. A staff member will help them out of the car and they will enter the cafeteria where they will sit with others in their grade level. Students will be dismissed to their classrooms beginning at 9:00 a.m. Please be patient for the first several days of school as everyone is getting used to the system and please be aware of children and pedestrians at all times. At the entrance to Kiss and Ride, a staff member will periodically stop traffic to allow children to cross.

At pickup time, students are dismissed from their classroom as follows: Students who ride buses or private transportation vans are called down as their buses or vans arrive, walkers or students who are picked up by parents in front or back of the school are dismissed to the front (Door 2 by the flagpole or toward the playground side of the building) or back of the school (Door 6), kindergarteners who are picked up by walk-up parents will be escorted to the area just inside Door 1 or Door 6, students who are enrolled in the School Age Child Care (SACC) program are dismissed to the SACC classrooms, and students who are picked up by vehicle in the Kiss and Ride loop are dismissed down to the Gym. Please use the PickUp Patrol (PUP) app to designate how your children will be picked up from school each day. (See "PUP app" for more information.) Kindergarteners must be met by someone that is in seventh grade or older. Caregivers waiting at the front of the building should wait for walkers in grades 1-6 by the flagpole or the Lion painting on the driveway to the playground, so that our bus riders have clear access to their buses.

*Please note: Kindergarteners' dismissal time is at 3:50, 5 minutes before the general dismissal time.

Everyone using Kiss and Ride for picking up children in the afternoon will need a PickUp Patrol (PUP) Name

Tag. All students will be given a PUP Tag at the start of the school year, just so you have it if your plans change and you want to use Kiss and Ride for dismissal.

Upon arriving at Kiss and Ride to pick up your child, please display your PUP tag on the dash of your car so our staff can get your child(ren) ready. By the time you work your way through the loop, your child(ren) will be called up and escorted outside to their awaiting adult.

eNotify Messages (formerly known as Keep In Touch (KIT) messages - Email messages sent from the school to parents who entered an email address when registering their child.

FCPS App - Fairfax County Public Schools has an app that you might find helpful for locating important information including a calendar, lunch menus, school closures/delays and bus delays.

<https://www.fcps.edu/mobile>.

Field Trips - Students at every grade level go on field trips throughout the year. Please be sure to fill out the permission slip in a timely manner and send it back to your child's teacher. If chaperones are needed, your teacher will let all parents know.

Financial Assistance - Financial Assistance to pay for PTA-sponsored activities is available for those who qualify for free or reduced lunch and in special circumstances. Please contact the school social worker or counselor, or the school's main office to discuss the ways we can help.

Food Allergies - Many of our students have food allergies, and some are very severe. If your student has a food allergy it is very important to let the school health room aide and your child's teacher know as soon as possible. For parents whose children do not have food allergies, it is helpful to get to know the allergies in your child's classroom when packing a snack or lunch.

Forgotten Items from Home - In an effort to minimize disruption to instruction, the office does not call into classrooms to inform students that parents have dropped off forgotten items, with the exception of lunches. You may email your teacher to let them know that you are dropping off a forgotten item, but it is possible that the teacher will not see the email in time.

Going Home with a Friend - If your child's after school transportation will change from the normal routine, dismissal changes must be made in PUP. The cut-off time to make any changes for dismissal in PUP is 3:00 p.m. (Please see "PUP" for more information). If you miss the cut-off time, please call the front office. If a child will be riding a bus home with a friend, both parents need to contact the respective classroom teachers and attendance desk to get a Bus Pass to give to the driver. Please provide this information as early in the school day as possible.

Health Room Aide - Children who need to take medication during school hours must have a signed Medication Authorization Form which can be found at <https://laurelridgees.fcps.edu/resources/clinic>. Prescription medications require the signature of both the parent and the physician. Inhalers and EpiPens require specific authorization forms also available at the above site or from the Health Room Aide. The Health Room is in the main lobby, second door on the right.

Kiss and Ride - Please see "Drop off/Pick up Procedures."

Library - Our library is located just inside the main doors at the top of the inner stairs. Library procedures will be explained to the students during the first few weeks of school and include how many books they may check out at one time. Books are due 3 weeks after they are checked out.

Lightning Lions - Lightning Lions is a performance jump rope team and PTA-sponsored club that has been a part of our school community since 1975. Currently the team is for students in grades 4-6 and practices three mornings per week; it develops cooperation and sportsmanship, while creating a routine to perform at school events and outside-of-school events. Registration takes place at the start of the school year, and the program runs through May. In addition to the performance team, Lightning Lions also offers:

1. Jump Club - a once-a-week club for boys and girls in grades 4-6. There are separate fall, winter, and spring sessions. The Jump Club focuses on the basics of jump rope, learning and improving jump skills and jumping with friends.
2. Thunder Cubs - a program offered in the spring for boys and girls in grade 3 who would like to experience the thrill of being part of a jump rope team.

There is a fee for participation in any of the three Lightning Lions activities.

Lion's Tale Newsletter - A weekly email newsletter from LRES about upcoming events and items of interest.

Subscribe via News You Choose at

https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/VAEDUFPCS/subscriber/new?qsp=Laurel_Ridge_ES.

Lost and Found - Our Lost and Found is located at the bottom of the staircase next to the cafeteria—just inside Door 2. Students can ask their teacher if they can look for lost items on the way to lunch, and parents can sign in and have a staff member escort them to look for lost items. Everyone is encouraged to please straighten up the Lost and Found, re-hang items and pick things up off the floor! Volunteers are always needed to help manage the area. Items not claimed are donated to charity in December and June.



Lucky the Lion - Lucky the Lion is our Mascot (see right).

Medications- Please see Health Room Aide.

Memorials - There are several memorial areas at Laurel Ridge where we remember students that we have lost over the years. Ladybug Corner is a reading nook built and donated by friends and family of former LRES student Sadie Murata, who passed away from cancer in the Fall of 2017. Students are invited to choose from one of many donated books and read quietly with their teacher's permission.

There is a bench and memorial placard near the playground for Viam Faggioni.

The library houses a section of books in memory of Sarah Valentine Sherer.

Military Families Group - Military-connected students and families are invited to get together through our Military Families Group. The group plans service and social activities for students and their families. Please contact Mrs. Waring at snwaring@fcps.edu for more information and/or if a parent is preparing for a deployment or a remote tour.

Military Kids Club - Laurel Ridge has an active Military Kids Club sponsored by Mrs. Waring. The club meets once a month and uses meetings to connect through games, conversation, and service projects.

News You Choose - This subscription-based, email communication tool is used for the distribution of non critical communications such as newsletters, events, news updates and other topics. Be sure to sign up and choose what you'd like to receive so you don't miss anything! More information at

<https://www.fcps.edu/index.php/resources/parent-communication-overview>.

Nurse - Please see Health Room Aide.

Parent Information Phone Lines (FCPS) - FCPS language lines are available in eight different languages to assist parents who do not speak English as their first language. A school system employee will respond to your call in your preferred language within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. The caller will provide you with the requested information, arrange for you to speak with the appropriate school employee, or connect you with the resource that you are looking to find. The FCPS Parent Information Phone Lines are listed here: <https://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-information-phone-lines>.

Parking - Parking around LRES can be challenging as we are a large school. Please be courteous to our neighbors and do not park within 10 feet on either side of a driveway. Please do not block driveways or park on the corners of two streets. Our neighbors have been forced to call Fairfax County Police due to cars parked in front of and too close to their driveway entrance. Please do not pull into the entrance or the exit of the front Bus Loop to drop off students in the road.

In front of the school there is a limited number of 10-minute parking spots for when you are making a quick stop at school. Please be aware the front curb of the school is designated as a fire lane and cannot be used as a waiting zone to pick up students.

PE (Physical Education)- Your student's teacher will let you know when your child has PE during the week. Please be sure to send your child in athletic shoes on PE days.

Picture Day - Fall picture day for students is usually held in September or early October. These pictures will be used in the yearbook. Picture day is again held in the spring as a bonus opportunity to purchase professional photos of your child and to take class photos. Volunteers are always needed to help with picture day. All school photos are ordered online, and ordering information will be available as Picture Day approaches.

PTA and PTA Meetings- The Laurel Ridge Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a membership organization of families, teachers, administrators and community members working together for the benefit of our children. We plan fun and educational events, advocate on behalf of all students, and provide funding for important programs and teacher supplies. We ask every parent to join us when you receive the membership form or email. More info and a sign up list of committees and volunteer opportunities is available on our website: <http://laurelridge.ptboard.com>.

PUP (PickUp Patrol)- PickUp Patrol is a system that tracks student dismissal information. The PUP web app can be used to notify the school office when your student will be absent or leaving early, and to submit changes to your student's regular dismissal plans. For example, make a PUP change if your student normally rides the bus, but is getting picked up today, or if your student usually goes to aftercare but is leaving early for an appointment. All dismissal changes must be entered in PUP by 3:00 p.m. You will receive a registration email from PickUp Patrol with a link to set up your account. You can learn more about PUP at the following link: <https://www.pickuppatrol.net/parent-questions>.

Red Zones - Throughout the school Red Zone signs are posted to remind students if they are in a no-talking area of the school.

SACC (School Aged Child Care) - School Aged Child Care (SACC) is the before and after school child care program at Laurel Ridge and other schools provided by Fairfax County Office for Children. More information is available at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc/school-age-child-care>.

Safety Patrol - Students may join Safety Patrol in fifth or sixth grade and serve to keep the school a safer place for everyone. Patrols are assigned to positions within and outside of the school building, on school buses, and at school crossings. They also assist kindergarteners to and from class each day, and raise and lower the flags. Information about joining Safety Patrol is made available before the end of each school year.

Schoology - Schoology is the learning management system that is used divisionwide. It is a learning space that supports instructional practices aligned to the FCPS learning model and helps students reach the Portrait of a Graduate goals. For more information, please go to: <https://www.fcps.edu/schoology>.

School Supply Lists - School supply lists can be found at <https://laurelridgees.fcps.edu/academics/school-supply-lists>. As a convenience, the PTA offers the purchase of pre-assembled school supply kits through a company. Orders for the kits typically close in early summer. Families are also welcome to purchase their children's school supplies on their own.

SEA (Student Equity Ambassadors) - The Laurel Ridge SEA is a leadership opportunity available to all students in grades 4-6. Interested students will develop and provide opportunities for Laurel Ridge students and staff to build community and foster compassion and inclusion for all. The work of the LRES SEA has included a Kindness Challenge, a collection drive for the FCPS Homeless Liaison Office, a Black History Month bulletin board, and much more. Our Clinical Support Staff will visit grade 4-6 classrooms during the first month of school to give students more information.

SIS Accounts - The Student Information System (SIS) Parent Account is the FCPS secure solution for accessing information about your child's attendance, class performance, demographic data, and links to FCPS 24-7 information. It provides an additional conduit for communication with your child's school. More information can be found at <https://www.fcps.edu/student-information-system-sis>.

Sixth Grade Send Off Party - Parents and teachers of our sixth graders plan and fundraise all year long to put on a huge send off for our sixth graders during the last week of school. Please contact your child's sixth grade teacher if you'd like to help.

Snacks - Unless otherwise specified by the teacher, students may bring in a snack for themselves every day. They are also encouraged to bring in a refillable water bottle. There is a designated snack time within each classroom.

Spanish Immersion - Laurel Ridge Elementary School has a partial Spanish Immersion Program for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. In the immersion program, students spend approximately half of each day learning mathematics, science, and health in Spanish. The other half of the day is spent learning social studies, language arts, and reading in English. There are no formal criteria for enrollment, but the program is only open to residents of Fairfax County. To learn more about how to join this program and other FCPS immersion programs visit: <https://www.fcps.edu/index.php/academics/world-languages-immersion-programs>.

Special Education Family Committee - A PTA subcommittee of parents of children in Special Education programs that meets for social events and hosts speakers. For more information please email the LRES PTA president at ptaforlres@gmail.com.

Specials - General classes in music, art, STEAM, and physical education are referred to as Specials in the student's weekly schedule.

Spirit Wear - Spirit Wear is Laurel Ridge themed clothing sold by PTA. Students are encouraged to wear Spirit Wear several times during the year for themed weeks. To purchase Spirit Wear items, look for the PTA at school events or purchase online (delivered to your child's classroom) after the start of the school year.

Spirit Week - Spirit Weeks are held periodically throughout the year to celebrate specific themes like Inclusion Week or Read Across America Week.

Staff Directory - A staff directory is available on the school's website at <https://laurelridgees.fcps.edu/staff-directory>.

Standards of Learning (SOL) Tests - Students in grades 3-6 take Standards of Learning (SOL) tests each spring, as required by Virginia state law. Test results are generally distributed to parents and guardians about three months after the test was taken. For more information: <https://www.fcps.edu/node/35021>.

STEAM - STEAM is a specials class where students explore a lesson in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. It is in addition to regularly scheduled lessons in science, art and math.

Strings - Fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students have the opportunity to learn to play a string instrument during the school day. More information will be provided to your student during the first few weeks of school along with details about how to rent an instrument.

Tardy - If you are dropping your student off to school late, they are considered tardy and must come to the office to check in and get a pass to their classroom.

Text Messaging for Parents - Parent cell phone numbers that are listed in the SIS are automatically enrolled to receive text messages. Text messaging is an additional way to quickly and efficiently contact parents when your child's school or district needs to notify you in cases of emergency.

Visiting the School – All visitors must stop in the main office and check in on the computer system. **A valid ID is required and you will not be permitted into the school without an ID.** An ID label will print out and you should wear it while in the building. Please check in every time you come to the building during school hours. Upon leaving the school, you will sign out by scanning the ID label that was worn while in the building.

Volunteering - Volunteers are at the heart of our school community! There are several ways to get involved at LRES. First, check with your teacher and find out what they could use help with. Next, check in with PTA (ptaforlres@gmail.com) and see what events and ongoing projects could use help. Volunteers are needed in our Cafeteria for the first few weeks of school. Also, see our webpage for additional information on sign-ups that are available at <https://laurelridge.ptboard.com/>. Our PTA has many committees that need dedicated members and a few volunteer lists for people who would like to be on call to help in various ways.

Websites -

School - <https://laurelridgees.fcps.edu/>

PTA - <https://laurelridge.ptboard.com/home>

FCPS – <https://www.fcps.edu/>

PTA Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/lresptava

LRES Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LaurelRidgeES>

Wednesday Folder - Flyers, information, and other school papers will be sent home weekly in your child's

Wednesday Folder. This is a great way for parents to be up-to-date on school events and news. Some teachers will ask that you sign the Wednesday folder before returning it to school empty.

WLRS - WLRS ("Window on Laurel Ridge School") is the daily morning news program that airs in the classrooms at Laurel Ridge. Sixth graders may apply for positions on WLRS and new crew and cast members are selected each grading period.

Yearbook - The LRES Yearbook is organized by our staff and a committee of dedicated student volunteers. Order forms are sent out from the main office and yearbooks are distributed during the last week of school.

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