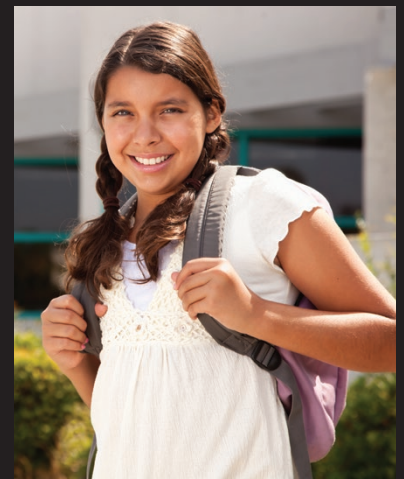


California AfterSchool Network

ENGLISH LEARNER NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA **SUMMITS REPORT**



- ▶ **In California, there were over 1.4 million English Learners attending schools in the 2010-2011 school year, representing almost 25% of the state's school population.**

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California AfterSchool Network

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► Introduction

The California After School Network (CAN) held two English Learner Summits in the Fall of 2010 and the Winter of 2011 in Northern and Southern California respectively. This report summarizes the content, discussions and reflections that occurred at these two summits. Our hope is that this report helps readers understand the thinking and context of where the field was at that time to help us see places where we have grown and changed, identify places where more movement can happen and help the field plan for next steps in our quest to support English Learners successfully in after school and expanded learning programs.

► Context of English Learners in California

English Learners (ELs) are one of the fastest growing school-age populations in the nation. Between the 1997-1998 and 2008-2009 school years, there was a 51% increase in the number of ELs attending our schools¹. It is no wonder then, that afterschool programs are seeing increasing numbers of ELs among their participants as a result. Nationally, ELs represent 13% of the student population², and in CA, there were over 1.4 million ELs attending schools in the 2010-2011 school year, representing almost 25% of our state's school population³. This is the highest percentage of EL students of any state in the nation⁴.

These numbers present an exciting opportunity for afterschool and expanded learning programs to meet the needs of a diverse and vulnerable population that is largely at-risk. Due to language accessibility issues and barriers to empowering, well-rounded educational opportunities, English Learners are not experiencing high academic achievement in our schools. In the 2010-2011 school year, about 60% of the ELs enrolled in California graduated. In comparison, the graduation rate for all students is close to 80%. Looking at further achievement data, we see that while 44% of all students scored proficient in the 8th grade reading state assessment test, only 18% of ELs scored proficient. For the 8th grade math state assessment test, 56% of all students scored proficient while only 14% of ELs did⁵. It is also important to note that ELs in California are largely from low-income neighborhoods, as their poverty rates range from 74 to 85 percent, which is much higher than the 21% overall poverty rate for California school-aged children⁶.

Although ELs are often economically vulnerable, they come from backgrounds rich in culture, language, and family values. They deserve a chance to succeed and thrive, but as stated earlier, are often academically marginalized because of the lack of adequate supports that can help them reach their full potential. As part of a field deeply rooted in youth development and centered

It is important to note that ELs in California are largely from low-income neighborhoods, as their poverty rates range from 74 to 85 percent

¹ The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, "The Growing Numbers of English Learner Students, 1998/99-2008/09," February 2011. Retrieved from http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/uploads/9/growingLEP_0809.pdf.

² Common Core of Data, Tabulated from Build a Table tool, 9/11/2012: <http://www.nces.ed.gov/ccd/>. Retrieved from <http://eddataexpress.ed.gov/data-element-explorer.cfm/tab/data/deid/4/>.

³ California Department of Education, (March 2012). Facts about English Learners in California – CalEdFacts. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/cefelfacts.asp>.

⁴ Common Core of Data, Tabulated from Build a Table tool, 9/11/2012: <http://www.nces.ed.gov/ccd/>. Retrieved from <http://eddataexpress.ed.gov/data-element-explorer.cfm/tab/data/deid/4/>.

⁵ ED Data Express, Department of Education, (May 2013). Retrieved from <http://eddataexpress.ed.gov/state-report.cfm/state/CA/>.

⁶ Hill, Laura. (September 2012). California's English Learner Students. Public Policy Institute of California. Retrieved from http://www.ppic.org/main/publication_quick.asp?i=1031

around youth support, afterschool and expanded learning programs are poised to capitalize on their strong relationships and influence on participating children and youth in order to provide much-needed support to ELs, while validating students' cultural identity and providing the social and emotional support they need. Relatively free of the mandates that constrain schools, afterschool and expanded learning programs can offer creative and effective programming that builds on the strengths of ELs and redefines their success to incorporate not only acquiring English but also growing into well-rounded, active, and empowered members of society.

Realizing the potential and opportunity afterschool and expanded learning programs have to effectively support ELs, the California Afterschool Network (CAN) created the English Learner Committee to help programs across the state address the needs of English Learners.

► About the California After School (CAN) English Learner (EL) Committee and EL Summits

CAN EL Committee

In the Fall of 2009, Alliance for a Better Community (ABC), an education policy and advocacy organization that supports high quality educational opportunities for English Learners released the report "Maximizing After School Opportunities for English Learners." The report outlined findings from a study they conducted and recommendations on how the after school field could support ELs.

The report surfaced some areas that afterschool and expanded learning programs can continue to improve upon in order to effectively support English Learners. With the findings from the report stirring dialogue in the field, and afterschool and expanded learning program staff beginning to clearly voice a need for resources and an avenue to talk about strategies to better support ELs in their programs, it was proposed to the California Afterschool Network's Leadership Team that a new EL committee be formed in order to serve as a space to discuss promising practices,



professional development needs and opportunities, and other issues/concerns the field was experiencing in relationship to serving ELs.

Once the CAN English Learner Committee was formed, the committee's primary charge became to advance the conversation of what quality EL education looks like in after school and expanded learning programs, and inform committee members of promising practices, strategies and resources to effectively support English Learners. The EL Committee also serves as a forum for network participants to discuss elements of quality EL practices of after school programs and helps to identify and disseminate resources to support afterschool programs to meet the diverse needs of English Learner students. The three EL Committee Goals are:

1. Increase the field's knowledge of the multiple needs of English Learners including socio-emotional and academic needs.
2. Increase the field's access to quality resources, tools and strategies for EL students.
3. Provide a space for participants to have dialog around trending topics and challenges in working with English Learners in after school.

Two tiers of membership have been established in order for committee members to have the level of involvement that best suits them. The tiers for membership are: Active Member and Informational Member.

Active Members are required to join at least one work group and regularly participate in the monthly meetings via telephone. As a benefit, calls and meetings are scheduled in accordance to the schedule of Active Members, and they are the first to receive information and resources through the committee. Active Members also help shape the work of the Committee and create and inform materials and resources produced through the Committee.

Informational Members are welcome to join the monthly committee meetings as their schedule permits and receive the meeting notes via email.

The English Learners Committee continues to seek out-of-school time practitioners and educational experts to join our committee and sub-committee workgroups. If you would like to join the committee, please go to this link: <http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/splash-carousel-item/join-can-english-learners-committee>

English Learner Summits

Once the English Learner Committee was formed, the new members took note of the Rural Programs Summit that had recently been coordinated by CAN's Rural Programs Committee. This was a gathering for rural practitioners to hear about successes and challenges in working in rural communities, and work in small groups to make policy recommendations to better support Rural Programs. Borrowing from this model, the newly created English Learner Committee decided that one of its first tasks would be to hold an English Learner Summit.



The idea behind the EL Summit was to bring together afterschool program staff, CDE (California Department of Education- After School Unit), community members, and school administrators all in an effort to begin a conversation and a potential process for more collaboration to better support ELs in the state. This Summit would bring experts and presenters who would share best practices for supporting English Learners, provide networking opportunities, and would create an avenue for participants to share recommendations for the field.

As the planning for the EL Summit commenced, it quickly became clear that in order to make the EL Summit as accessible as possible to people throughout the state, there would have to be two separate EL Summits—one in Northern California and one in Southern California. With that established, the first EL Summit was scheduled to take place that Fall on October 12th, 2010 to be held at UC Davis. The main goals of the Northern California Summit were to provide participants access and information to promising practices and strategies to support ELs in after school programs, connect them to the Quality Self-Assessment tool, and obtain recommendations for support they needed. The second EL Summit was scheduled for early the following year on February 15th, 2011. In collaboration with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) After School Technical Assistance Unit, this Summit's goal was to have each attendee leave with information, tools, and knowledge they could take back and begin utilizing at their programs immediately. The format for both summits included a keynote address from Dr. Laurie Olsen, informational presentation on relevant projects or research, workshop break-out sessions, and a time for reflections and dialogue.



► **The following are the agendas from the Northern and Southern California EL Summits.**

English Learners Afterschool Summit

October 12, 2010 • 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
UC Davis Conference Center • Davis, California

- 9:30 Registration and Networking (Conference Center Lobby)
- 10:00 Welcome and Introduction: Welcome by Gordon Jackson – Director of Learning Support & Partnerships Division, California Department of Education
- 10:15 Keynote- Laurie Olsen, Director of the Sobrato Early Academic Literacy Initiative for English Learners
- 10:35 Cynthia Zarate, Education Policy Coordinator, Alliance for a Better Community – *Maximizing opportunities for EL Learners*
- 10:50 EL Experiences – Youth Voices Video from CA Tomorrow
- 11:20 Jose Gonzalez, Waterford Unified School District – *Promising practices supporting English Learners*
- 11:40 Jeff Davis, Program Coordinator, California Afterschool Network – Existing Promising Practices to Support English Learners in Afterschool: *Engaging with the Quality Self-Assessment Tool*
- 12:00 Lunch
- 12:45 – 1:45 Breakout sessions: Jhumpa Bhattacharya and Jimena Quiroga, ThrivePoint Group
Learning English and Beyond: Tools to Fully Support English Learners
- Julie Sesser, Stanislaus County Office of Education and Jose Gonzalez, Waterford Unified School District
Keys to Success: Meeting the Needs of ESL Learners
- Shelley Joyer, Erin Nelson, and Stephanie Haglund
Accelerating Language and Literacy for English Learners
- Nora Zamora, California Afterschool Resource Center (CASRQ) & California Healthy Kids Resource Center (CHKRC)
Diversity Rocks! English Learning in Action
- 2:00 – 3:00 Breakout sessions:
- Corey Newhouse, Public Profit: *Measuring English Learner’s Path to Mastery- Tips for Evaluation Design and Reporting*
- Julie Sesser, Stanislaus County Office of Education and Jose Gonzalez, Waterford Unified School District
Keys to Success: Meeting the Needs of EL Learners
- Jennifer Kobrin, Foundations Inc.: *Crucial Links, Practical Strategies, Aligning School and Afterschool for EL Success*
- Nora Zamora, California After School Resource Center (CASRC) & California Healthy Kids Resource Center (CHKRC)
Diversity Rocks! English Learning in Action
- 3:05 Helen Gonzalez, After School Regional Lead, San Diego County Office of Education California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESSA): *Supporting English Language Learners Through After School Programs Project*
- 3:15 Table Discussions of Recommendations for Technical Assistance
- 3:45 Closing and next steps
- 4:00 Adjourn

English Learners Afterschool Summit

February 15, 2011 • 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
LACOE Education Center • Downey, California 90242

- 8:30 Check-in and Networking
- 9:00 Welcome and Introduction:
– Andee Press-Dawson, Executive Director of the California After School Network (CASN)
– Mary Jo Ginty, After School Regional Lead, Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), After School Technical Assistance Unit
- 9:15 Introduction of California Department of Education: After School Program Office Representative:
– Veronica Bloomfield, Co-Facilitator of LACOE ASTAU English Learner Work Group
– Gordon Jackson, Director of Learning Support & Partnerships Division, California Department of Education
- 9:30 Introduction of keynote speaker:
– Lori Ward, After School Regional Lead, Stanislaus County Office of Education and Co-Chair of English Learner Committee of CASN
– Keynote: Laurie Olsen, Ph.D.
- 10:00 Introduction of thought provoking video:
– Jimena Quiroga, Senior Consultant, ThrivePoint Group and Co-Chair of English Learner Committee of CAN, English Learner Experiences: Youth Voices Video from CA Tomorrow
- 10:20 Break
- 10:40 Workshop Sessions (concurrent sessions):
- Workshop A: Laurie Olsen, Ph.D. (Room 296): *Finding the Power in After School Programs to Meet the Needs of English Learners*. Intended Audience: Grant Managers, Program Directors, District Staff including Bilingual Coordinators
- Workshop B: Kimberly Clerx & Diana Villarreal (Room 281): William Green Elementary School (*Lawndale Unified School District*) *Partnerships in Action: Frontloading in After School Programs*. Intended Audience: Site Coordinators, Principals and Instructional Day Teachers
- Workshop C: Nora Zamora, M.S. (Room 242): California After School Resource Center (CASRC) & California Healthy Kids Resource Center (CHKRC). *English Learning in Action*. Intended Audience: Front-line staff
- 12:00 Lunch & Networking
- 12:30 Reflections & Conversations: Facilitator: Mary Jo Ginty, After School Regional Lead, LACOE, ASTAU
- 1:15 Helen Gonzales, After School Regional Lead, San Diego County Office of Education. *California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESSA): Supporting English Language Learners Through After School Programs Project*
- 1:20 Evaluations:
– Cynthia V. Zarate, Co-Facilitator of LACOE After School English Learner Work Group and Co-Chair of English Learner Committee, CASN
- 1:25 Closing:
– Veronica Bloomfield, Co-Facilitator of LACOE After School English Learner Work Group
- 1:30 Adjourn

► California After School Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool

Through a collaborative project of the California Afterschool Network, the California Department of Education (CDE), statewide stakeholders, and national experts, The California Afterschool Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSA Tool) was created as a comprehensive self-assessment tool that out-of-school time professionals can use to start important conversations about quality. It encompasses eleven Program Quality Elements, including a Program Quality Element on Effectively Supporting English Learners. The nine indicators under Effectively Supporting English Learners can help programs determine how well they are addressing the needs of the English Learners in their programs. The tool also encourages programs to create an action plan along with determining technical assistance and training needs.

In our program:

In our program:		Level 1-4, DK	Examples of this indicator in our program
1	Staff provide an environment and activities that encourage English Learners to practice oral English skills without fear of judgment or ridicule.		
2	Staff adapt activities to engage participants with different levels of English fluency. For example, through visual cues for very limited English speakers or opportunities for discussion for students who have a greater degree of English fluency.		
3	Staff use academic support strategies for English Learners, such as explaining common academic terms and providing content-based materials and instruction in participants' home languages.		
4	Staff and program leadership encourage participants to develop and sustain their home languages and cultures. For example, the program can encourage the use of home languages in the program and provide materials that represent participants' home cultures and languages.		
5	All adults in the program are committed to meeting the socio-emotional needs of English Learners, who come from varied backgrounds and familiarity with American norms and customs.		
6	English Learners and English-fluent students interact regularly, both in structured program activities and during free time, which promotes inclusion and strengthens participants' English development.		
7	Staff and leadership empower and encourage English Learners socially and academically. For example, programs may provide leadership opportunities for English Learners and acknowledge their academic and linguistic progress.		
8	Staff communicate with EL participants' teachers to learn about participants' language fluency, home language, and academic program in order to tailor after school activities.		
9	Staff communicate frequently with families about English Learners' needs and accomplishments.		
Action Plan		Technical Assistance/Training Needed	

Level 1: Just beginning; **Level 2:** Done some work; **Level 3:** High level of proficiency; **Level 4:** Exceptionally proficient; **DK:** Don't Know

► Key Learnings from the Summits

Highlights from the Keynote Speaker Dr. Laurie Olsen

At both summits, CAN was honored to have renowned English Learner expert Dr. Laurie Olsen serve as the keynote speaker to share her wisdom and experience in successfully engaging and working with English Learners. Spanning over four decades as a researcher, writer, advocate, and provider of technical assistance and professional development, Dr. Olsen is the Director of the Sobrato Early Academic Literacy initiative for English Learners in Redwood City and San Jose. She consults with schools and districts throughout the nation on developing powerful programs for English Learners, and has delivered her acclaimed Secondary School Leadership for English Learner Success series for leadership teams to hundreds of educators across the state. In addition, for 23 years, she was the Executive Director of California Tomorrow. Dr. Olsen has published dozens of books, videos and articles, including the award winning *Made in America*. She holds a Ph.D. in Social and Cultural Studies in Education from UC Berkeley, and serves on the Executive Board of Californians Together.

Dr. Olsen shared eight key points in her keynote speech that help highlight the best practice research available at the time of the summits that afterschool and expanded learning programs should understand in order to best serve their English Learners. The following points were presented at her keynote and come from her publication and training series, *The Secondary School Leadership for English Learner Success Leadership Development Series Secondary School*⁶:

1. A second language develops in predictable, sequential steps along a continuum from no proficiency to full proficiency. Where an English Learner is along the continuum determines the kind of support they need. It is important for afterschool and expanded programs to learn and understand what step in the continuum their English Learner students are at and customize programming to meet those needs.



Afterschool and expanded learning programs should focus on developing all parts of language – reading, writing, speaking and listening along with knowledge development, not just literacy.

⁶ Olsen, L. and Romero, A. (2006). *Supporting Effective Instruction for English Learners*. Oakland, CA: California Tomorrow and Los Angeles County Office of Education.

2. The development of **social** English takes much less time (2-3 years) than the development of **academic** language (5-7 years). Social English is often referred to as “playground” English and incorporates everyday speech. English Learners need to master both social and academic language (subject specific vocabulary like parallelogram, membrane, isosceles or higher order vocabulary like construct, antonym etc.) in order to be successful academically. Successful afterschool and expanded learning programs can help ELs develop both their social and academic English.



3. A first language and a second language are interdependent! Along with English acquisition, there is an important and powerful role for home language in the education and healthy development of English Learners. Continued use and development of the home language benefits overall language and literacy, brain functioning and academic success as it:

- Strengthens English – ELs do at least as well, usually better in achieving English acquisition than students instructed in only English;
- Improves access to academic content and prevents development of academic gaps;
- Strengthens the brain (cognitive flexibility, problem solving);
- Provides economic and social benefits; and
- Strengthens family connection and identity.

4. Language is about more than literacy (reading and writing)! Language learning includes literacy skills, expression and communication, concept development and knowledge development. Afterschool and expanded learning programs should focus on developing all parts of language – reading, writing, speaking and listening along with knowledge development, not just literacy.

5. Oral language is the foundation for developing proficiency in a new language- and it is the bridge to academic language. Afterschool and expanded learning programs can focus on providing ample opportunities for ELs to practice their oral English skills.

6. Language develops in context! English Learners need full and enriched curriculum (e.g., science, the arts, social studies) – with language development opportunities throughout. The more afterschool and expanded programs can provide enriching curriculum where ELs receive a range of learning opportunities that incorporate real-life experiences, the better.

7. English Learners need meaningful interaction with English speakers. Afterschool and expanded learning programs can take an active and intentional role in mixing EL students with monolingual, fluent English speakers to both help create bridges between these two groups and provide good English models for ELs.

8. An affirming environment promotes learning, participation, engagement and healthy identity development. Afterschool and expanded learning programs can take intentional steps to create emotionally safe and affirming environments where ELs feel welcomed and nurtured, no matter what their English fluency.

Dr. Olsen concluded her speech by stating that afterschool and expanded learning programs have a significant and important opportunity to support academic growth, build on and supplement what happens during the school day, provide ELs with access and full participation in the program's activities, and provide language-rich, language intensive, language-engaged programming to provide the extra support ELs need to be truly thriving and successful.

Summary of Discussions from the Summits

After a day of learning, reflection and growth on how to best support English Learners in expanded learning and afterschool programs, both the Northern California and Southern California Summits conducted small-group table discussions to garner thinking from the participants on their key recommendations and thoughts to share with the field. Participants gave their input on key Technical Assistance (TA) needs, requests on needed curriculum and tools, recommended strategies and recommendations on structural changes.

Technical Assistance Needs Surfaced at the Summits. One major theme that surfaced from the small-group table discussions was the need to have access to high-quality English Learner trainings that are appropriate for the afterschool and expanded learning audience. It was stressed

that what is needed are trainings and deep coaching and implementation support that are grounded in youth development and help programs complement, not duplicate, what happens during the school day. Specifically, participants listed the following topics as areas where they would like further Technical Assistance in supporting English Learners in their programs:

One major theme that surfaced from the small-group table discussions was the need to have access to high-quality English Learner trainings that are appropriate for the afterschool and expanded learning audience.

- Incorporating culturally responsive programming
- Home language support
- Language development
- Providing socio-emotional support
- Linkage/Collaboration with the school day
- Working with Newcomers
- Parent/Family Engagement
- Leveraging monetary resources to work with English Learners
- How to use data such as CELDT (California English Language Development Test) scores

Along with recommendations on training topic areas, participants also spoke about the need for specific types of training and TA they needed. These included English Learner trainings for front line staff, access to free workshops, grade-level specific trainings (i.e. Elementary, Middle School, High School), Training for Trainers (TOT) and facilitated Learning Communities.

Requested Tools and Curriculum Surfaced from the Summits. Participants at both summits shared their thoughts on what they felt the field needed in terms of specific tools and curriculum to help expanded learning and afterschool programs better support English Learners. Participants noted a need for:

- Tools/Rubrics to obtain and use data from the school day
- A Framework with a unified vision for working with English Learners in afterschool/expanded learning programs
- Engaging games/curriculum to help with vocabulary development
- EL specific program evaluation and self-assessment tools
- Experiential learning curriculum
- Coaching techniques to help ensure implementation of strategies and learnings from trainings
- Computer-based programs to support ELs



Recommended strategies. Some participants at the Summits came representing programs that are already taking strides toward effectively serving English Learners. These participants shared some of the strategies they have been implementing in their programs that they recommend for other programs to try:

- Use of visuals and graphic organizers
- Providing leadership opportunities and youth choice/voice
- Incorporating discussion and oral practice
- Creating emotionally safe environments to ensure EL inclusion
- Build close-knit relationships with ELs
- Incorporate culturally responsive curriculum that celebrates diversity
- Cooperative learning opportunities/group work
- Allow for “think” time/patience
- Know your EL population and their specific needs, including their language levels
- Encourage home language
- Have staff advocate for ELs at school and with parents

Recommendations for Structural Changes. Participants that attended the Summits brought with them their own experiences of what has worked and what obstacles they have encountered in their efforts to implement supports for ELs in their programs. Through these experiences, participants offered suggestions for creating change at all levels of a program. These were some of the structural changes recommended:

- Need to have commitment and support from teachers and school day staff
- Increased planning time
- More communication with teachers and administration
- Adding EL awareness and data collection questions on documents and forms such as the Regional Lead TA site visit forms
- Phased implementation plan (creating and developing strategies to implement over time, systematically and thoughtfully)
- Build CBO/lead agency capacity to support ELs
- Provide resources for targeted on site coaching
- Hiring staff that reflect the community and student population

► Moving Forward

In order to continue to build upon the efforts of afterschool and expanded learning programs to support English Learners throughout the state of California, we hope to use this report to continue to build momentum in the field to improve and expand the resources and supports for programs to help English Learners succeed.

To that end, the English Learner Committee is currently working on disseminating the findings in this report by presenting them at conferences and other relevant forums. We also plan to continue to provide afterschool providers with accessible strategies, including an “English Learner Tip Sheet” which highlights a summary of “easy to implement” program strategies for supporting ELs in the out of school time. We will also continue to enhance and improve the resources provided on working with English Learners on the English Learner Committee page of the California Afterschool Network website.

If you would like to join the California Afterschool Network’s English Learner Committee and help support our efforts to strengthen and continue to build the capacity of out of school time programs in the area of English Learner support, please visit California Afterschool Network’s English Learner Committee website page: <http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/splash-carousel-item/join-can-english-learners-committee>

We plan to continue to provide afterschool providers with accessible strategies, including an “English Learner Tip Sheet” which highlights a summary of “easy to implement” program strategies for supporting ELs in the out of school time.



Mission

The mission of the California AfterSchool Network is to provide out-of-school time practitioners, advocates, and community members with the resources and tools necessary to build high quality out-of-school time programs in California.

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