

Voters to decide on \$28.5 million budget for 2022-23 school year

Proposed budget maintains programming; tax levy under ‘cap’

On Tuesday, May 17, Stillwater Central School District residents will vote on a proposed \$28,544,605 budget for the 2022-23 school year. The spending plan preserves existing programs and services, includes the purchase of three new school buses, and includes funding for debt service payments, salary increases for faculty and staff, and increases in employee benefit costs. The vote will be held from 12-9 p.m. in the district auditorium.

Spending under the proposal would decrease by 0.60%, or \$173,014, less than the current-year budget. The decrease in spending is a result of projected faculty and staff retirements, a slight decrease in debt service payments and removal of an appropriation for construction of a new concession stand that is currently underway.

“The proposed budget maintains programs and services in our schools while remaining fiscally responsible to district residents,” Superintendent Patricia Morris said. “Our priority remains to provide high quality programs for our students and innovative professional development opportunities for our staff. We would be able to do so within the proposed spending plan.”

District officials estimate that school tax rates, which are the amount of taxes

residents pay per \$1,000 of assessed property value, will decrease by approximately 0.29% for residents in the Towns of Stillwater, Saratoga and Schaghticoke and 97% for residents in the Town of Easton, which has gone to full value assessment. Final school tax rates are set in August when assessment rolls are finalized. *(See page 3 for more about the tax rates.)*

If voters approve the proposed budget, the projected tax levy—the total amount of money a school district can raise through property taxes—would increase by 2.99%. This increase is below Stillwater’s maximum allowable tax levy increase as determined by the state’s tax levy “cap” formula (4.65%).

On May 17, voters will elect three members to the Board of Education to serve three-year terms.

District residents will also vote on a proposed budget and trustees for the Stillwater Public Library. *(See page 5 for more information.)*



**BUDGET VOTE
AT-A-GLANCE**

WHEN & WHERE:

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2022

12:00 - 9:00 P.M.

STILLWATER AUDITORIUM

PROPOSED BUDGET

\$28,544,605

Spending Decrease	Tax Levy Increase	Projected Tax Rate Decrease
-0.60%	2.99%	-0.29%

PROJECTED TAX RATES			
	2021-22*	2022-23*	% Change
Stillwater	\$14.92	\$14.87	-0.29%
Saratoga	\$14.25	\$14.21	-0.29%
Easton	\$593.90	\$12.79	-97.85%
Schaghticoke	\$59.67	\$59.49	-0.29%

*Tax rates are only estimates and are per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Rates and % change calculations are rounded from six decimal places. Easton has had a revaluation and gone to full value assessment.

Greetings to the community...

On behalf of the Board of Education, I am pleased to present the 2022-23 budget that was adopted at our meeting on April 12, 2022. This year's budget total will be \$28,544,605. Again this year, the budget upholds the vision of the school district as well as the Board-approved district goals, which include student achievement, curriculum and instruction, safe learning environment, communication and community engagement, creating sustainable community partnerships and fiscal management.

As the Chair of the BOE Finance Committee, one of my goals for next year's budget was to have a 0% tax rate increase while maintaining our educational programs and making sure that our staff and teachers have everything they need to continue to ensure that our students receive a high quality education and maintain our infrastructure. I am pleased to say that through the leadership of the board and the administration, we have achieved that goal!

This year's budget continues the support of our current academic programs while adding:

- A STEAM program in the elementary school.
- An assistant principal position in the elementary school.
- Expanded Career and Technical Education, work-based learning, summer enrichment, and credit recovery opportunities for our students.

This budget also supports:

- Continued preventive maintenance programs that we have instituted for HVAC systems, boilers and equipment.

- Increased funding for diesel, gasoline and fuel oil for next year, and funding to purchase three new buses.
- Salary increases that were successfully negotiated with our teachers, plus increased costs associated with employee benefits.
- Continued funding for the \$100,000 capital outlay project.

As I sit and write this, I reflect on how far we have come as a school and community during this time in the COVID pandemic. This school year started with our students coming back to in-person learning, wearing masks and COVID testing. There were many challenges surrounding these issues. The Board of Education is proud of our administration, teachers and staff because, even though there were some bumps in the road, they all came together to work through the issues to ensure student growth, learning and safety during these uncertain times.

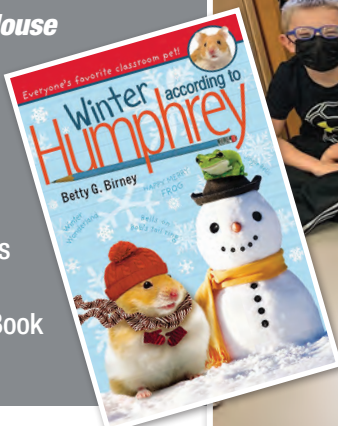
Also, this year we had our first play in our newly renovated, state-of-the-art auditorium since the pandemic started and it was wonderfully done! Our varsity basketball team and our track students had big wins in their respective sports and we are very proud of their accomplishments. The new turf field was installed and we will be breaking ground for the new concession stand this spring! Our students are back and things are bustling again on our campus.

The Stillwater community has many things to be proud of and thankful for! We would also like to thank the community for their continued support of the school district and would like to remind you to please come out and vote on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, from noon to 9 p.m.

— Sincerely, Valerie Masterson, Board President

Our kind and caring elementary students raised \$3,694 for Ronald McDonald House

by reading "Winter According to Humphrey," which was also the focus of their One School One Book program.



BUDGET



Q What's different in the proposed budget?

A The 2022-23 budget proposal decreases spending by \$173,014, or 0.60% less than the current year. The 2022-23 spending plan includes funding for rising costs associated with salaries, employee pensions and benefits, as well as state and federal mandated programs and services. In addition, the proposed budget would fund debt service payments associated with the recent capital project and continue to provide for funding debt service payments from prior years projects.

TAXES

Q What is the difference between the tax levy and tax rate?

A The tax levy is the total amount of money a school district raises in taxes each year from all property owners in the district. Tax rates are calculated by dividing the total amount of the levy by the total taxable assessed value in a community. Tax rates are affected by changes in both municipal assessments and state equalization rates, which are determined during the summer after the budget is adopted. The tax rate is used to calculate each individual property tax bill.

Q How would the proposed budget affect my taxes?

A While the tax levy would increase by \$359,841 next year, total property assessments within the district are also growing, meaning there are more properties across which to distribute the tax levy. So, while the tax levy is increasing 2.99%, the projected tax rate decrease is approximately 0.29% because there is projected to be more taxable value sharing that cost.

Actual tax rates are set in August when assessment rolls for the year are finalized. These rates are based on final property assessments (provided by each town) and equalization rates for each town, which are provided by the state Office of Real Property Services.

REVENUES

Q What is the district's maximum allowable tax levy?

A State law limits the amount a district can increase its tax levy and still have its budget approved by a simple majority of voters (50% +1). Using a formula developed by the Office of the State Comptroller, Stillwater's 2022-23 maximum allowable tax levy limit is 4.65%. However, the proposed 2022-23 budget would increase the tax levy by 2.99%, or \$359,841, which is below the district's tax levy limit.

Q How does the Global Foundries PILOT affect the district's budget?

A The Global Foundries PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) continues to provide a guaranteed source of revenue for the district. The district is planning to receive \$1,355,000 through the PILOT in 2022-23. Although this is a decrease from the current year based on the terms of the agreement, the PILOT

continues to provide revenue that supports programs and services for students.

VOTING

Q Why is there a vote for the Stillwater Public Library on the ballot?

A On May 17, residents will vote on a separate proposition to approve the Stillwater Public Library budget and elect trustees. This is separate from the school district's budget. The library is seeking to increase its budget from \$309,400 to \$320,298, to support and maintain services. This money will be collected by the district and then forwarded to the library. The Stillwater Public Library has the same service boundary as the school district, however the library is not governed by the district.

Q What happens if the budget is not approved?

A Under New York state law, if the school budget is defeated, the Board of Education typically has two options: put the same or a modified budget up for another vote on the third Tuesday in June, or immediately adopt a contingent budget. If residents defeat the proposed budget during a second vote, the Board must adopt a contingent budget.

TAX RATES

Town of	2021 Rate Per \$1,000 Assessed Value	2022 Rate Per \$1,000 Assessed Value	*2023 Rate Per \$1,000 Assessed Value
Stillwater	\$14.69	\$14.92	\$14.87
Saratoga	\$13.30	\$14.25	\$14.21
Easton	\$582.38	\$593.90	\$12.79
Schaghticoke	\$57.97	\$59.67	\$59.49

* The rates projected for the next year are only estimates. The estimated tax rates do not reflect any STAR or other tax exemptions that may reduce individual tax bills. This chart reflects projected tax rates based on the anticipated growth in property assessments. Easton has had a revaluation and gone to full value assessment.

Spring brings lots of activity

Spring is here and the Stillwater campus is blooming with activity. At the elementary school, the morning program returned after a pandemic-related absence, and students are learning and growing through innovative lessons, clubs and community service projects. A STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) classroom is coming to the elementary school, where students will work across disciplines to create a deeper understanding of and solve real-world problems. They'll collaborate, problem solve, think critically and explore, hands-on, skills they'll need as they continue their education and enter the workforce.

At the middle/high school, March 2022 Career Week activities featured middle school students learning from high school students, and high school students sharing their career and technical education experiences with their peers. Plans are also underway for this year's Warrior Days, our sports teams are having a great year, and seniors were once again able to enjoy a senior trip. Moving up ceremonies and graduation are just around the corner.

Estimated Revenues: Where the money comes from

	2021-22	2022-23	Change
Real Property Taxes and STAR	\$12,020,441	\$12,380,282	\$359,841
Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$1,500,000	\$1,355,000	-\$145,000
Interest and Penalties on Property Taxes	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
Tuition Students, Non-Resident	\$0	\$0	\$0
Admissions	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Charges for Services	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$0
Interest and Earnings	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$0
Medicare Retiree Drug Subsidy	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$0
Refund BOCES Services Approved	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$0
Miscellaneous	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
State Aid	\$12,147,178	\$12,384,323	\$237,145
Other Federal Aid	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$0
Federal Medicaid Aid	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0
Transfer from Debt Service	\$275,000	\$275,000	\$0
Revenue Subtotal	\$26,242,619	\$26,694,605	\$451,986
Fund Balance Applied	\$2,475,000	\$1,850,000	-\$625,000
TOTAL Revenues	\$28,717,619	\$28,544,605	-\$173,014



Stillwater's teams excelled in sports and the classroom, with several named NYS PHSAA Scholar-Athlete teams for earning an average of 90 or above.



Fall Sports

Girls Soccer	96.3	Boys Basketball	92.0
Boys Soccer	92.5	Girls Basketball	92.7
Girls Cross Country	94.3	Cheerleading	90.3
Boys Cross Country	92.4	Boys Indoor Track	92.1
Volleyball	95.0	Girls Indoor Track	96.2

Winter Sports



The boys basketball team had a spectacular season finishing 23-4 after becoming Section 2 Class C champions, Regional Class C champions and State Class C finalists.



Senior and future Duke University D1 track and field competitor Gianna Locci is the NYS long jump champion and ranks third in the nation in indoor long jump.

Estimated Expenditures: Where the money goes

ADMINISTRATIVE (10.4% of total budget)	2021-22	2022-23	Change
Board of Education	\$14,939	\$15,277	\$338
Central Administration	\$251,281	\$259,635	\$8,354
Finance	\$435,288	\$452,889	\$17,601
Staff (Legal, Personnel, Public Information)	\$134,575	\$137,875	\$3,300
Central Data Processing	\$179,000	\$239,000	\$60,000
Special Items (Insurance, Dues, BOCES Admin.)	\$303,750	\$320,750	\$17,000
Curriculum Development and Supervision	\$852,160	\$928,648	\$76,488
Employee Benefits	\$616,875	\$611,375	-\$5,500
Subtotal	\$2,787,868	\$2,965,449	\$177,581
PROGRAM (69.9% of total budget)	2021-22	2022-23	Change
Program Legal Fees	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0
In-Service Training	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$0
Teaching - Regular School	\$7,188,286	\$7,430,803	\$242,517
Programs for Students with Disabilities	\$2,926,451	\$2,934,763	\$8,312
Career and Technical Education	\$485,000	\$490,000	\$5,000
Teaching – Special Schools	\$49,600	\$46,600	-\$3,000
Instructional Media	\$765,379	\$794,031	\$28,652
Pupil Services	\$1,248,438	\$1,346,259	\$97,821
Pupil Transportation	\$1,304,997	\$1,399,605	\$94,608
Employee Benefits	\$5,440,187	\$5,314,937	-\$125,250
Transfer to Federal Fund	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0
Subtotal	\$19,613,338	\$19,961,998	\$348,660
CAPITAL (19.7% of total budget)	2021-22	2022-23	Change
Central Services	\$1,642,220	\$1,606,520	-\$35,700
Special Items	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
Bus Purchases	\$350,000	\$380,000	\$30,000
Employee Benefits	\$336,688	\$372,438	\$35,750
Debt Service	\$3,477,505	\$3,148,200	-\$329,305
Transfer to Capital Fund	\$500,000	\$100,000	-\$400,000
Subtotal	\$6,316,413	\$5,617,158	-\$699,255
TOTAL Expenditures	\$28,717,619	\$28,544,605	-\$173,014

Elementary library refresh

Originally built in 1989, the elementary library is being updated and refreshed as part of a voter-approved capital outlay project to improve and maintain school facilities. Work includes new carpeting, updated furniture including tables, desks, chairs and shelving, and painting of the entire space, to make the library a more functional setting for student collaboration, problem solving, research and

self-directed learning. Updates include an area dedicated solely to makerspace activities for individuals, small groups and classes, and more than 600 new books to provide students with a greater selection of characters and topics. The library has shifted from a space where students go solely to check out books to an engaging, innovative learning environment.

PROPOSITIONS & BOE ELECTION

Public Library proposition

Community members will vote on a proposition requested by and for the Stillwater Public Library to raise \$320,298, separate and apart from the annual School District budget, to support, maintain and fund the operating budget of the library. This money will be collected by the district and then forwarded to the library. The Stillwater Public Library has the same service boundary as the school district, however the library is not governed by the district. Voters will also be asked to elect three members to the library's Board of Trustees for at-large terms running from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2025.

Board election

There are three open seats on the Board of Education. The "at-large" seats are for three-year terms to run from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2025, to fill seats for which terms expire June 30, 2022. At the time this publication went to print, the final slate of candidates was not yet available.

CONCESSION BUILDING UPDATE

In May 2021, voters approved construction of a concession building near the middle/high school athletic field to provide a cleaner, safer, efficient and accessible facility for outdoor food service for student activities. The district has been using a tent and temporary storage trailer for this purpose. Work begins on the concession building this spring with a projected fall 2022 opening.



School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2021-22 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2022-23 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2022-23 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$28,717,619	\$28,544,605	\$27,962,514
Increase/Decrease for the 2022-23 School Year		-\$173,014	-\$755,105
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		-0.6%	-2.63%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.7%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$12,020,441	\$12,380,282	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$12,020,441	\$12,380,282	\$12,020,441
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$858,252	\$751,767	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$11,197,646	\$11,827,815	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$11,162,189	\$11,628,515	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$35,457	\$199,300	
Administrative Component	\$2,787,868	\$2,965,449	\$2,965,449
Program Component	\$19,613,338	\$19,961,998	\$19,899,917
Capital Component	\$6,316,413	\$5,617,158	\$5,097,148

* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2022-23 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

The contingency budget for 2022-23 assumes the elimination of all equipment purchases and eliminates funding for a capital outlay project for 2022-23.

	Description	Amount
** List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)		\$0
		\$0
		\$0

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2022-23 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$468
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The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2022-23 by the qualified voters of the Stillwater Central School District, Saratoga County, New York, will be held at the Stillwater Central School Auditorium in said district on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 between the hours of 12:00pm and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the Auditorium, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

1. The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law

Celebrating our **TOP SENIORS**



Class of 2022 Valedictorian **Paige Womble**

grade. Seeking to define her career goal, Paige participated in job shadow, internship and mentorship programs during her high school years and is now focused on becoming an architect.

Paige has attended Stillwater since kindergarten. When asked what she likes best about the district, Paige said, "Throughout high school, I've seen what other schools are like, in our area and farther out, for students and teachers and I like everything about Stillwater. I'm glad this was the school I got to grow up in, and I know everyone here!"

Paige thanked all of her teachers and her guidance counselor, Lisa Miller, "for all of the career exploration experiences I've had." She also thanked her mentors

in the Architecture Construction Engineering program, and her parents for "supporting me through all of my decisions."

After graduation, Paige plans to enroll in a five-year architectural master's degree program, with Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston as her top college choice. Paige is still deciding whether to work in commercial or residential architecture, but she plans to sit for the national Architect Registration Examination.

When asked what advice she'd offer fellow Stillwater students, Paige said, "The earlier you can find out what you enjoy and the more experience you can get, all make your decision so much easier and stress-free."

Paige is a high-achieving student who is both a leader and an explorer. She's been active in student government, serving as president during her sophomore year, as treasurer of the yearbook club and as a member of the volleyball team in ninth and tenth



Class of 2022 Salutatorian **Ryan Golden**

Ryan has attended Stillwater schools since moving to the district in fourth grade. Reflecting on what he likes best about Stillwater, he said, "The students are more welcoming and supportive here than at other schools, and basically, the people here make the school more enjoyable."

Outside of school, Ryan loves to ski during the winter and fish during the summer, "a lot," he said. "It's my main hobby and I fish off the boat in Saratoga Lake or the Hudson River."

Ryan thanked "Coach West and Mr. McC (McClements) for always being available to help with anything, no matter what the topic — school, college or life." He thanked his parents for "supporting me through all of school. Even when they are busy with other things, they are always available to help." And he thanked "all of my friends for making every day enjoyable."

When asked what he will miss most about Stillwater, Ryan said, "I'll miss how friendly our grade is. It feels like I'm part of a big friends group where you know everyone and everyone knows you."

Ryan will focus his future career on renewable energy, "because it's something that can help our future." He plans to major in mechanical engineering at either Clarkson University or Alfred University, and sees himself working on machines such as wind turbines.

When asked what advice he would give to fellow students, Ryan said, "Don't be afraid to ask for help. You're always going to have more questions and more to know. Reaching out and how friendly people are in our school are probably the best things that helped me succeed."

Ryan is an accomplished student and a leader both in the classroom and on the athletic field. He has been a member of the soccer team since ninth grade and served as captain the past two years. Ryan's also been a member of the baseball, lacrosse, bowling and alpine ski racing teams. He's been active in the varsity club and National Honor Society.

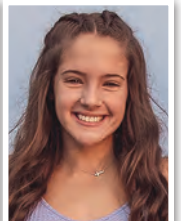
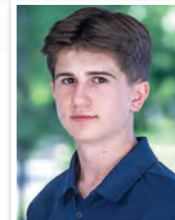
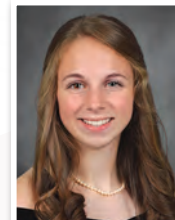
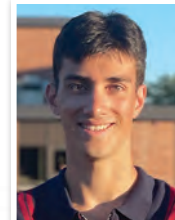
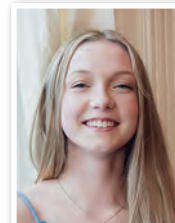
Class of **2022**

TOP 10 STUDENTS

The Stillwater Central School District Class of 2022 top 10 students were named in late March.

Congratulations to

Paige Womble (Valedictorian),
Ryan Golden (Salutatorian),
Michel Ghorayeb, Tai Surakan,
Kelly Moran, Lauren Zazzaro,
Nicholas Baines, Mei Lei Urbanski,
Gianna Locci and Skyler Rich.



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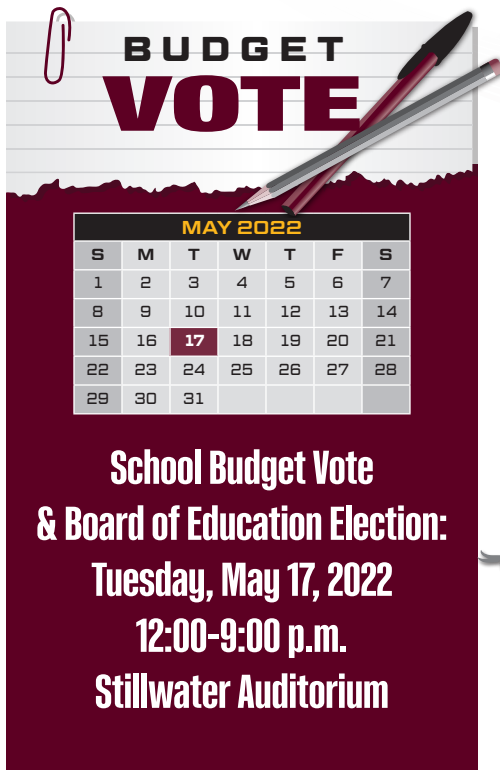
SUPERINTENDENT

Patricia Morris

Editor: Monique Jacobs

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**BUDGET
VOTE**

MAY 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**School Budget Vote
& Board of Education Election:
Tuesday, May 17, 2022
12:00-9:00 p.m.
Stillwater Auditorium**

What's on the ballot?

- ✓ Proposed \$28,544,605 budget for the 2022-23 school year.
- ✓ Elect three (3) members to the Board of Education.
- ✓ Proposed \$320,298 budget for the Stillwater Public Library and election of three trustees for the library.

Absentee Ballot Information

All completed absentee ballots must be received by the district no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, in order to be counted. Applications are available from the District Clerk.



The talented Stillwater Drama Club presented "Disenchanted: A New Musical Comedy" in our state-of-the-art auditorium in March.

VOTER QUALIFICATIONS

To vote, you must be:

- ✓ A resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.
- ✓ 18 years of age or older.
- ✓ A citizen of the United States.
- ✓ Registered with either the school district or the county Board of Elections.

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