



Sioux Falls Lutheran School

# EAGLES NEWS



[Mrs. Tia Esser](#)  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

[Mr. James Stubkjaer](#)  
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL  
ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

[Dr. Kristen Newell](#)  
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL  
ELEMENTARY STEM DIRECTOR

[Mrs. Brenda Bernard](#)  
PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

April 24, 2026

## SFLS to be Featured in PeaceWise Promotional Video

SFLS was recently contacted by [PeaceWise](#) about being featured in a video designed to share the blessings and benefits of PeaceWiseKids and PeaceWiseYouth more broadly within the US/Canadian market.



The PeaceWise curriculum has been part of our Bible classes at SFLS for many years—you can [read more about its impact on our school community](#) by visiting our blog. We are thrilled at the opportunity to participate in this project and look forward to sharing the impact of PeaceWise with other schools across the US and Canada. We also look forward to sharing the finished product with you and the greater Sioux Falls community.

PeaceWise has contracted with 605 Video Company to film the project.

### Filming is scheduled from 8:30AM to 4:00PM on Monday, May 4.

Students whose 2025-26 enrollment packets granted media release permission will be eligible for inclusion in this special video project. **If, for any reason, you do not wish for your child to participate, please contact Megan Baedke at [mbaedke@sflutherschool.com](mailto:mbaedke@sflutherschool.com) by Friday, April 24.**

In an effort to ensure our school is well represented in this video, we **encourage you to send your students to school in spirit wear and kindly ask for your diligent adherence to our dress code on Monday, May 4.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to let me know. We appreciate your support of this exciting opportunity and again look forward to sharing the finished product with you!

Blessings,

Megan Baedke, Director of Community Engagement

Marli Ockander, Middle School Science Teacher & PeaceWise Champion

Tia Esser, Executive Director

## QUICK LINKS

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## NEWSFLASH: PTF Matches Gifts to Preschool ARK OF FAITH Project

Thanks to your generous contributions to our fall fundraiser, the PTF was able to donate \$10,000 toward the new Preschool Ark Initiative playground equipment! You can see the LION representing this gift displayed in the preschool wing vestibule.



Even more exciting — PTF will **match gifts up to \$5,000 through the month of May**, doubling the impact of your support! If you would like to contribute, please scan the QR code in the Ark of Faith section above.

## NEEDS-BASED VARIABLE TUITION & SDPE SCHOLARSHIPS – APPLY BY MAY 15

[K–12 needs-based variable tuition](#) applications for the 2026–27 school year are due through TADS by May 15. Thanks to the continued generosity of our donors, SFLS anticipates awarding up to \$400,000 in tuition assistance to qualifying families.

**Important SDPE Update:** New legislation (SB 84) expands eligibility for the [South Dakota Partners in Education \(SDPE\) scholarship program](#) beginning in 2026–27.

- **Income eligibility is increasing to 200% of the Free & Reduced Lunch Income Guidelines**, meaning more families may qualify.
- Students who have been in the program for three years or are entering high school will need to **reapply this year** (all families who wish to be considered for tuition assistance funds through SFLS during the 2026-27 school year need to reapply this year).
- Reapplying students' household income may not exceed **250% of the Reduced Lunch Income Guideline**.
- **Children in Foster Care automatically qualify** and receive the same scholarship amount for three years.
- SDPE prioritizes **returning students first**, and then new applicants.

## 2026-2027 Qualifying Income Scale

We honor the income level that originally qualified the student, or we use the lower-income level of a subsequent application submitted before the time to reapply.

**A qualifying income cannot be more than what is listed below.**

Household Size	Free Lunch Income Level	Reduced Lunch Income Level	200% Of Reduced Lunch Income Level	250% Reapplying Students Only
2	\$28,132	\$40,034	\$80,068	\$100,085
3	\$35,516	\$50,542	\$101,084	\$126,355
4	\$42,900	\$61,050	\$122,100	\$152,625
5	\$50,284	\$71,558	\$143,116	\$178,895
6	\$57,668	\$82,066	\$164,132	\$205,165
7	\$65,052	\$92,574	\$185,148	\$231,435
8	\$72,436	\$103,082	\$206,164	\$257,705
For each additional family member, add	\$7,384	\$10,508	\$21,016	\$26,270

## What to Do:

- Visit [www.mytads.com](http://www.mytads.com) and click "Financial Aid Assessment" to start your application.
- Submit your application to **both SFLS and SDPE** to be considered for all available assistance.

- Ensure your application reaches a **GOOD form rating by May 15, 2026** (late applications will be waitlisted).

TADS will guide you through required documentation, including your most recent tax return. **For technical support, contact TADS** (Mon–Fri, 7am–5pm CST) at 612-548-3320, 800-477-8237, or TADS-Support@venturedsolutions.com.

As a friendly reminder, **all infant through 12<sup>th</sup> grade families may reduce tuition through [RaiseRight](#)** by purchasing gift cards for everyday expenses and earning tuition credit throughout the year.

## BOOK SALE

### Sioux Falls Lutheran School Annual Used Book Sale August 5-8

\*\*Money raised goes to Tuition Assistance Fund\*\*

- Donation boxes are now available at the main entrance or at the Preschool entrance at SFLS.
- Donations at SFLS will be accepted until August 1.
- Donation boxes available at Memorial Lutheran Church (5000 S. Western Avenue) on June 1.
- Donations accepted include books of all genres for all ages, CD's, DVD's, records, music, board games and puzzles.



## SIGN UP & JOIN THE FUN!

Sioux Falls Lutheran School's annual golf tournament is coming up on Monday, August 3 at Bakker Crossing. This year's Mardi Gras-themed event will bring even more fun and flair to a great day on the course with our community, all while



supporting our school's activities and athletics programs. Registration is now open at

<https://siouxfallslutheran.ejoinme.org/2026SFLSGolfRegistration>—\$500 per team of four. Interested in getting your name out on the course? Hole sponsorships are available for \$750—reach out to learn more!

## SFLS AFTER-SCHOOL HOMEWORK HELP

Homework Help is a free resource for students after school on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays until 4PM. It is supervised by an MS/HS teacher and provides students with a quiet, studious environment to complete homework or work on group projects. Use the QR code to sign your student up!

Click [HERE](#) for more information and to access the QR code.

## HELP US SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT KINDERGARTEN

As you may recall, we shared last spring that enrollment in our 4-year-old preschool program for the 2025–26 school year was lower than in previous years, and we intentionally expanded our 2-year-old program to move younger children out of our wait pool.

With fewer 4-year-olds moving up to kindergarten, we have more openings in kindergarten for the 2026–27 school year than usual—just as we anticipated.

This creates a wonderful opportunity to welcome more students from across our community as they begin their kindergarten journey at Sioux Falls Lutheran School.

Do you know a family with an incoming kindergartener? We would love your help in spreading the word and inviting them to explore SFLS. Please see details on how you can get involved!

### K-8th GRADE YEARBOOK ORDERS!

We're excited to continue offering K–8 yearbooks as a special way to capture this year's memories! After many years of providing them at no cost, yearbooks will now be available for purchase at \$20 each.

If your family would like to order one, please use the link below **by June 1**.

<https://shop.memorybook.com>

All users will have to register the first time they access the site. School Code: 064826M.

Yearbooks will be available for pick up at back to school night in August.

Thank you for your understanding and support—we're grateful to continue providing this keepsake for our students!

## Share the Love. Earn \$500.

Refer a friend for kindergarten at Sioux Falls Lutheran School and you **BOTH** receive a tuition credit!



Families who are registered for the **2026-27 school year** and refer a friend who enrolls in kindergarten for the **2026-27 school year** will earn a **\$500 tuition credit** for both themselves and their friend!\*

Know a family with an incoming kindergartener?  
Invite them to explore SFLS today!

- ✓ You receive \$500
- ✓ Your friend receives \$500
- ✓ It's that simple!



**SFLS** SIOUX FALLS LUTHERAN SCHOOL  
World Ready. Faith Secure.

\*To qualify for the \$500 tuition credit, the new family must meet all admissions requirements, complete the entire enrollment process, pay the \$400 enrollment fee, and maintain continuous enrollment for the duration of the 2026-27 school year. Once these conditions are met, both the referring family and the new family will receive a \$500 tuition credit on April 15, 2027. This offer is only valid for new kindergarten enrollments for the 2026-27 school year.

## LIBRARY

As we near the end of the school year, please take a moment to check with your student(s) for any overdue or missing library books. We appreciate your support in ensuring all books are returned so all students can continue to enjoy our library collection!

## SUPPORT SFLS WITH THE COMMUNITY CARD – in Partnership with First National Bank



The First National Bank in Sioux Falls is excited to offer a Community Card in partnership with Sioux Falls Lutheran School—a simple way to support SFLS through everyday purchases.

The [Community Card](#) works like a debit card, drawing directly from your checking account. When you swipe your card and select the credit option, a portion of each purchase is donated back to Sioux Falls Lutheran School.

It's an easy way to show your school spirit while supporting the mission of SFLS in your daily life. As an added benefit, FNBSF is currently offering a **\$350 incentive** when you open a new personal checking account. This limited-time promotion runs through **June 30, 2026**.

To request a card or open an account, please contact Emily Schonebaum at (605) 782-5742 to learn more.

## CAREER CORNER

### We're hiring!

Junior High Track & Field Coach (Spring 2026)

2026-27 School Year:

Head Varsity Girls Basketball Coach

Junior High Football Coach

Eagle Care Workers (especially 18+)

Learn more and apply: [siouxfallslutheran.com/careers](https://siouxfallslutheran.com/careers).



## CHAPEL

**Chapel** for **Wednesday, April 29** will be led by Pastor Aker from Faith Lutheran Church in the Meyer Chapel & Performing Arts Center.

This year's theme is Walk by Faith, and this week's focus is *The Church's Mission by Faith: Pentecost: The Spirit Empowers the Walk* based on Acts 2:1-21.

- 6-12: 8:05AM
- K-5: 8:50AM

**Preschool chapel** will be held on **Wednesday, April 29**, led by Liz Peters, DCE from Memorial Lutheran Church, in the Early Childhood wing, beginning at **8:40 AM** and **9:00 AM**. The theme is *Parable of the Seeds*.

**1st Grade Chat & Chapel** will take place on Wednesday, April 29. All 1st grade parents, guardians, and family members are invited to gather in the commons after drop-off for a time of fellowship before the chapel service. Additional details will be shared by your student's teacher.

**Campus Chaplain** the week of April 27 is Pastor Aker from Faith Lutheran Church.

**Chapel Offerings:** Our 2nd Semester offering supporting the work of Missionaries Rev. Jordon and Alison Andreasen serving in Romania continues with a total of \$1,207.25 so far. Please join us in supporting these missionaries for the last 4 chapels this school year. Through these gifts, we join in God's mission of sharing the love of Jesus with people around the world.



**We honor God by serving others!**

**BUILDING AN ARK OF FAITH FOR OUR YOUNGEST LEARNERS**

Step by step, two by two, we are building an Ark of Faith — a joyful new playground for our littlest disciples. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, each gift, big or small, helps bring this vision to life. From our mighty Elephants to the diligent Ants, every member of our giving Ark is making a lasting impact. Soon, children will have a safe, faith-filled place to laugh, explore, and grow *for generations of tiny disciples*.



**Through the month of May, gifts toward the Ark Project can go even further thanks to a \$5,000 matching opportunity through PTF — doubling the impact of your generosity.**

*You can learn more about this match in the PTF section below.*



We invite you to climb aboard by scanning the QR code, emailing [bmakepeace@sflutheranschool](mailto:bmakepeace@sflutheranschool) for more information, or visiting the early childhood entrance to see the progress firsthand!

## PTF (PARENT TEACHER FELLOWSHIP)

No PTF meeting in May due to band concerts.

**Next Meeting:** June 15 from 5:30-7:00 PM in the Reading Area.



## Teacher Appreciation Week

The PTF has put together a full-campus plan for **Teacher Appreciation Week May 4-8** to celebrate and recognize our incredible staff across all grade levels.

Our goal is to create a meaningful, fun, and well-coordinated week that ensures *every staff member feels seen and appreciated*—teachers, aides, office staff, custodial, and support teams.

Here's the week:

- **Monday:** Breakfast Bar + Themed Raffle
- **Tuesday:** Coffee Truck ("Thanks a Latte")
- **Wednesday:** Student Notes of Gratitude
- **Thursday:** Classroom-Focused Appreciation (parent-supported)
- **Friday:** Float Bar Celebration

Not all teachers responded, but please find teacher favorites here for consideration on Thursday:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1M8TX71G4tvFhhufA0sLmBEPufLZWVN0t1fXhSZpiczM/e/dit?usp=drivesdk>

Thank you for partnering with PTF to spoil our amazing teachers this week!

## EAGLE CARE

### SAVE THE DATES:

*Monday, May 18* is the last day for after-school Eagle Care.

*Tuesday, May 19*, we will only offer care before school from 7:00-8:00AM. (Students will be dismissed early.)

*Tuesday, May 26* is the first day for registered Summer Eagle Care families.

## COUNSELING SERVICES

**Awareness of the Month Topic: Marijuana Use**

Marijuana use among youth can affect learning, decision-making, memory, and emotional development. Click [Here](#) to learn more.



Barb DeVos, Contracted School Counselor, is available to support your child’s well-being. Barb is at Sioux Falls Lutheran School *Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays*. [bdevos@carrollinstitute.org](mailto:bdevos@carrollinstitute.org) or [bdevos@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:bdevos@sflutheranschool.com)

**RAISERIGHT (AKA SCRIP)**

<b>Order Dates by 10 AM</b>	<b>Pick-Up Dates after 11 AM</b>
Monday, May 4	Thursday, May 7
Monday, May 18	Thursday, May 21
Monday, June 1	Thursday, June 4

**PRESCHOOL**

**SAVE THE DATE:** 2026-27 School Year **BACK TO SCHOOL ORIENTATION & SCHOOL PICTURES:** *August 13*

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**Map Testing Reminder**

Many students started (some finished) MAP testing this week. Some classes and students will work to finish these next week. We are always excited to see how much they have grown!

**Thank you** for encouraging your students to give their best effort. Students perform best when they are well-rested and have a healthy breakfast to start their day.

**SAVE THE DATE:** 2026-27 School Year **BACK TO SCHOOL ORIENTATION & SCHOOL PICTURES:** *August 17*



## **Study Hall Volunteers Needed for 2026–2027 School Year**

Sioux Falls Lutheran School is seeking dependable and caring volunteers to help supervise high school study hall periods during the upcoming school year. In order to increase the number of class offerings, we are in need of additional support to ensure our students have a structured, productive environment for study and quiet work.

Study halls run throughout the day from 8:50 AM to 3:20 PM. Volunteers are welcome to choose days and times that fit their schedules, with the understanding that consistency is important for our students.

Volunteers would assist by monitoring students, maintaining a focused atmosphere, and offering general support during assigned study hall times. This is a great opportunity to serve our school community, build relationships with students, and support their academic success.

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact the school office. We are grateful for your consideration and partnership in serving our students.

*“Serve one another humbly in love.” — Galatians 5:13*

### **Map Testing Reminder**

We will continue our final round of MAP testing for the year April 27-May 1 for students in grades 1-8. This is NOT a “summative” assessment of their learning, but rather an opportunity to measure the growth they’ve made throughout the school year. The results also help guide our instruction, curriculum planning, and support decisions.

**Thank you** for encouraging your students to give their best effort. Students perform best when they are well-rested and have a healthy breakfast to start their day.

**High School Graduation:** Friday, May 15 at 6:30 PM in the Dr. Vaughn & Joann Meyer Chapel and Performing Arts Center.

**SAVE THE DATE:** 2026-27 School Year BACK TO SCHOOL ORIENTATION & SCHOOL

PICTURES: *August 17*

## **SFLS Prom - TOMORROW NIGHT - April 25**

**Theme:** Under Lantern's Light

**Grand March:** 7:00 PM SFLS in the Meyer Chapel

**Dance:** 8-10 PM

**After Prom:** to follow until 2:30 AM



## **STAFFING UPDATES**

While many families have already received this in an email, we wanted to share a staffing update for those of you who may not have seen it. Whitney Fisher will not be returning to Sioux Falls Lutheran School next year. We are thankful for the time she has invested in our students and school community, and we pray for God's blessings on her and her family in the future.

We are also pleased to share that Sheena Sinkgraven will be joining our middle and high school team. Sheena brings a strong background in science education, with teaching experience across multiple grade levels. She holds a degree in Biology with an education endorsement from the University of Sioux Falls and is certified to teach middle-level science as well as advanced biology and physical science. **She will be teaching some middle school science and some high school courses.**

In addition to her classroom experience, Mrs. Sinkgraven is passionate about hands-on, engaging learning and helping students develop curiosity and confidence in their understanding of God's creation. Most of all, Sheena brings a heart for Christ-centered education. She views teaching as both a profession and a ministry, with a desire to nurture students academically and spiritually while fostering a respectful, supportive classroom environment. We are grateful to welcome Mrs. Sinkgraven to SFLS and look forward to the ways she will serve our students and families. As always, our priority is to provide a consistent,

Christ-centered educational experience marked by strong relationships and academic excellence. We are confident in the strength of our high school team and excited for the year ahead.

**Ms. Marli Ockander's course offerings will also change slightly. She will continue to be the 7th-grade homeroom teacher, science teacher, and Bible teacher. However, she will be adding some High School Courses to her teaching schedule.**

## ART

### STATE VISUAL ARTS CONTEST

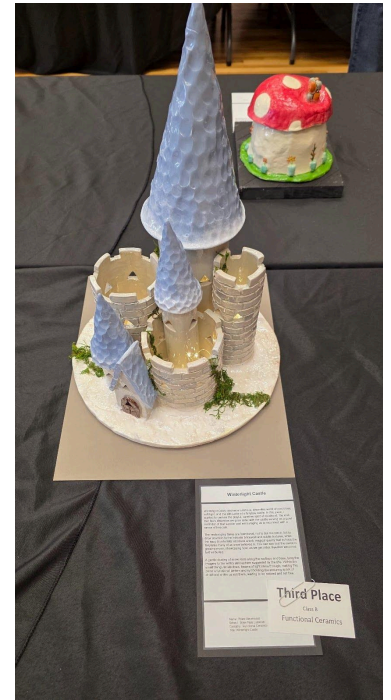
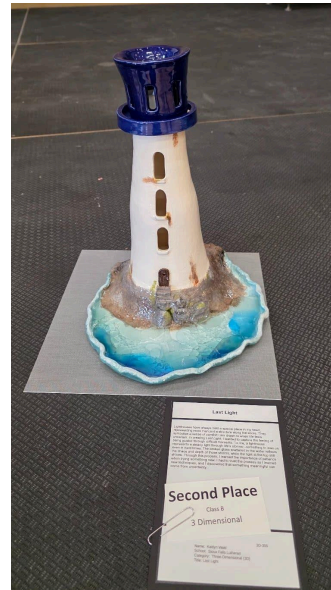
We are incredibly proud of our high school artists who represented SFLS at the State Visual Arts Contest! Competing in Class B, our students delivered an outstanding performance—earning multiple top finishes and placing 4th overall out of 13 schools.

Out of nine entries, they brought home:

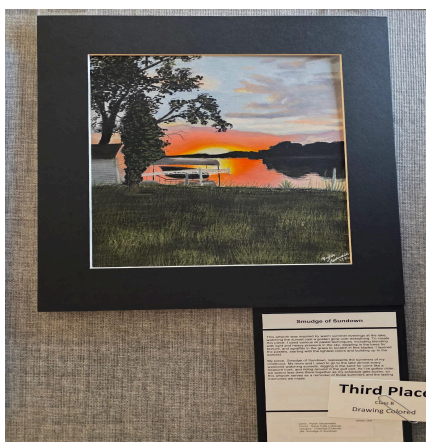
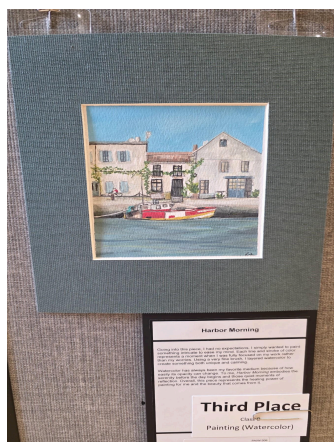
- 🏆 1 Runner-Up (2nd Place)
- 🏆 4 Third Place Awards

Individual results included:

- Crafts (3rd Place): Kaitlyn Wald
- Drawing – Colored (3rd Place): Rylee Steuerwald
- Functional Ceramics (3rd Place): Rylee Steuerwald
- Painting – Watercolor (3rd Place): Livia Sinkgraven
- Three-Dimensional (Runner-Up): Kaitlyn Wald
- Printmaking (5th Place): Rylee Steuerwald



It is such a joy to see these students using their God-given talents with creativity, dedication, and excellence. We are so proud of the way they represented SFLS!





## MEET OUR NEW CHEER COACH:

Hi! I'm Alexis Urban. I am originally from Sioux City, Iowa. I developed a passion for dance at a young age, which grew into a love for cheerleading. I cheered in high school and for a season at Concordia University, Nebraska.

I currently teach 4th grade here at SFLS and truly love being part of this supportive and welcoming community. I am excited to step into the role of sideline cheer coach this upcoming season! This year, I had the opportunity to help out with some practices and games, which gave me valuable insight into the team's goals and allowed me to see their progress firsthand.

I look forward to continuing to build this program by fostering school spirit, encouraging leadership, and developing strong athletic skills in an uplifting team environment that brings glory to God!

Go Eagles!



## TRACK & FIELD

Click [HERE](#) for the full Varsity schedule.

Results can be found on the [Athletic.net](#) website. You can also download the [APP](#).



## GOLF

Click [HERE](#) for the full Golf schedule.

**Summer Camp Registrations** are still open.

Use the QR Code to get you to the registration page. OR use [this link](#). Under Registration, click on Camps. There will be no additional fees added to your registration. Payment is due at time of registration. Questions? Ask Lisa: [lasmus@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:lasmus@sflutheranschool.com) or Monica: [finance@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:finance@sflutheranschool.com)



2026

## SUMMER CAMP INFORMATION & SIGN UP



Join us for growth and positive interactions.

Many different camps are now open for registration!



## APRIL Middle School Ensemble Calendar

[Click or scan to take a look at the SFLS Strings Site!](#)



High School Spring Semester High School Ensemble dates:

- Tuesday, April 28 - Spring Concert (All Ensembles)
- Friday, May 15 - Graduation (Choir, Orchestra, Band)

Upcoming Elementary/Middle School Music Events:

- Wednesday, April 29 - 1st Grade Music Class on the Stage (after Chat and Chapel)
- Monday, May 11 - 4th-8th Grade Spring Concerts
  - 4th/5th Grade at 6:00 PM
  - Middle School at 7:15 PM

### **SFLS Voices Take the Ice at Stampede Game**

Thanks to our 4th and 5th grade (and a few 6th grade) choir students for representing SFLS by singing the National Anthem at a Stampede hockey playoff game last Friday night. They sounded great!



### ASSOCIATION CHURCHES

**Memorial** - Rev. Doug Slavens, DCE Hailey Jo Miller and DCE Liz Peters



#### **Food Pantry Open to All**

The Memorial Lutheran Church Food Pantry will now be open to all SFLS families, staff, friends, and neighbors in need of food assistance. (No questions asked and no forms to complete)

The Food Pantry will be open Monday - Thursday, 9:00-4:00PM or by appointment. You may call the church office at 605-334-7133 for an appointment or with questions. Memorial Lutheran Church is located at [5000 South Western Avenue](#).

[Faith](#) - Rev. Corey Aker & Rev. Jason Rensner

[Our Redeemer](#) - Rev. Brett Simek

[Lord of Life](#) - Rev. Billy Newell

[Resurrection](#) - Rev. Chris Ascher

Click [HERE](#) for worship times!

#### SUPPORTING MEMBER

[Zion](#) - Rev. Greg Lehr & Rev. Paul Winckler

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit your FACTS family portal calendar or click this [link](#) to our website for upcoming events.

Please contact [schooloffice@sflutherschool.com](mailto:schooloffice@sflutherschool.com) with any questions or concerns.



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