Mission Statement

Rome Catholic School is dedicated to the quality education of preschool through sixth grade students of all faiths. Rome Catholic shares the joy of the Gospel daily, by educating the whole child, supporting families, and welcoming the community. We empower each child to grow academically, socially, physically, and spiritually. The Rome Catholic community follows Jesus, through a lifelong commitment to service and learning.
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Introduction

Rome Catholic School has created a comprehensive Reopening Plan for the 2020-2021 school year. The purpose of this plan is to outline the safe reopening of school facilities for in-person instruction, to monitor health conditions to ensure detection of illness, to ensure containment to prevent spreading of illness as directed, and to ensure closure if illness cannot be contained or if closure is required by state and local health departments. Ensuring the safest and most comprehensive education of our students while maintaining a healthy and safe environment is our priority. Feedback was sought via survey from families and the needs were taken into consideration during the formulation of this plan. A committee was formed comprising of stakeholders from the Rome Catholic School community who worked to generate a plan to meet the guidelines issued by the DOH and from the NYS Office for Religious Independent Schools. As necessary, this plan may be revised based on updated information provided by federal, state, or local governmental officials.

Communication

To ensure compliance with communication requirements, Rome Catholic School has implemented the following:

- The school will use our webpage, our established current school messenger system (Rediker), correspondence (letters from the office), and social media to communicate as necessary.
- The nurse, classroom teachers, and staff will instruct and reinforce all COVID-19 protocols.
- Signage and verbal reminders will be used on a regular basis to remind all students, faculty, staff, and visitors of the following:
  - Stay home if they feel sick or show symptoms of COVID-19 illness.
  - Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering when unable to maintain social distance from others.
  - Properly store and when necessary discard PPE.
  - Adhere to social distancing instructions.
  - Report symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19, and how they should do so.
  - Follow hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
  - Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

Rome Catholic School is taking a team approach of the role of Coordinator. Our team consists of the building principal, school nurse and the main office staff.
Health and Safety

Daily Health Screenings

- All screening tools will be evaluated periodically to ensure validity as per CDC symptoms guidelines.
- Anyone completing in-person screenings will be trained to appropriately complete those screening by the nurse.
- Screeners will wear PPE as determined by the nurse.

Students

- Students will be screened daily using an approved screening tool to be determined. The screening tools will be completed by parents before the child enters the school. If the parent does not complete the screening tool, the child will be screened on the premises by the nurse before entry to the building is permitted.

Employees

- Faculty and staff will complete a daily approved screening tool to be determined. The screening tools will be completed by faculty and staff before they enter the school. If the faculty or staff member has not completed the screening tool prior to arrival, the faculty and staff will be screened on the premises before entry to the building is permitted.

Visitors

- Any visitors, vendors, or contractors that must enter the building will complete an onsite screening prior to entering the building.

Any students, employees, or visitors with a temperature, signs of illness or positive responses to screenings will be isolated for further evaluation in the designated isolation room.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

- Cleaning logs will be posted in classrooms, bathrooms and common use areas that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.
- Appropriate number of employees will be available to complete the cleaning and disinfection as needed.
- The school nurse will train students, faculty, and staff on appropriate hand and respiratory hygiene. Information will be made available to parents to reinforce these concepts at home.
- Student bathrooms and faculty bathrooms have soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
- Each classroom will have alcohol-based hand sanitizer as will all common areas and entrances. Hand sanitizer stations at the entrances will be touch free.
• Hand sanitizer use will be monitored by teachers in elementary classes. Any parent of a student not wanting their child to use hand sanitizer that notifies the school will be accommodated to allow for handwashing instead of the use of hand sanitizer.
• Appropriate signage will be placed near hand sanitizer stations indicating appropriate usage.
• The Maintenance Dept. will be notified upon installation of hand sanitizer unit that hand sanitizer can be flammable and installation areas should be chosen carefully to avoid heat sources.
• Waste receptacles will be placed at all sanitizer stations in classrooms and common areas for proper disposal of soiled items.

Social Distancing

• All common areas (e.g., bathrooms, hallways, cafeteria etc.) will be marked with 6-foot social distancing floor markings.
• Student and teacher desks will be placed using 6-foot social distancing guidelines.
• Classroom floors will be marked so that students will maintain social distancing for seated work and when lining up.
• Students participating in formal PE and Music classes will maintain 12 feet social distancing. PE classes will be outside when practical and the gym will be used for both Music and PE when necessary. The custodial staff will disinfect the gym at the close of each school day.

High Risk Groups

Parents of students in high risk groups for COVID-19 should seek the guidance of their healthcare providers. Rome Catholic will make every effort to ensure the student’s needs are met if they attend in person, and will provide remote learning if necessary.

The principal will discuss on a case-by-case basis concerns of high-risk employees or those living with people that are high risk.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE and face coverings)

• Masks will be worn in all common areas while traveling to and from the building and through the building or any time social distance cannot be maintained.
• While engaged in socially distant learning, e.g., at desks, students are permitted to take mask breaks.
• Students will not wear masks while eating but will wear masks to and from the cafeteria.
• All teachers and students will have a mask with them at all times, lanyards and or clips will be provided for students for assuring they are not forgotten while in school
• The school nurse will provide lessons, and all staff will support and reinforce lessons regarding proper application, removal and discarding of face masks/PPE.
• CDC handouts will be distributed and posted regarding proper PPE usage.
Management of Ill Persons

- The school nurse will instruct all staff to observe for signs of COVID-19 illness in students and other staff members:
  - Fever or chills of 100 F or higher
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea of vomiting and/or
  - Diarrhea

- Staff members should monitor students for any sign of illness such as:
  - Flushed cheeks
  - Rapid or difficulty breathing without recent physical activity
  - Fatigue, and/or irritability; and
  - Frequent use of the bathroom

- In addition, all employees will receive information on the symptoms of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C):
  - Fever
  - Abdominal pain
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Neck pain
  - Rash
  - Blood shot eyes
  - Feeling extra tired

The school nurse will use her medical judgement when necessary for calling emergency services regarding the health of any student, employee, or visitor.
• Any students or staff found symptomatic will be taken to the nurse for further evaluation.
• Students and employees who screen positive for symptoms of COVID-19 by the school nurse will be appropriately isolated and the nurse will then follow the guidelines set forth by the DOH regarding a positive screening.
• A small isolation room with supervision will be provided to separate student, faculty or staff from others with COVID-19 symptoms until they can go home or to a healthcare facility.
• Parents will be notified in writing by the school nurse the protocol for their child presenting with symptoms of COVID-19.
• All appropriate PPE requirements for school health office staff will be made available.
• CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfection will be followed.
• Asthma related respiratory treatments will be handled on a case-by-case basis and appropriate protocols will be followed.

If a student or staff reports having tested positive for COVID-19, the school nurse will notify the Oneida County Department of Health to determine what steps are needed for the school community.

Return to School After Illness

Rome Catholic School will follow CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. If a person is not diagnosed by a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) with COVID-19 they can return to school once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for 24 hours. If they have been diagnosed with another condition and has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school, they may then return to school.

If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and will stay at home until:

• It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms.
• It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine).
• It has been at least three days since the individual’s symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

The CDC provides specific guidance for individuals who are on home isolation regarding when the isolation may end. CDC recommends 14 days of quarantine after exposure based on the time it may take to develop illness if infected. Thus, it is possible that a person known to be infected could leave isolation earlier than a person who is quarantined because of the possibility they are infected.
COVID-19 Testing

Rome Catholic will comply with CDC guidance and not conduct COVID-19 testing or require testing or antibody testing of students or staff members. The decision of whether a test needs to be conducted will be determined by a healthcare provider or the local department of health.

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is a public health function performed by local public health departments to trace all persons who had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. This allows public health officials to put in place isolation or other measures to limit the spread of the virus. Rome Catholic will cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing. To assist public health departments in knowing who may have had contact at school with a confirmed case Rome Catholic will:

- Keep accurate attendance records of students and staff members.
- Ensure student schedules are up to date.
- Keep a log of any visitors which includes date, time and where in the school they visited.
- Assist local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual at school in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.

Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations. Rome Catholic will not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local department of health.

Tracing

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, Rome Catholic will immediately notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as employees or visitors who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations.

- Employees that test positive shall report such information to the principal.
- The principal will report this information to the school nurse, superintendent of the Diocese of Syracuse and when appropriate, the director of the UPK Program.
- The school nurse will communicate such information to the Oneida County Department of Health.
Cleaning and Disinfection

- A spray bottle of appropriate cleaner and paper towels will be given to each classroom teacher for periodic cleaning of teacher used items.
- All trash receptacles and paper towel dispensers in the school building are hands free.
- Hand sanitizer will be available near the water bottle refilling stations.
- All drinking fountains will be closed and students will be encouraged to use their own water bottles.
- For cleaning and disinfection of highly used or high-risk areas:
  - Restrooms will be cleaned periodically throughout the day.
  - Employees using tools or items are responsible to maintain a regular cleaning schedule for those items using appropriate DOH cleaners.
- Sinks and urinals will be marked to maintain social distancing. As the numbers allow, some sinks and urinals may be marked or bagged as unusable.
- Appropriate signage will be posted at the bathroom so that occupancy and distancing rules are adhered to.
- CDC guidelines will be followed by employees of the Maintenance Dept. should there be a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case. All guidelines will be followed per instruction of the DOH.
  - Close off areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
    - Responsible Parties do not necessarily need to close operations, if they can close off the affected areas (e.g., classroom, restroom, hallway), but they should consult the local health departments in development to their protocols.
  - Open windows to increase air circulation in the area.
  - Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect, unless waiting 24 hours is not feasible, in which case wait as long as possible.
  - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.
  - Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it can be reopened for use.
    - Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the area and resume school activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
  - If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection should continue.

Facilities (K-6)

General Health and Safety Assurances

- Student lockers will be staggered so that two classes are not directly next to one another and
teachers will stagger the student use of lockers to maintain social distancing while lockers are in use.

- Students participating in learning that is not social distant, such as reading groups at a reading table, will wear an appropriate facial covering. The tables will be wiped between use.
- All student learning will take place within the cohort model. In grades K-6 a cohort is the physical classroom to which the child is assigned, e.g., K, 1/2, 3/4, 5/6 classrooms.
- Floors in the common areas will be marked with directional arrows for flow of traffic and 6-foot social distancing denotations.
- Only one class will be permitted in the stairwell at any given time.
- Traffic on stairwells will be restricted to one direction at a time and students and teachers should prepare to wait and take turns to do so.
- All visitors, delivery people, and parents of students will use the main door to handle business. There will be a screening station in the closed section in the foyer. Anyone given permission to access the building is required to comply at the screening station and to sign in as stated in the guest log.
- General entry of the public will be by appointment only.
- Faculty/Staff entrance to the building will be at the outer gymnasium door and a daily sign in screening station will be provided. All faculty and staff must complete the DOH COVID-19 screening upon entering the building.

Fire Code Compliance

If and when needed all physical changes to the facility will meet fire code compliance. At this time the physical relocation of the Nurse’s office to a larger location is the only change that was necessary.

Doorways

The function, position, and operation of automatic corridor doors will remain unchanged.

Doors that must be physically opened should remain open during high traffic times to reduce the number of times they need to be touched.

Emergency Drills

Evacuation drills and lockdown drills are required by Educational Law and Rome Catholic School is required to complete eight (8) evacuation drills and four (4) lockdowns drills. It will be necessary to follow protocols that allow for social distancing rather than our typical protocols while conducting these drills.

Students will be instructed that during evacuations and lockdowns that social distancing protocols are for drills only and that social distancing would not be a priority if there were to be a real emergency.
Required Square Footages

- Classroom: 20 sq. ft./person
- Cafeteria: 15 sq. ft./person
- Offices: 150 sq. ft./person

When in common areas, six-foot social distancing will be followed. Students in the gymnasium for PE or music class must practice 12-foot social distancing.

Facility Alterations

At this time no facility alterations are necessary beyond relocating the nurse’s office and designating an isolation room should the need arise.

Ventilation

Classroom windows should remain open when possible to promote air quality.

Child Nutrition

Rome Catholic School participates in the School Food Authorities (SFA) Federal Child Nutrition Program. The cafeteria services are provided through Rome City School District and as such are in compliance with the Child Nutrition Program requirements. More information about the Child Nutrition Program is available at the RCSD website under food services.

Rome Catholic School will provide breakfast and lunch in the manner outlined below.

Safety and Sanitation

- All cafeteria surfaces will be completely wiped down and disinfected between each student (cohort) use;
- Serving line surfaces will be completely wiped down and disinfected between each student (cohort) use;
- Protective barriers will be installed at the point of sale/point of pickup to minimize the spread of germs;
- Adequate supplies of face masks, soap, hand sanitizer, and tissues will be available in the kitchen and cafeteria;
• All staff will be required to wear single-use gloves when handling or delivering all foods;
• All staff will be required to wear a disposable apron when handling or delivering foods;
• Only food services staff and custodians (for cleaning purposes only) will be permitted in school kitchens.

Free and Reduced Lunch Application

The free and reduced lunch program is designed to aid families in providing a healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunch to their children. We encourage all families to apply for this program. For more detailed information about the free and reduced lunch program you may contact the RCSD Food Services Department at (315)-338-6556.

School Breakfast (In-Person or Remote Learning)

All breakfast meals will be served in a ‘grab and go’ style. Those students that choose to participate will be given a breakfast at dismissal to be eaten at home the following morning.

School Lunch (In-Person)

Pre-K students will eat in their classroom and meals will be delivered. Social distancing will be followed.

Grades K-6 will eat lunch in the cafeteria and two lunch periods will be scheduled to allow for social distancing.

For all lunch times the safety and sanitation rules listed above will apply.

Hand Hygiene

Before and after eating every meal while at school students will be required to wash their hands. All staff will wear gloves at all times while handling food and will wash their hands before putting gloves on and after taking gloves off.

Food Sharing

Teachers and cafeteria staff will instruct students that the sharing of food and beverages is not a safe and healthy practice and will be discouraged.
Food Allergies

Any student with food allergies will be given seating that will be exposure-free to the food item of concern. Parents of students with food allergies should speak with the school nurse to ensure all proper precautions are taken.

Transportation

Transportation is provided by the public school district in which the students reside. Rome Catholic will encourage all students who receive public school transportation to adhere to the CDC and DOH guidelines.

- Students are expected to wear masks while on the bus and maintain social distancing as directed by the bus monitor/driver.
- Only students from the same household may share a seat.
- All regular bus rules apply, such as no eating or drinking on the bus, which would require removal of the face mask.

Drop off and Pick up

- To meet social distancing guidelines, parents should anticipate that drop off and pick up will be different for the 2020-2021 school year.
  - More time should be anticipated for drop off and pick up.
  - Multiple drop off and pick up points will be assigned by grade levels.
  - Parents will not be permitted in the building for drop off and pick up.
  - Students must be screened prior to entering the building.

Social Emotional Well-Being

Rome Catholic School is working with the Diocese to provide regular counseling services for our students. It is our intention to form a team that will identify needs of a social-emotional nature and to address those needs. Potentially an on-site counselor will provide support in the form of classroom lessons, faculty in-service, and family resources.
School Schedules

School Calendar

Rome City School District is Rome Catholic School’s district of location, and as such we follow their yearly calendar for attendance. As in typical years, if RCSD is not in session, RCS is not in session.

As per Rome City School Districts reopening plan, adjustments have been made to the calendar as follows:

- September 2 & 3 (scheduled Superintendent’s Conference days) – CANCELED
- September 7 – HOLIDAY, Labor Day
- September 8 (scheduled first day of school) – EMERGENCY DAY
- September 9 & 10 (scheduled school day) – Superintendent’s Conference Days
- September 11 (scheduled school day) – EMERGENCY DAY
- September 14 – FIRST DAY OF CLASSES FOR STUDENTS

Emergency Days are days previously reserved as contingency days (inclement weather or emergent building closure needs). We will use those days as seen in the list above to ensure proper preparation and training of faculty and staff for new protocols. In the event of bad weather or other inability to meet in person, remote learning will take place for the day in question.

Student Schedules

Each year our classroom teachers set daily schedules based on required minutes of teaching. We also set schedules for special classes such as music, art, PE, library/technology, and foreign language. This year will be no different and classroom schedules will be made available to families when the school year begins and the teachers have had an opportunity to evaluate the needs of the students and what best meets those needs.

Attendance

Daily Attendance

Rome Catholic School is responsible to collect and report daily attendance regardless of instructional setting being in-person, hybrid or remote learning.

- Teachers will take daily attendance regardless of setting in Rediker, our student management system.
• Flexibility may be necessary during remote learning or if students need to be kept home due to illness.
• Rome Catholic will work with families where situations warrant assistance with connecting remotely either by lending technology devices or seeking internet access.

Please note that UPK students are considered RCSD students and fall under their attendance policies in addition to those at Rome Catholic School.

Chronic Absenteeism

In situations where absenteeism becomes excessive, Rome Catholic will work with the family to support and increase the student’s attendance in school. We encourage families to contact us before attendance become chronic so that we may prevent this issue.

Teaching and Learning

Models of Instruction

K-6 Grade

Rome Catholic anticipates offering 5 full days per week in-person instruction for K-6 students. Any K-6 students whose parents prefer they do not attend school in-person and wish to enroll in remote learning must contact the school and make this preference known as soon as possible so that accommodations can be made.

Once your preference is made in writing via email or hand written letter, changes in attendance choice will only be accommodated on the first day of each month.

UPK 3 & UPK 4

Parents must complete the RCSD Instruction Choice Survey that was made available to them by RCSD. Changes in attendance choice must follow RCSD policy. For questions or concerns please call RCSD’s Early Childhood Program at (315) 334-1250.
In-Person

As much as possible Rome Catholic School will operate in the in-person model of instruction 5 days per week.

At this time, Grades K-6 enrollment is such that social distancing can be maintained in each classroom and we do not foresee a need for a hybrid learning model. If COVID-19 infection rates change and governmental authorities direct closure of the school buildings, Rome Catholic K-6 will make the change to remote learning.

UPK students will attend as per the direction of RCSD as they are considered RCSD students due to their education being funded by the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Grant through RCSD.

Hybrid

As stated above, the enrollment numbers in Grades K-6 do not show a need for a hybrid learning model as we can accommodate all students in Grades K-6 to be in full attendance 5 days per week.

UPK students will attend as per the direction of RCSD as they are considered RCSD students due to their education being funded by the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Grant through RCSD.

If at any time the hybrid model needs to be implemented, Rome Catholic School will follow the hybrid model prescribed by RCSD. This will maintain consistency and continuity of services provided by RCSD. The following chart is a tentative hybrid schedule which is to change as needed and in conjunction with changes in RCSD’s hybrid plans.

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<td>In-Person Learning (A) --- Remote Learning (B)</td>
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Remote

If at any time Rome Catholic is required to provide remote learning either due to closure or hybrid, the schedule of the regular school day will be maintained as closely as possible.

Academic Program

Regardless of the instructional model or age level, all students will receive a program aligned with the New York State Learning Standards provided by a certified teacher and there will be direct, daily live interaction between students and teachers.
UPK students will be screened in the initial weeks of school in September regardless of mode of instruction. Families will also be asked to complete a social-emotional screening prior to the first day of school to get a baseline for social and emotional needs of students.

K-6 students will use i-Ready diagnostic assessments to determine individual student needs for academics.

Before and After School Care Programs

Rome Catholic School will not begin the year with Before and After School Care Programs in operation. We will reassess quarterly to see if circumstances change and will work to provide Before and After School Care Programming when we can assure it can be provided in a safe and healthy manner within the DOH and NYS guidelines.

Special Classes

Rome Catholic School currently offers art, PE, music, library/technology, and intends to offer Spanish. These classes will take place in the student’s main classroom as much as possible. In situations where singing and physical activity will take place, these classes will be held maintaining 12-feet of social distancing/spacing either in the gym or outside.

Report Cards

UPK report cards will follow RCSD guidelines and be issued three times a year using Teaching Strategies Gold.

K-6 students will receive quarterly progress reports and report cards following our regular academic calendar.

Grading

In the spring of 2020 teachers provided students with learning activities and lessons with concern mainly that students stay connected and engaged. Students were given participatory credit when applicable. This fall we return to more typical accountability for student learning. Regardless of mode of learning, assessment of student learning will take place and be reported to parents.

At any time if teachers or parents are concerned about a student’s progress, conversation should take place and a plan activated to ensure student success.
Technology Equity

Rome Catholic will make available via loan, technology devices for those who do not have them readily available. Efforts will also be made to accommodate need for internet access by attempting to provide MiFi devices if possible.

Communication Plan for Instruction and/or Technology

Families may contact the following with questions for instruction and/or technology:

- Classroom teacher
- Nancy Wilson, Principal at newilson@syrdiocese.org or 315-336-6190 ext. 2
- James Gulick, Technology Mentor at jgulick@syrdiocese.org

Athletic and Extra-Curricular Activities

Beginning extra-curricular clubs will be postponed at the start of the year. There will be quarterly review to assess the assurance of beginning them in a safe and healthy manner within the guidelines provided by the DOH and NYS.

Bilingual Education and World Languages

English Language Learners (ELLs) will be identified and assessed in cooperation with their home districts. Qualifying students will receive supports as required and their progress will be monitored. Faculty and staff will receive professional learning opportunities to best support their ELL students.
Acknowledgements

Rome Catholic School wishes to acknowledge the following members of the School Reopening Committee:

• Alyson Baribault, Teacher
• Margaret Bartell, Administrative Assistant
• Victoria Decker, Teacher
• Christina Earl, Board Member, Parent
• Devyn Fisher, Teacher
• James Gulick, Technology Mentor
• Paul Jennings, Head of Maintenance
• Anne Mack, School Nurse, Parent
• Tina Rescigno, Custodian
• Gayle Tien, Teacher
• Nancy Wilson, Principal

COVID-19 Safety Coordination Team:

• Margaret Bartell, Administrative Assistant at mbartell@syrdiocese.org 315-336-6190
• Anne Mack, School Nurse at anmack@rcsd.org phone 315-336-6190 ext. 3
• Madeline Mills, School Secretary at mmills@syrdiocese.org 315-336-6190
• Nancy Wilson, Principal at newilson@syrdiocese.org 315-336-6190, ext. 2

Resources:

CDC Link for School Information

NYS Department of Health - COVID-19

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