

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY ANTONIN SCALIA LAW SCHOOL

LAW & ECONOMICS CENTER

Elementary School Teacher Use of EdTech: Preliminary Teacher Survey Results

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | OCTOBER 2020

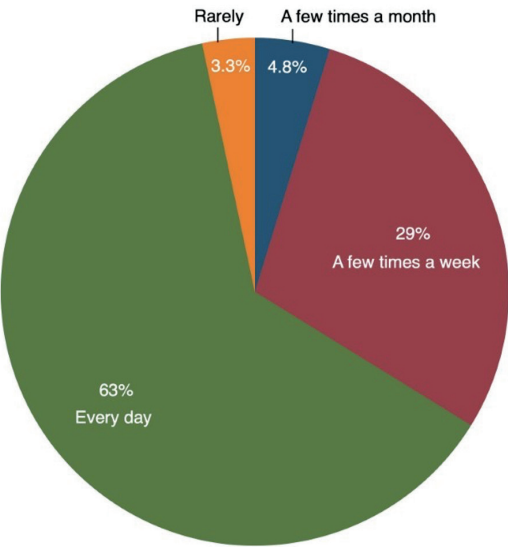


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Digital educational technology (“edtech”) has grown to become a core component of education. Most students use computers or tablets during school, and teachers routinely incorporate videos, apps, and other web-based content into their lesson plans. What is more, many schools use tech platforms to distribute assignments, post grades, and provide information to students and parents. And as the pandemic has ushered in an era of remote instruction, edtech has proven indispensable to the continuation of primary and secondary schooling.

This report is based on information from an online survey of elementary school educators from 111 schools across ninety-three school districts in nine states with varying student privacy laws (Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Texas) during the 2018-19 academic year designed to shed light on how elementary school teachers utilize edtech. Specifically, we examine the frequency and type of edtech used both in the classroom and assigned as homework. Further, we also study the extent to which schools provide guidelines for edtech use, and educators are aware of, and receive training on, federal and state student privacy laws. The study also explores the relationship between the presence of privacy training or edtech guidelines, state student privacy laws, and the willingness to use edtech.

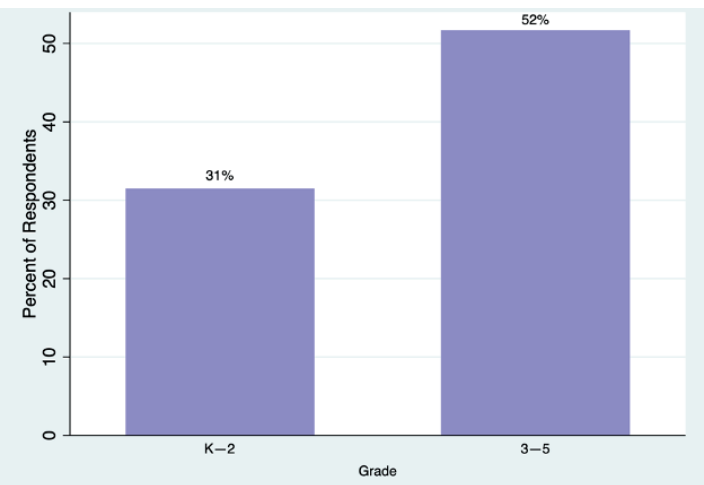
FREQUENCY OF EDTECH USE IN THE CLASSROOM



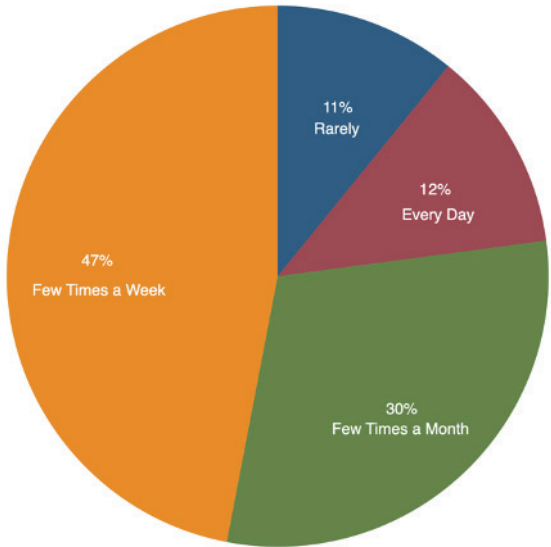
Below we highlight some of the key findings:

- Nearly all educators sampled (97%) employ edtech inside the classroom, and 92% of these educators use it at least a few times a week, with a majority (63%) using it daily. At the same time, less than half (41%) of sampled educators regularly ask their students to use edtech outside the classroom as part of homework. This average masks a marked difference across grades – not surprisingly, edtech homework is more common for older students, with 52% of grades 3-5 teachers report assigning edtech homework, compared to only 31% of educators who teach grades K-2.

EDTECH HOMEWORK BY GRADE TAUGHT



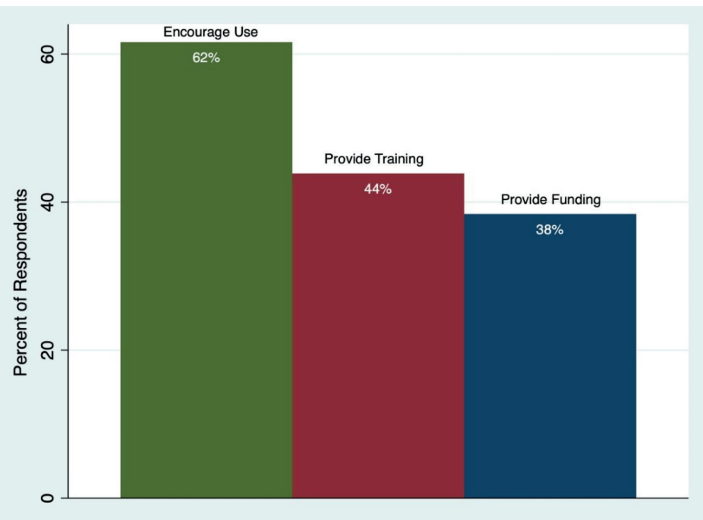
FREQUENCY OF EDTECH HOMEWORK



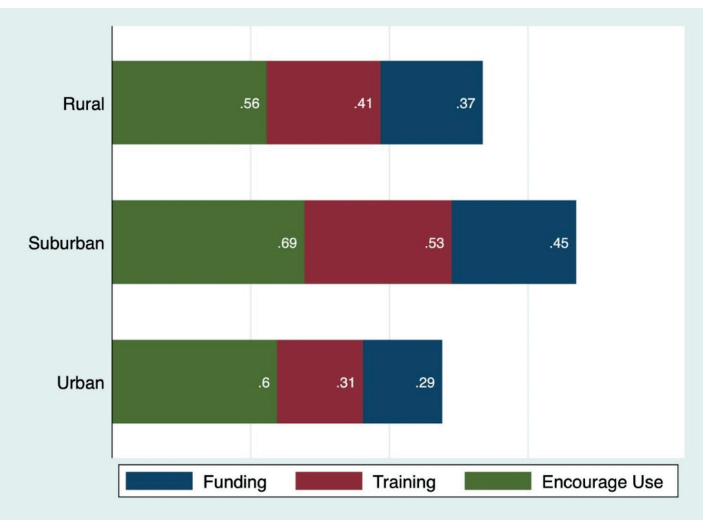
- The frequency of edtech use inside and outside the classroom is relatively uniform across school locations. Over 90% of educators across the categories report daily or weekly use of edtech inside the classroom, and 59% of educators assign edtech homework and at least a few times week. Rural and suburban respondents were more likely to report daily and weekly edtech homework than their urban counterparts.

- A majority (62%) of respondents say that their administration encourages use of edtech, but only 44% of respondents are given edtech training, and even fewer (38%) say that their administration fosters their use of edtech by providing funding. Further, urban schools lag significantly behind both rural and suburban schools in training and funding.

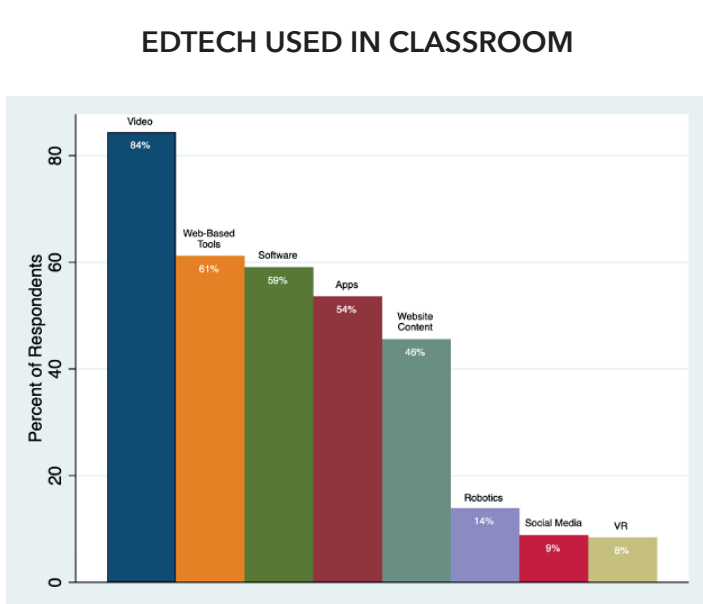
MEANS FOR FOSTERING EDTECH



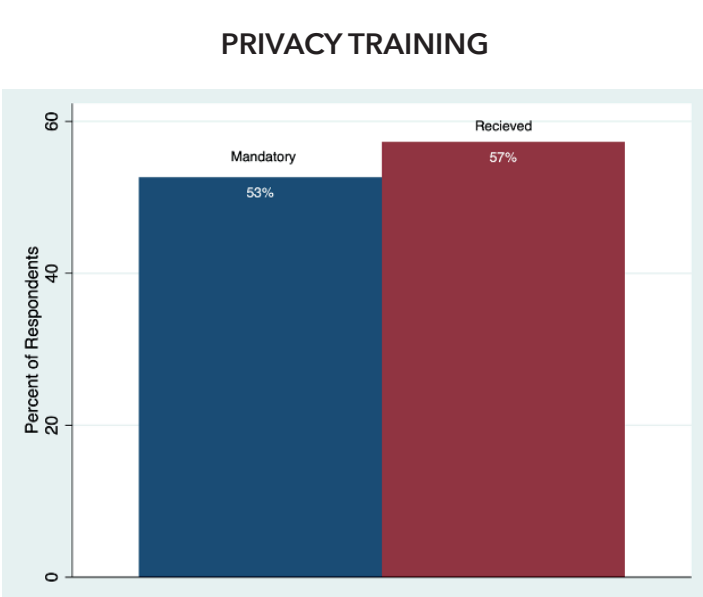
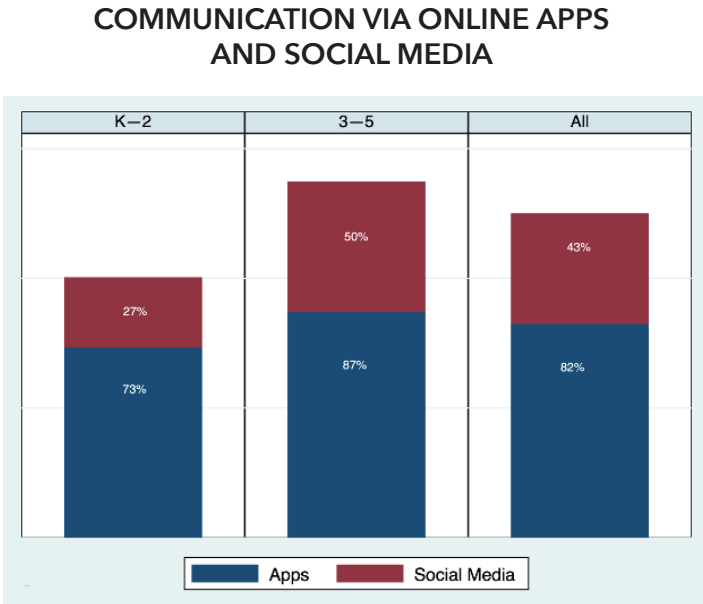
MEANS FOR FOSTERING EDTECH BY SCHOOL LOCATION



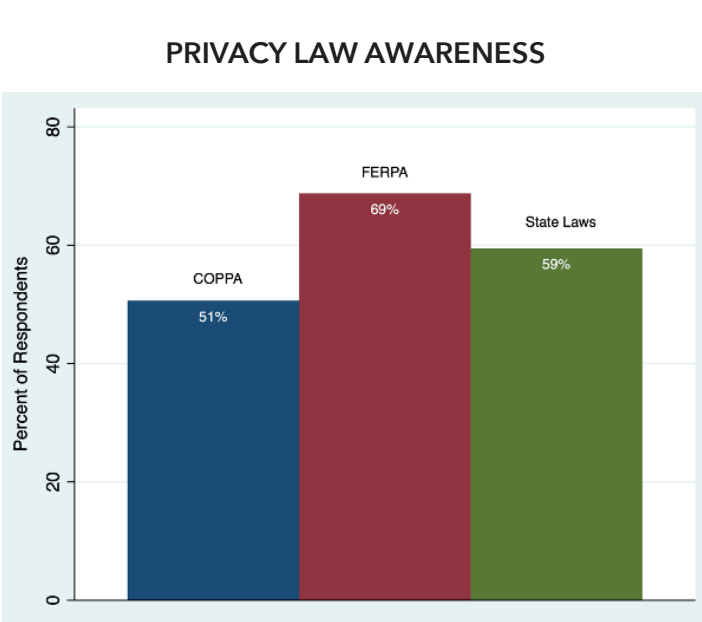
- Video (e.g, YouTube) is the most commonly used type of edtech inside the classroom. Web-based learning applications, such as Scratch or Google Apps for Education are the most common form of edtech homework. Social media, robotics, and virtual reality were the least commonly reported types of edtech used either inside or outside the classroom.



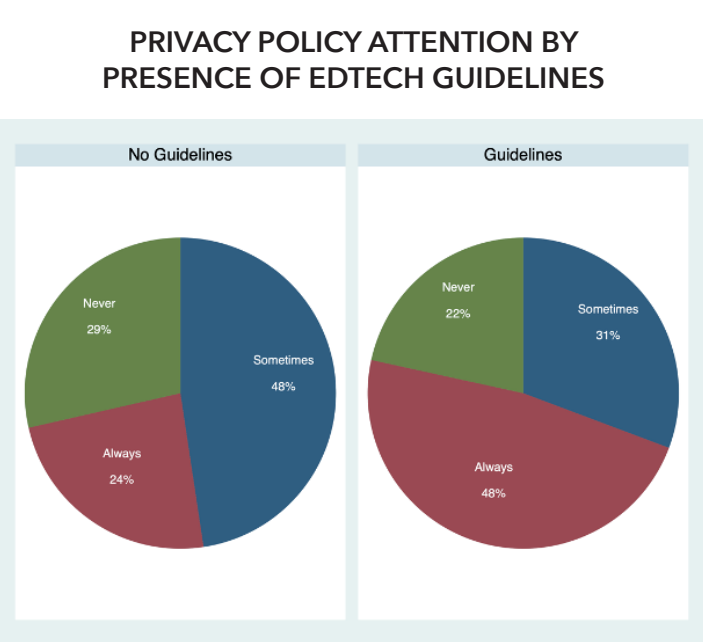
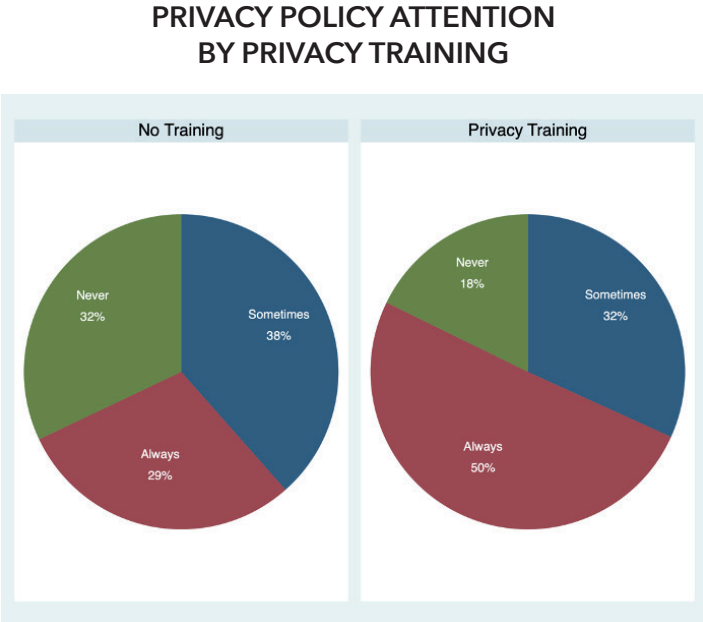
- A little more than half of the sample (53%) reported having mandatory privacy training, and 57% reported having received some privacy training at least once. A majority of those who have had privacy training report having done so more than once.
- Most educators (82%) report using online applications (e.g., Google Apps for Education, Blackboard, or Class Dojo) to communicate with parents and students. About half as many (43%) report using social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) to broadcast classroom or school information.



- A majority of educators are at least “somewhat familiar” with each of the most relevant student privacy laws. Specifically, educators were more likely to have knowledge of FERPA (69%) and their state privacy law (59%) than COPPA (51%).



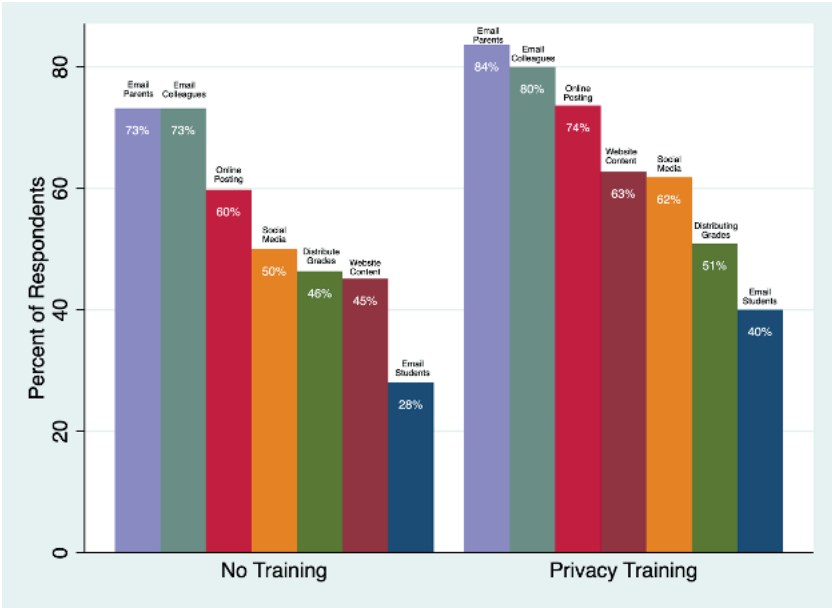
- Educators who receive privacy training, or whose schools have edtech guidelines in place, are more likely to report using edtech and are more likely to take actions that reflect an awareness of student privacy:
 - 50% of educators who had privacy training, and 48% of those from schools with edtech guidelines in place, report “always” reading privacy policies compared to only 29% of those educators who have not had privacy training, and 24% of those who come from schools without edtech guidelines in place.



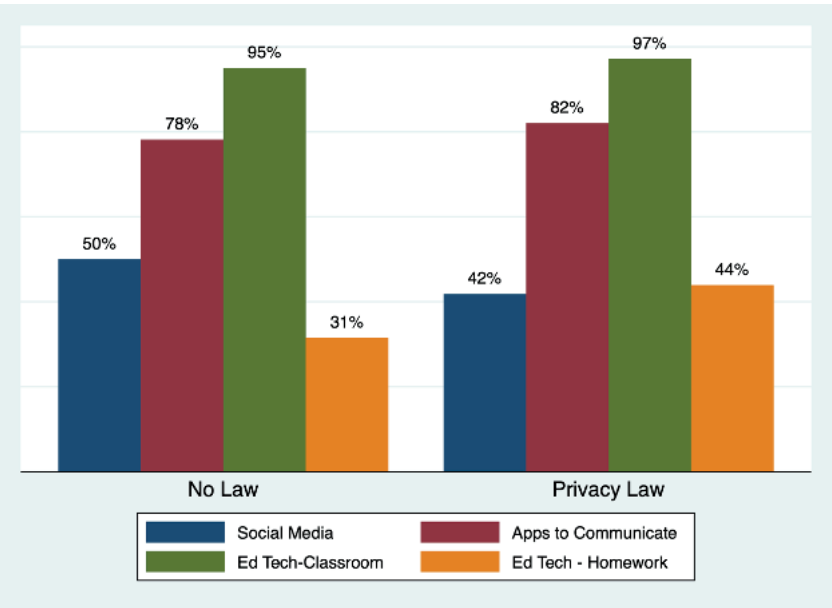
o The presence of privacy training and edtech guidelines is also associated with higher levels of student privacy awareness across various situations, such as emailing parents and colleagues, social media posting, and the use of website content.

• There does not appear to be any general relationship between the presence of a student privacy law and the overall use of edtech. However, the data suggest that educators from states with student privacy laws assign edtech homework more frequently.

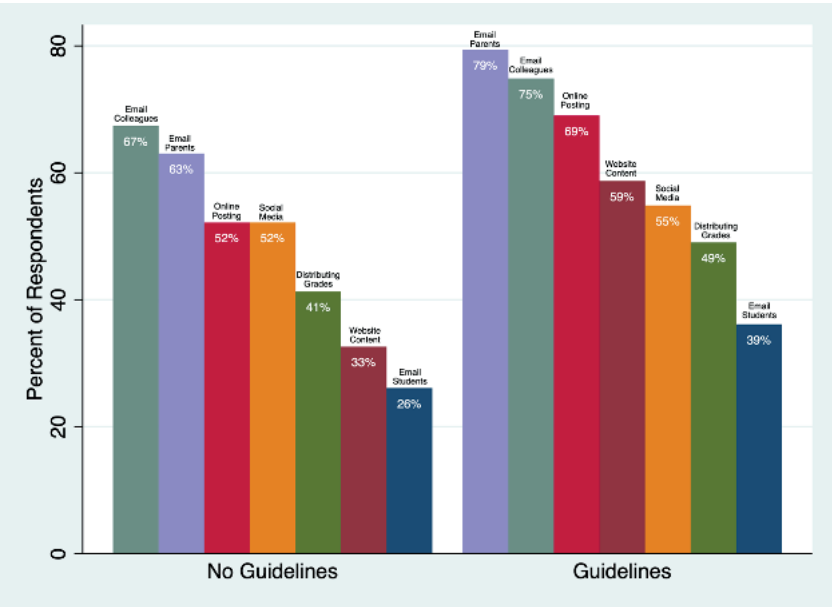
STUDENT PRIVACY AWARENESS
BY PRIVACY TRAINING



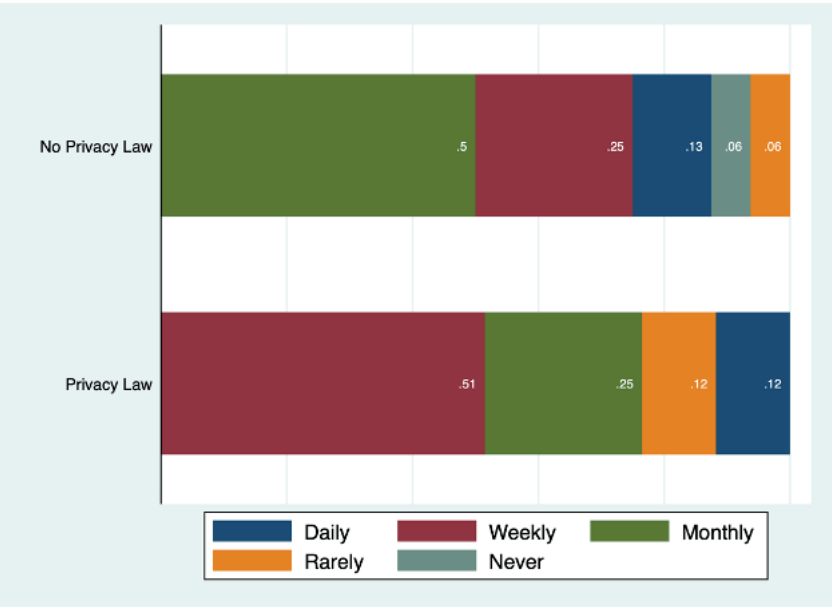
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY USE BY PRIVACY LAW



PRIVACY AWARENESS BY
PRESENCE OF EDTECH GUIDELINES



EDTECH HOMEWORK



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