



Heights Martin L. Murray Elementary School Wilkes-Barre Area School District

**1 South Sherman Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702-5910**

Telephone 570 826-7255 Fax 570 819-5065

http://www.wbasd.k12.pa.us/heightsmurrayelementary_home.aspx

Mr. Aidan McKenna- Principal

Mr. Jack Rothenbecker- Guidance / Head Teacher

Ms. Mary Tranguch- Head Teacher



Heights-Murray Elementary School Welcome Packet **2024-2025**

When does school start?

School begins for elementary students on Thursday September 5th

- Students must arrive at school at 8:25 AM. Students will be dismissed at 2:30 PM. (more details about arrival and dismissal below)
- Parents wishing to have their child enroll in the Wilkes Barre Cyber Academy, must notify the principal, Mr. McKenna, or our district cyber school administrator, Mr. Gabriel by the first week of school. Mr. McKenna's email is amckenna@wbasd.k12.pa.us The Cyber Academy will provide students with access to grade appropriate curriculum at home, but this option does not provide live instruction from a teacher.
- **Clear backpacks are required for all students. Support Heights PTO, and buy your backpack for \$12.00 in our main office while supplies last! Cash, check, or money order only. (summer office hours- Monday- Thursday 8 to 1)**

DAILY Arrival

Bus students should be at their bus stop by 7:50 each morning.

Walkers should arrive at school by 8:25 AM. Doors will open for walkers at 8:25.

Homeroom & Free Breakfast will take place from 8:25-8:45 AM for all students

Instruction begins at 8:45 and students will be marked late after that.

Walkers/Parent Drop-Offs

***Kindergarten through 5th grade** walkers will enter the building at 8:25 AM at the front entrance on Sherman Street. *Our front driveway is closed from 8:00- 8:45. No vehicles will be allowed at that time. Please follow traffic rules around the school and do not block traffic during arrival or dismissal.

Notice of Discrimination

The Wilkes-Barre Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: The Wilkes-Barre Area School District Superintendent, 730 South Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711-0375, (570) 826-7111

***Cars can not stop along the front of the school on South Sherman Street.** The City of Wilkes-Barre has installed “safety sticks” that will send a ticket based on your license plate if the vehicle stops for more than 90 seconds.

***All parents/guardians/adults must remain behind the yellow/black line for safety and organizational purposes.**

***Any student who arrives after 8:45 AM will be marked late. Late students must be signed-in at the main office.**

Breakfast/Homeroom

8:25-8:45 AM

All students will have free breakfast and attendance will be taken during homeroom.

Instructional Day/ Lunch

Instruction will begin at **8:45 AM** each day.

Students will receive a free 30 minute lunch somewhere between 11AM and 1PM as scheduled.

Dismissal

Kindergarten and 1st grade walkers will be dismissed to their parent or designated guardian beginning at 2:25 each day. Walker dismissal locations are based on the students home address as listed later in this packet.

2nd thru 5th grade walkers/ car riders, will be dismissed at 2:30 PM each day.

No student will be dismissed from school early after 2:10 PM. Doctor/dentist, etc. appointments should be scheduled prior to 8:45 AM or after 2:30 PM to avoid disrupting the educational process.

Bus students-Students will report to their assigned bus upon announcement. This will begin at 2:30 PM at the REAR GYM DOORS. Bus information will be available on Skyward Family Access.

Walkers/Parent Pick-Ups

***All parents/guardians/adults must remain behind the yellow/black line at the Front Entrance and cones at other exits for safety and organizational purposes. Please do not park in traffic lanes around the school.**

12 noon (early) dismissal

Students will be dismissed as follows on early dismissal days unless otherwise noted:

- 11:30- special transportation Van dismissal
- 11:45- Kindergarten and 1st grade walker dismissal.
- 11:55- 2nd to 5th grade walker and regular bus dismissal begins.
- All students should be dismissed by 12 noon.

PLEASE SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR WALKER DISMISSAL LOCATIONS BY STREET.

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Where will my child be dismissed from?

- **All students who would typically ride a bus, but are being transported by family will be dismissed from the NORTH DOOR on Amber Lane.** *Streets are not listed for bus streets, therefore, this indicates that the child will be dismissed from the NORTH DOOR. This must be requested to your child's teacher in writing.
- Any walker being picked up will still exit through the door based on their address.

Front Door-MAIN ENTRANCE/SOUTH SHERMAN STREET- (Kindergarten front door will be on the patio to the Amber lane side of the building.)

S. Sherman Street	N. Sherman Street		
S. Fulton Street	N. Fulton Street	Fulton Court	
S. Meade Street	N. Meade Street	Meade Court	Grove Lane
S. Empire Street	N. Empire Street	Empire Court	Hillside Street
Bethel Street	Coal Street #197-303	Cross Lane	Custer Street
Dock Lane	East South Street	Freeman Street	Joseph Lane #1-99
Logan Street	McFarlane Street	Myrtle Lane	New Market Street
Oakwood Lane	Opal Lane	Parkview Circle	Pershing Street
Rees Street #75-200	Reno Lane	Sheridan Street	Sylvanus Street
Taft Street	Wilkes Lane	Worth Lane	

North Door-AMBER LANE

Amber Lane	Carbon Lane	Coal Street #117-196	Dougher Lane
Hayes Lane	N. Grant Street	N. Hancock Street	North Welles Street
Walter's Way			

South Door-ROSE LANE

Armstrong Lane	Bethel Street	E. Market Street	E. Northampton Street #1-324
Garnet Lane	Lanning Lane	Midland Court	Park Avenue #1-99
Puritan Lane	Rees Street #1-73	Rose Lane	S. Baltimore Street
S. Grant Street	S. Hancock Street	S. Welles Street	S. Wilkes Barre Blvd.
Wayne Street	Winter Lane		

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Attendance policy

WE HOPE OUR PARENTS AND FAMILIES WILL MAKE IT A FAMILY GOAL TO NOT MISS MORE THAN 10 SCHOOL DAYS WITHIN A SCHOOL YEAR.

- EVERY 30 DAYS THERE WILL BE AN ATTENDANCE CELEBRATION FOR ALL STUDENTS THAT HAVE MISSED NO MORE THAN 2 DAYS WITHIN 30 SCHOOL DAYS AS FOLLOWS:
 - No more than 2 absences by October 15th
 - No more than 4 absences by December 5th
 - No more than 6 absences by January 28th
 - No more than 8 absences by March 14th
 - No more than 10 absences by April 30th
- IF OUR FAMILIES COMMIT TO GOOD ATTENDANCE, STUDENTS WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES INCLUDING FAMILY BREAKFAST, ICE CREAM SUNDAE BAR, ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATES, GIFT CARD DRAWINGS, AND OTHER FREE PRIZES.
- IF OUR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES ARE COMMITTED TO GOOD ATTENDANCE, WE KNOW OUR STUDENTS WILL BE MORE SUCCESSFUL ON THEIR EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY.
- ***ATTEND TO ACHIEVE-*** TOGETHER WE CAN REACH NEW HEIGHTS.

Please see our district attendance policy below for more detailed information regarding attendance.

A student who is absent from school must present a note written and signed by his/her parent/legal guardian explaining why the student was absent. Absences shall be treated as unexcused until the written excuse is submitted to the homeroom teacher upon entering school. If a student fails to produce such a note within three school days, the day(s) missed will remain “illegal/unexcused”.

Excused/legal absences: The following is a list of, but not all inclusive, of excused/legal absences:

1. Illness/Medical
2. Death in the student’s immediate family
 - a. Parent/Legal Guardian
 - b. Sibling
 - c. Grandparent
 - d. Aunt/Uncle
3. Legal and exceptionally urgent reasons that may affect the child
 - a. Unsafe and hazardous road conditions

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- b. Quarantine of the home
- c. Death in the family other than an immediate family member such as a close friend or relative
- d. Suspension from school
- 4. Educational trips (see below requirements)

Request for excused absence for educational trips: The Wilkes-Barre Area School District recognizes that, from time to time, students may have the opportunity to participate in a pre-planned, educational trip during the regular school year. In order for your child to be legally excused and attend the educational trip, the following steps need to be taken and prerequisites met:

1. Parent/legal guardian must get the approval of the administrator by submitting, to the administrator, an official educational trip request form at least two weeks prior to the departure date of the trip. The administrator will evaluate the child's academic standing, discipline history, attendance record, and the educational value of the trip. The form can be obtained in the main office.
2. If the educational trip is during the first semester of the school year, the child cannot miss five days or more of school. If the child's absences exceed the five days, the request will be denied.
3. If the educational trip is during the second semester of the school year, the child cannot miss ten days or more of school. If the child's absences exceed the ten days, the request will be denied.
4. The parent and student shall agree that all class work that is missed during the period of absence will be made up within a time frame established by the administrator.
5. No more than five excused absences for educational trips will be granted per school year.

Unexcused/illegal absences: The following is a list of, but not all inclusive, of unexcused/illegal absences:

1. Failure to wake up for school
2. Missing a scheduled school bus or not having a ride to school
3. Absence without a parent/legal guardian's knowledge
4. Caring for a sibling in a non-emergency situation/babysitting
5. Running errands and/or shopping
6. Pursuing a talent or skill without the administrator's prior approval
7. Temporary employment during school hours

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8. Going on a vacation without the administrator's prior approval
9. Failure to provide a medical practitioner's excuse when requested or required
10. Failure to attend school either before or after a scheduled medical appointment. (For example: a dentist appointment, medicine check, court appearance, etc.)
11. School refusal
12. Failure to remedy head lice within three days

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PROCEDURES FOR EXCUSED/LEGAL ABSENCES

Absences shall be treated as unexcused until a written excuse is submitted to the homeroom teacher upon entering school. The excuse must be written and signed by the parent/legal guardian, explain why the student was absent, and submitted within three days of the absence. Failure to comply will result in the absence remaining as an illegal or unexcused absence.

Three or more consecutive days: If a student is absent three or more consecutive days, the absence must be justified by a written excuse from a medical practitioner. The medical practitioner must have seen the student or the parent/legal guardian must have had communication with the medical practitioner in regards of medical advice or medication. If the student does not present a medical note, all consecutive absences will remain illegal/unexcused.

Ten cumulative days: If a student is absent ten cumulative days, a written notification will be issued to the parent/legal guardian stating the amount of total absences and that a medical practitioner's excuse will be required for each subsequent absence. Each absence will remain illegal/unexcused if there is failure to comply.

PENALTIES FOR UNEXCUSED/ILLEGAL ABSENCES

Three unexcused/illegal absences: The student is considered truant and a "Notice of Truancy" will be issued to the parent/legal guardian by the Home and School Visitor.

Six unexcused/illegal absences: The student is considered habitually truant. The parent/legal guardian and the student will be invited to participate in a School Attendance Improvement Plan meeting (SAIP) with Administration, Home and School Visitor, and a representative from The BRIDGE in attendance. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a plan being made without any parental input.

If there is no cooperation and/or the student continues to be absent without an excuse following the SAIP, a Summary Citation will be filed with the local magistrate's office where the proposed SAIP will become court ordered. Failure to comply with this court order may result in a maximum fine, approximately \$300.00 plus court costs, community service, and/or loss of driver's license. The case will also be sent to Luzerne County Truancy Court.

Please note: if the student has six or more unexcused/illegal absences, he/she may lose the privilege to participate in any and all events and extra-curricular activities such as performances, clubs, field trips, participation on any athletic team sponsored by their school, fun day, field day, class trips etc.

Ten unexcused/illegal absences: If a student has ten or more unexcused/illegal absences and is a senior student, he/she will not graduate on stage.

If it is determined that the student, 17 years old or older, has been absent for ten or more consecutive days without justification which includes, but not limited to: unable to locate family, unoccupied residence, student is beyond compulsory age of attendance, the student will be dropped from school roll.

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HOMEWORK WHEN ABSENT FROM SCHOOL

If an absence is classified as “excused” or “legal”, the student will be permitted to make-up work when absent from school. Students will be afforded one (1) day for each day of excused absence for work to be completed and submitted. This applies to assignments, quizzes, tests, and/or major projects. There will be no reduction in grade for make-up work turned in following this procedure; however, the assignment/assessment format may be modified or altered.

If an absence is classified as “unexcused” or “illegal”, the student will not receive credit for assignments, tests, quizzes, projects, etc. For example, if a student misses a test due to an “unexcused” or “illegal” absence, the student shall receive a zero. In addition, the teacher is not required to provide the student the opportunity to make up missed work if the absence is deemed illegal.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain the assignments from his or her teachers prior to approved educational trips.

ACTIVITIES WHEN ABSENT FROM SCHOOL

The Wilkes-Barre Area School District maintains a policy that links consistently poor attendance with the loss of the privilege to participate in any extra- curricular activities. Therefore, any student absent from school, either excused or unexcused, may be prohibited from participating in any school activities during that same school day (during school hours and after school hours). Exceptions may be made by the discretion of the administration. Such events/activities include, but are not limited to: performances, clubs, field trips, participation on any athletic team sponsored by their school, sixth grade trip, fun day, field day, class night, class trips, school dances, the semi-formal, the prom, etc.

TARDINESS

Tardiness is defined as the absence of a student at the time school session begins, provided the student reports to school and is in attendance for any portion of the school day. The school session begins as follows:

Elementary School: 8:45 A.M.

Daily attendance and being on time are necessary components for students to achieve academically and become productive and responsible citizens.

Legal tardiness: A student arriving late for school for any of the following reasons will be considered an excused late:

1. Doctor’s appointment
2. Dentist’s appointment
3. Mental health care appointment
4. Court appearance
5. Funeral involving immediate family members, relatives, and close friends
6. School related activities pre-approved by the administrator

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Excuses must accompany the student when arriving tardy from these appointments. Any other tardy will be considered unexcused and will accumulate on the student's permanent record card. All tardies will be calculated and translated into equivalent illegal/unexcused absences. (see illegal absences)

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Procedures for when a student is tardy: If a student reports to school tardy, the student must report directly to the main office and present a written excuse from a parent/legal guardian stating the reason for the tardiness. Elementary students must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian. If the student does not have a written excuse or the reason is considered unexcused, disciplinary action will be taken by the administration. In addition, habitual tardiness will not be tolerated and will result in appropriate disciplinary/legal action.

Parents/legal guardians may not accompany their child to the classroom or pick up their child at the classroom. Violation of this procedure may result in legal action.

Cumulative tardiness: All unexcused/illegal tardies will be documented on skyward and will be calculated and translated into equivalent illegal/unexcused absences. Illegal/unexcused absences may result in a summary citation for violation of the Pennsylvania Compulsory School Attendance Law.

Consequences for excessive tardiness: The following are consequences for excessive tardiness per semester:

Five illegal tardies: parent notification letter sent home by administration

Six to Nine illegal tardies:

(elementary) loss of recess, lunch detention

Ten illegal tardies: parental conference

Eleven and more illegal tardies: loss of privileges and the duration of the loss of privileges will be determined by the administrator (field trips, sporting events, club activities, dances, and all other extracurricular activities).

When a student reaches the tenth illegal late, a parental conference will be required to discuss the policy and devise a plan ensuring that the student arrives at school on time. Any absences that result from the failure of the parent to attend this conference may initiate a legal action for truancy. The minutes late will be calculated and translated into equivalent illegal/unexcused absences. This may result in a summary citation for violation of the Pennsylvania Compulsory School Attendance Law.

Consequences for illegal tardiness: If a student is tardy two hours or more, the student will not be able to participate in any extracurricular activities for that day.

STUDENTS BEING RELEASED EARLY

Students will only be dismissed from school for professional appointments, court appearances, emergencies or illnesses. The following procedures must be followed:

1. Upon arrival at school, a written request must be submitted to the main office. The request

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must include the justification, date, time, telephone number and signature of the parent/legal guardian.

2. **The parent/legal guardian must report to the office** at the appointed time and present proper valid ID. If someone other than the parent/legal guardian is picking the student up, the person's name must be written on the request, must be on the emergency contact card, and must have proper valid ID. The student will then be called to the main office. All parents/legal guardians must remain in the main office. No one may enter into the building and go directly to a classroom.
3. Prior to leaving school, the student must report to the main office in order to be signed out.

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4. If the student is being released early from school due to a court or medical appointment, the student must present proof of the appointment upon returning to school.

Students being released early for emergencies: Requests for a student to be released early from school due to an emergency must be made in person by the parent/legal guardian. The administrator will then determine if the emergency is valid or not and then either approve or deny the request.

Students being released early for illness/injury/medical reason: Only the school nurse or administrator can approve an early dismissal due to illness/injury/medical reason. The parent/legal guardian will be notified when a student needs to be sent home. Students will not be permitted to leave without parent's/legal guardian's permission, and the parent/legal guardian must report to the main office before the student will be dismissed.

Please note the following:

1. No student will be excused via a telephone call
2. No student will be sent home alone
3. No student will be excused within the last fifteen minutes of the school day
4. Students being excused from school may be prohibited in participating in any after school extra-curricular activities that day

SCHOOL BUILDING OF ATTENDANCE

All students are **required** to attend his/her home school building based on the student's residency and the boundaries set forth by the district. The boundaries are not based on bus stops. Boundaries are based on exact physical addresses.

The only exceptions are:

1. Special education placement
2. A note from a licensed psychiatrist. The note must include the diagnosis of the student's condition, a description of the treatment plan, and the signature of the psychiatrist, not a stamped signature. It then must be submitted to the office of Administration and Student Services for approval. Since the goal is to rehabilitate the

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student so that they can return to his/her home school, the student's treatment and progress must be monitored by an appropriately licensed psychiatrist and submitted to the office of Administration and Student Services each school year.

If a student is attending an incorrect school building, either by an error made by the parent/guardian or school district personnel, it will be rectified immediately, and the student will be required to attend his/her correct school building based on the physical address of the student. If a student moves within the district, the parent/legal guardian must inform the office at their child's current school AND provide two proofs of residency within one week of moving. Failure to do so will result in the student being dropped from the rolls until new proof is provided.

LEAVING SCHOOL WITHOUT PERMISSION

If any student leaves the school without permission, by either the school nurse or the school administration, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

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HOME AND SCHOOL VISITORS

Pennsylvania Compulsory Attendance Law mandates that school districts are responsible for a student's attendance. Consequently, school personnel are used to determine the validity of a student's absence. In the Wilkes-Barre Area School District, the person to whom this task is assigned is the Home and School Visitor.

When a child is absent an inordinate amount of time, the administration may request the Home and School Visitor to contact his/her parents to verify the reason(s) as to why the child is not in school. The Home and School Visitor will determine if the child has excessive absences. If such a determination is made, the child and parent may be subject to a citation. This citation will require the parent and the child to appear before a Magistrate and if found guilty, pay a fine plus court costs.

It is hoped that all parents will assist the school in seeing that their child attends school on a regular basis. Frequent absences result in poor schoolwork and may contribute to the eventuality of a school dropout. Many times, the attendance patterns that a child develops in the elementary grades are carried over into the secondary level, and in some instances, become the foundation of his/her job absentee rate.

CHANGES IN STUDENT INFORMATION/WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

New students registering at school must have proper medical and school records. Parents/guardians must also provide proof of residence. (i.e. copy of lease, utility bill, etc.)

It is imperative that the homeroom teacher and the school office be notified immediately in the event you have a change of address, home or work telephone number, or if emergency information changes during the academic school year.

If the change of address requires transferring the student to another school, parents should notify the school as early as possible. This will allow the teacher and office to properly prepare the papers necessary to ensure the least amount of interruption to the child's educational progress.

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PROOF OF RESIDENCY POLICY

To guard against enrolling students who are not legally living within the boundaries of Wilkes-Barre Area School District, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of all students who register are required to provide proof of residency. For the purpose of this policy, the term parent refers to a natural or adoptive parent/guardian who has a legal or court-ordered document indicating that they, for school purposes, are in legal custody of the student. Legally emancipated students are also required to provide the same proof of residency.

The following documents can serve as proof of residency. The document must be current, have the name of the parent/guardian, and an address within the boundaries of Wilkes-Barre Area School District. While the financial details of the document can be made unreadable, the name, date, and address must be discernable and unaltered. Acceptable documents include

1. A current copy of any 2 monthly or bi-monthly bills such as electric, gas, house insurance, telephone, cable, credit card, etc.
2. A copy of a dated lease agreement for the residence
3. A copy of a dated purchase agreement or mortgage for the residence
4. A copy of a dated court order directing a specific residence
5. A copy of a valid Pennsylvania driver's license with the address listed

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For those families that are unable to provide any proof of residency, the home and school visitor will be dispatched to the residence to ascertain with a high degree of confidence the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) are in fact currently occupying that address. Failure to admit the home and school visitor into the home will result in the student not being enrolled into the Wilkes-Barre Area School District.

Any individuals attempting to enroll students without being able to establish a legal residency will be referred to Luzerne County Children and Youth Services.

Any individuals who are suspected of perpetrating fraud by registering a child in a school or school district in which they do not maintain a legal residency will be referred to the appropriate authorities.

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SAFETY/SECURITY

Visitors

All visitors must remain in the lobby between the front doors until greeted by the office or security greeter.

*If the visitor must enter the building, a photo ID will be presented to the security greeter.

All visitors must walk through the metal detector.

School Resource Officer

Officer Sobocinski is the Heights-Murray Elementary School resource officer. Please contact Officer Sobocinski with any safety/security concerns or questions you may have (570) 826-7255, ext. 6108.

Health and Wellness Safety

Nurse Tracey Glynn-Roulinavage is the Heights-Murray Elementary School nurse. Please contact Nurse Tracey with any health/medical concerns you may have for your child (570) 826-7255, ext. 6115.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Policies-The school district dress code, electronic device, and other policies may be found on the district website at www.wbasd.k12.pa.us

PARENT NOTES to SCHOOL-(Day care, information changes, etc.) If your child attends day care, before and/or after-school care, please send in a note stating which daycare and what days they will be attending. If your child is not attending daycare on a particular day, please send in a note stating that you will be picking the child up or that the child will not be riding the bus. Any child that is being dismissed from school early must bring a note to school that morning and give it to the teacher. *These procedures are in place for the safety of your child.*

Heights School Website-Check frequently

http://www.wbasd.k12.pa.us/heightsmurrayelementary_home.aspx

Class Dojo- Many of our teachers utilize Class Dojo to communicate with families regarding academics or upcoming events specific to a particular grade or teacher. We also share building-wide announcements on Class Dojo from our main office.

Class DOJO should not be used for dismissal change requests or other messages that require a quick response. We also ask that families avoid messaging teachers after hours or on weekends/ holidays. In addition, communication on Dojo must remain respectful and constructive. Unkind, disrespectful, or otherwise inappropriate remarks on Class Dojo will result in restriction or removal of access.

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