



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Talk Tuesdays

## *Student Attendance, Engagement, and Support Series*

**October 19, 2021**

Please [sign-in](#) using the chat - include your name, title, district/school or agency.



Developed by the CSDE in collaboration with SERC



***Notice: This meeting is  
being recorded.***

# Agenda

## 1. Welcome

-  Kari Sullivan Custer, Attendance & Engagement Consultant, CSDE
-  Stephen Proffitt, Director for Special Education Programs and Instructional Design, SERC

## 2. ICYMI – Supported: Leveraging Attendance Data to Ensure Ongoing Success Webinar, Attendance Works, 9/29/2021

## 3. Peer Discussions



## 4. Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings

***Notice: This meeting is being recorded.***



# Getting to know you...

1. Are you new at supporting schools and families in attendance or have you been doing this work for a long time?
2. Describe one thing that you love about your work!

Go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use the code 1021 7951



# WHAT'S NEW AT CSDE AND PARTNERS



# What's New at CSDE

## October 14, 2021

- [Certification of 2020-21 Compliance of the Mandated Reporter Training Requirements – Due November 1, 2021](#)
- [2021 CT Fire Academy's Fire Service College Fair](#)

## October 12, 2021

- [New Maintenance of Equity Requirement under ARP](#)
- [Nominations for the 2022 U.S. Presidential Scholar Program](#)
- [Hispanic Heritage Month](#)

## October 7, 2021

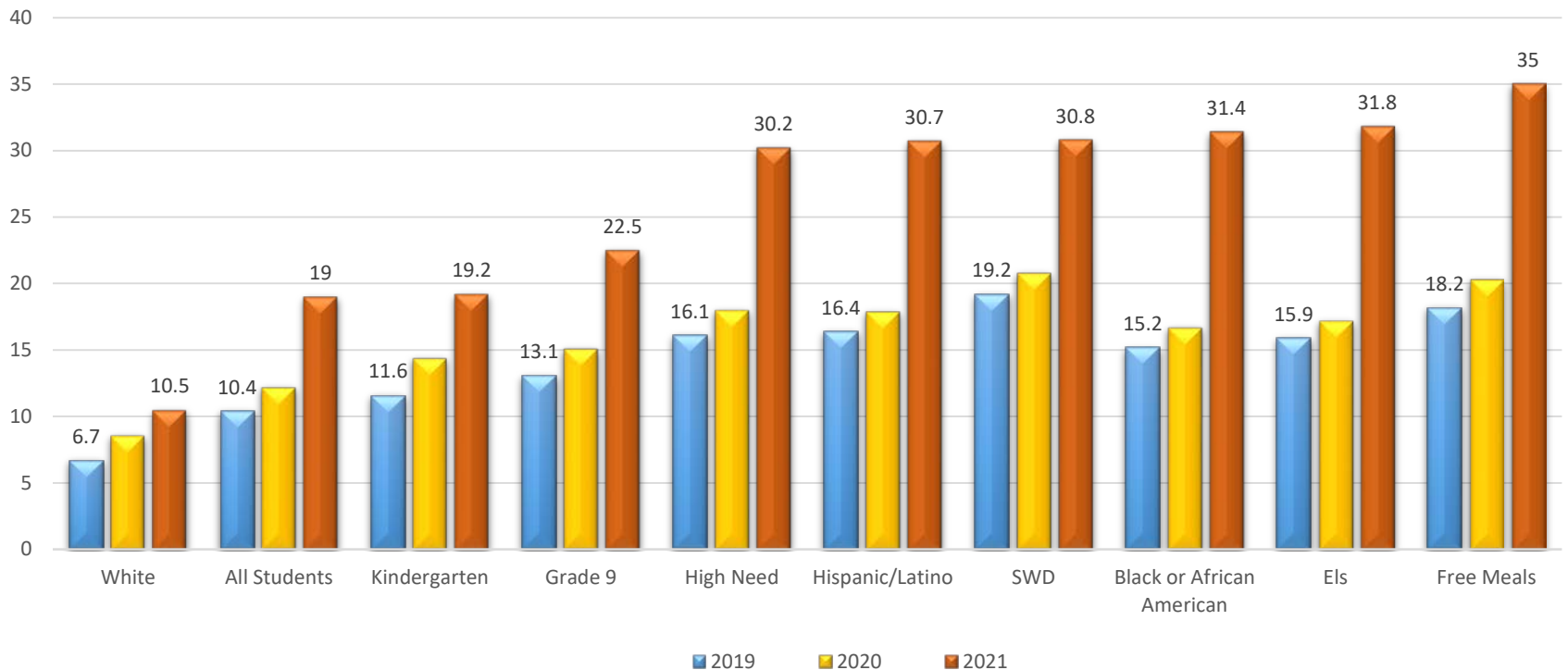
- [Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities \(CHRO\) Dear Colleague Letter](#)
- Reminder: 2021 Connecticut Teacher of the Year Ceremony Postponed



# 2020-21 Attendance Data

[EdSight - Connecticut State Department of Education](#)

## Chronic Absence Trend Data 2019-21



# Reconnecting with Families in the New School Year

## A Community-wide Approach

The pandemic has amplified inequities that already existed in our communities and schools. Connecting now with the most vulnerable students and families requires not only innovative strategies but also a team effort. In Stamford, schools are not alone. A broad-based community coalition works with schools in an “all hands on deck” approach to reach families and strengthen school-home connections.

Join us to learn how community stakeholders have mobilized to help Stamford Public Schools connect, engage and build trust with families.

### Conversation Catalysts:

- Mike Meyer, Director of Family and Community Engagement, Stamford
- Dena Booker, School and Family Resource Facilitator, Stamford
- Community Partners

**Date:** October 22, 9:30-11:00 a.m.

**Location:** Online



COMMUNITY AND  
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT  
Meeting Registration



Register:  
[Meeting  
Registration -  
Zoom](#)

# *Supported: Leveraging Attendance Data to Ensure Ongoing Success*

*Attendance Awareness Campaign, Webinar 4 of 4,  
Wednesday, September 29, 2021*

## **Presenters**

- Maribel Childress, Superintendent, Gravette School District, Arkansas
- Todd Rogers, Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School
- Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education, Connecticut State Department of Education
- Kwesi Rollins, Vice President for Leadership and Engagement, IEL
- Hedy Chang, Executive Director, Attendance Works

## [Webinars - Attendance Awareness Campaign 2021 \(attendanceworks.org\)](https://attendanceworks.org)

- [Webinar recording](#)
- [Download the presentation slides](#)
- [Download the discussion guide](#)
- [More resources and links from the webinar chat](#)
- [Count Us In! toolkit for 2021](#)
- [Pathways to Engagement: A Toolkit for Covid-19 Recovery Through Attendance](#)





## Back to School Letters

- Keep Safe
- Keep Healthy
- Keep Connected
- Keep Learning

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/update-your-communications-with-families-for-back-to-school/>

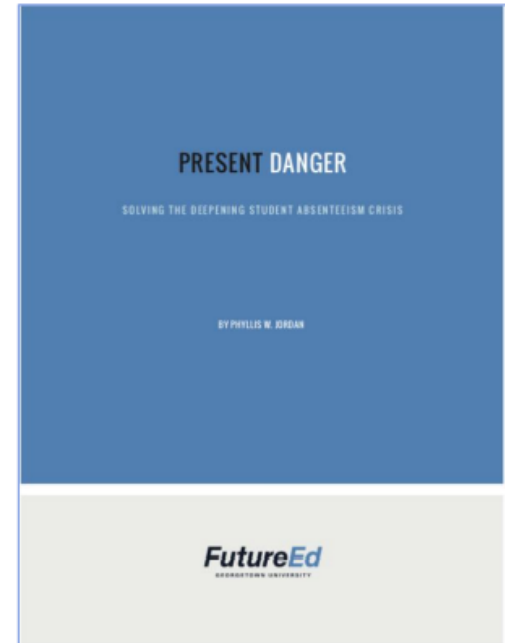
# Present Danger:

## *Solving the Deepening Student Attendance Crisis*

***A new report from FutureEd takes a deep dive into 5 large school districts working with EveryDay Labs.***

- Not only are more students missing school, they're missing many more days. The extent of "extreme chronic absenteeism," missing half the school year, is way up
- Absenteeism rates are rising faster among younger students
- Disadvantaged students see the biggest jumps in chronic absenteeism rates in every community
- Enrollment declines are most severe in the early grades
- Perfect attendance rates are also up, likely a mirage created by the changes in measuring attendance in the pandemic

<https://www.future-ed.org/present-danger-solving-the-deepening-student-absenteeism-crisis/>





**Begin with a strong,  
“relationship centered”  
foundation**

**Given the uncertainties of Covid-19,  
this relationship building foundation  
should be in place and sustainable  
across in-person and remote learning.**

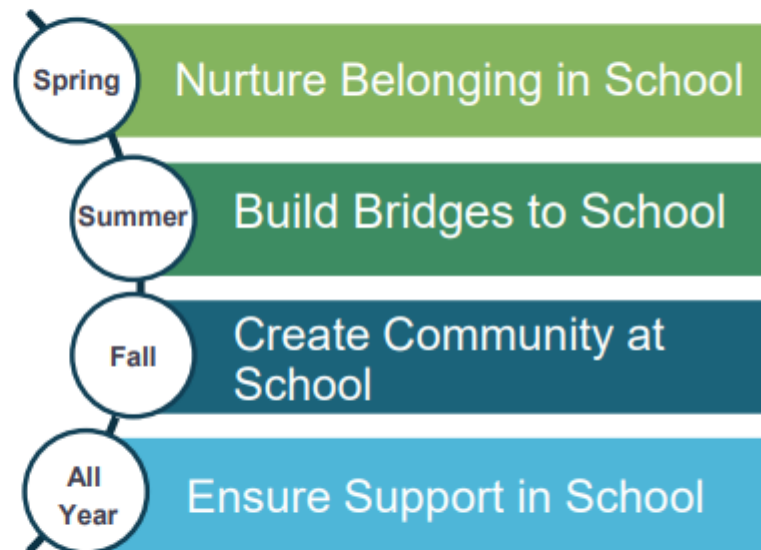
Physically healthy learning environment	Enrichment activities and clubs	Positive relationships	Support for families to facilitate learning at home
Access to tech equipment and connectivity	Access to Learning Supports	Routines, rituals and celebrations	A culture of continuous improvement
Welcoming, safe, trauma-informed school climate	Home rooms and/or Advisory	A published schedule of classes	Active engagement of families in planning

**Foundational Supports**

# Pathways to Engagement: A Toolkit for Covid-19 Recovery Through Attendance

## Recommended Steps:

1. *Establish your team*
2. *Review data & identify priority groups*
3. *Craft engagement strategies*
4. *Reflect, learn & improve*



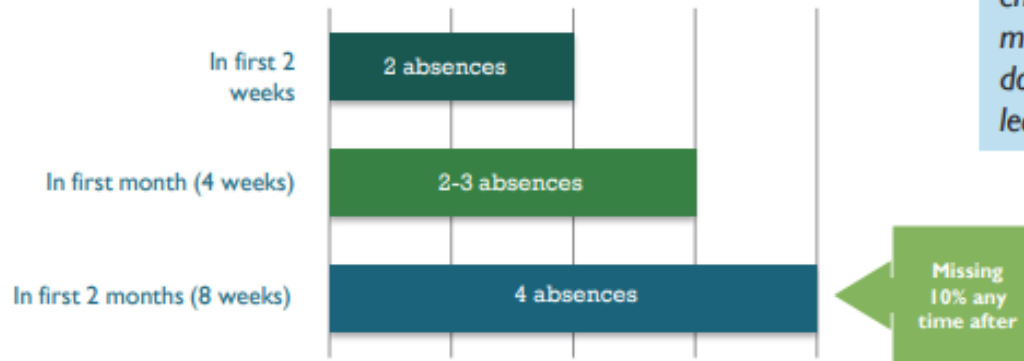
**Find the toolkit here:**

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/pathways-to-engagement-a-toolkit-for-covid-19-recovery-through-attendance/>



## Chronic absence in prior year or 1<sup>st</sup> Month of School = Need for Additional Support

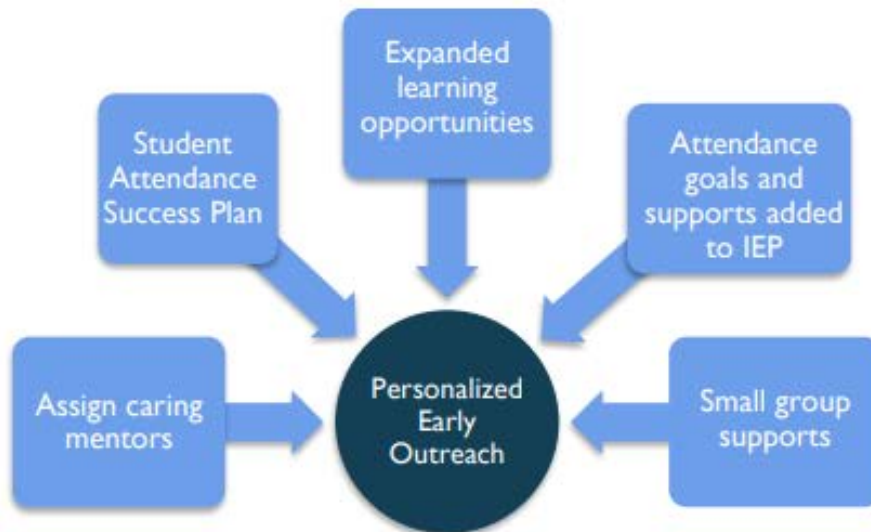
- ✓ Chronic absence (missed 10% or more of school) in the prior year, assuming data is available.
- ✓ And/or starting in the beginning of the school year, student has:



*Note: Quarantine creates chronic absence in the first month of school if students do not have access to learning opportunities.*



## Tier 2 Strategies Layer in Support, Strengthen Relationships, and Take a Problem-Solving Approach



Attendance Playbook: <https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/>

Implementation Guide: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/>

# Todd Rogers, Professor of Public Policy



**HARVARD** Kennedy School

## Writing for Busy Families

- Be clear on *purpose*
- People are busy
- People skim
- People prefer accessible writing
  
- Well written different than effectively written

## Writing for Busy Families

1. More is less
2. Write so skimmers can navigate
3. Write accessibly
4. Make response easy


38

## “Well Written” Messages...





Original: 190 words



### Closing the Attendance Gap in 2021: Insights from Leaders Doing the Work

Thursday, January 14 3:00-4:00 pm ET Virtual

Chronic absenteeism has always been a complex issue since barriers to attendance are often the result of systemic inequity. As the urgency to improve attendance heightens, it's critical to look beyond the headlines and at the data.

With COVID-19 exacerbating the equity gap, stakeholders across learning communities need to work collectively to remove barriers to attendance for students and families. Join a panel of district leaders to discuss this important topic, including:

- How they are using data to inform their spring strategy
- Practices they have found effective for addressing absenteeism and learning loss
- How they are supporting and engaging families

**Panelists:**

- Dr. Carolee Shaw-Ridley, Cache Director CE 1, Broward County Public Schools (FL)
- Shannon Trapp, Chief Academic Officer, Dallas Independent School District (TX)
- Derek Little, Deputy Chief of Academics (Programs), Dallas Independent School District (TX)

**Moderated by:**

- Dr. Todd Rogers, Professor, Harvard University, Chief Scientist, EveryDay Labs

[Register Now!](#)

Original > Short  
93% online

Shortened: 75 words



### Closing the Attendance Gap in 2021: Insights from Leaders Doing the Work

Thursday, January 14 3:00-4:00 pm ET Virtual

# +204%

## sign up rate

**Panelists:**

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[Register Now!](#)

# Randomized Experiments

- Paper reports vs. paper reports and text messages?
- Cumulative absences vs. absences in the past week?
- Exact data or approximate data (e.g., “more than”)?

# Webinars

*Free Webinar!*

## **The Science of Communicating with Busy Families & Educators**

Friday, October 22, 2021 @ 10am PT / 1pm ET

With schools and districts sending more than the usual number of communications, making sure messages are read and understood is paramount. Attendance Works and the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) are delighted to invite Todd Rogers of Harvard University to share the science of writing so busy families and educators read, understand and take action based on our messages.

In this webinar, Rogers will illustrate that most of us don't carefully read practical communications (emails, texts, forms and mail). We skim. This has surprising implications for how we should write. Rogers will share an actionable checklist for individuals and teams, and six easy-to-apply principles for writing that is more effective, inclusive and kind.

*Note: Because this is a highly interactive session, it will not be recorded or posted afterwards.*

**Register here:** [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_wrNy6FIKTSG\\_JJsZhap8TA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wrNy6FIKTSG_JJsZhap8TA)



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## **Resources**

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- [Download the presentation slides](#)
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- [More resources and links from the webinar chat](#)
- [Count Us In! toolkit for 2021](#)
- [Pathways to Engagement: A Toolkit for Covid-19 Recovery Through Attendance](#)

# Sharing Successes and Ideas

1. What do you find are effective strategies that work in your school/district to communicate with students and families?
2. What can you do to improve communications and relationship building in your school, district, and community?

Go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use the code 54 43 89 9



# RESOURCES



# CT Attendance Awareness Campaign

In partnership with [Attendance Works](#), CSDE has created messaging materials, in English and Spanish, for Connecticut districts and schools to use in their own attendance awareness campaigns. All materials can be downloaded and branded with a district or school's logo. The resources include banners, parent handouts, posters and coloring pages. All resources are in PDF format. Find the materials on the Connecticut [Attendance Awareness Campaign webpage](#).



## Banners

- Elementary [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Secondary [English](#) [Spanish](#)

## Parent Handouts

- Elementary [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Secondary [English](#) [Spanish](#)

## Posters [English](#) [Spanish](#)

## Coloring Pages [English](#) [Spanish](#)

**Attend Today Connecticut**

Stay on Track with Good Attendance...

The graphic features five cartoon characters representing different groups: a preschooler, an elementary student, a high schooler, a college student, and a worker. Below each character is a purple box with text describing their goals.

Group	Goal
PRESCHOOLERS	build skills and develop good habits for showing up on time
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS	read well by the end of third grade
HIGH SCHOOLERS	stay on track for graduation
COLLEGE STUDENTS	earn their degrees
WORKERS	succeed in their jobs

Too many absences—excused or unexcused—can keep students from succeeding in school and in life. How many are too many? 10% of the school year—that's 18 missed days or 2 days a month—can knock students off track.

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE> [#attendtodayCT](#) [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)

# Attendance 101!

CSDE Chronic Absence Webpage – [Related Resources](#)

## Supporting Attendance & Engagement

- [Reducing Chronic Absence in Connecticut's Schools: A Prevention and Intervention Guide for Schools and Districts Guide](#), basics (nuts & bolts), start with a team, unpack the data, understand root causes and develop a plan, e.g., district role, school role, tiered approach, and community role
  - [Addendum 14: Supporting Student Attendance and Engagement during Hybrid or Remote Learning \(COVID-19\)](#)

## Tracking and Monitoring Daily Attendance

- [Guidelines for Excused and Unexcused Absences](#)
  - [Tracking Attendance on Remote Days for State Reporting & FAQs \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Public School Information System \(PSIS\) Reference Guide](#) - The PSIS Reference Guide contains detailed guidance on reporting student attendance, Appendix F, in the PSIS and for when to unregister students, Appendix L, who are not coming to school for extended periods of time.
  - [Guidelines for Reporting Student Attendance](#)
  - [PSIS Appendix L - Reporting Information about Students who are Disengaged](#)

## Reviewing & Monitoring Attendance Trends

- [EdSight](#), an on-line portal for finding district and school-level data, including chronic absence.
- [Supporting Student Participation in 2020-21](#) (monthly attendance by district and school for 2020-21 school year)
- [Ed Sight Secure](#) and the Early Indication Tool



# Attendance 201!

## *State & National Related Resources*

- [Attendance Playbook: Smart Solutions for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism](#), FutureED
- [Guide to Using the Attendance Playbook: Smart Strategies for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism in the COVID Era](#), Attendance Works
- [Attendance Works](#) has developed a range of resources specific to grades served (i.e., elementary, middle, secondary) and aligned to five important strategies designed to improve attendance: recognizing good and improved attendance; engaging students and parents; monitoring attendance data and practice; providing personalized early outreach; and developing programmatic responses to barriers. A few examples include:
  - [Attendance Awareness Campaign, National](#)
  - [Pathways to Engagement: A Toolkit for Covid-19 Recovery Through Attendance](#)
  - [Year-Long Planning Calendars](#)
- [The Governor's Prevention Partnership](#), Connecticut Mentoring Resources, Training and Guidance
  - [Mentor: The National Mentoring Partnership](#)
- [Campaign for Grade-Level Reading](#)
- [Get Schooled](#)
- [Flamboyant Foundation](#), Building Effective Family Engagement

**STAY CONNECTED  
&  
LEARN TOGETHER**



# *How do I stay connected to Talk Tuesday, resources and other attendance-related events?*

Talk Tuesday has a new listserv that will be the primary tool for communications related to Talk Tuesday sessions as well as new attendance guidance, events and news.

- You may already be receiving emails from the listserv if your email address was on the previous email distribution lists for Talk Tuesdays.
- Feel free to share with colleagues in your district working on improving attendance and engagement with school teachers, staff, families and students.

## **How do I Subscribe to the SDE\_Talk\_Tuesday listserv?**

1. Open and address a new email to: [LISTSERV@list.ct.gov](mailto:LISTSERV@list.ct.gov);
2. Remove all text from the body of your email, including your contact information;
3. Type in the body of your email: subscribe SDE\_Talk\_Tuesday (first name last name); and
4. Send the email.

## **How do I Unsubscribe to the Talk Tuesday Listserv?**

1. Open and address a new email to: [LISTSERV@list.ct.gov](mailto:LISTSERV@list.ct.gov);
2. Remove all text from the body of your email, including your contact information;
3. Type in the body of your email: signoff SDE\_Talk\_Tuesday; and
4. Send the email.



# Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings

## Talk Tuesday

Tuesday, November 2, 2021  
10 to 11 a.m.

Have a **promising practice or success**  
you want to share?

**Concerns** you want to share through peer discussion?

Send ideas for topics for discussion to  
Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov.

## Attendance & Engagement Community of Practice

Thursday, **October 21, 2021**  
10 to 11:30 a.m.

**Hedy Chang joins us from  
Attendance Works!**

Register: <https://serc.info/aecop21oct>

Join meeting: [Zoom Meeting](#)

## Save the date!

All CoPs will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Thursday of the month from 10 to  
11:30 a.m.



# KEEP IN TOUCH!

**Kari Sullivan Custer, CSDE**

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860-807-2041

**Stephen Proffitt, SERC**

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860-632-1485, ext. 322

