

# Setting the Stage for Universal Preschool

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# What is Transitional Kindergarten (TK)?

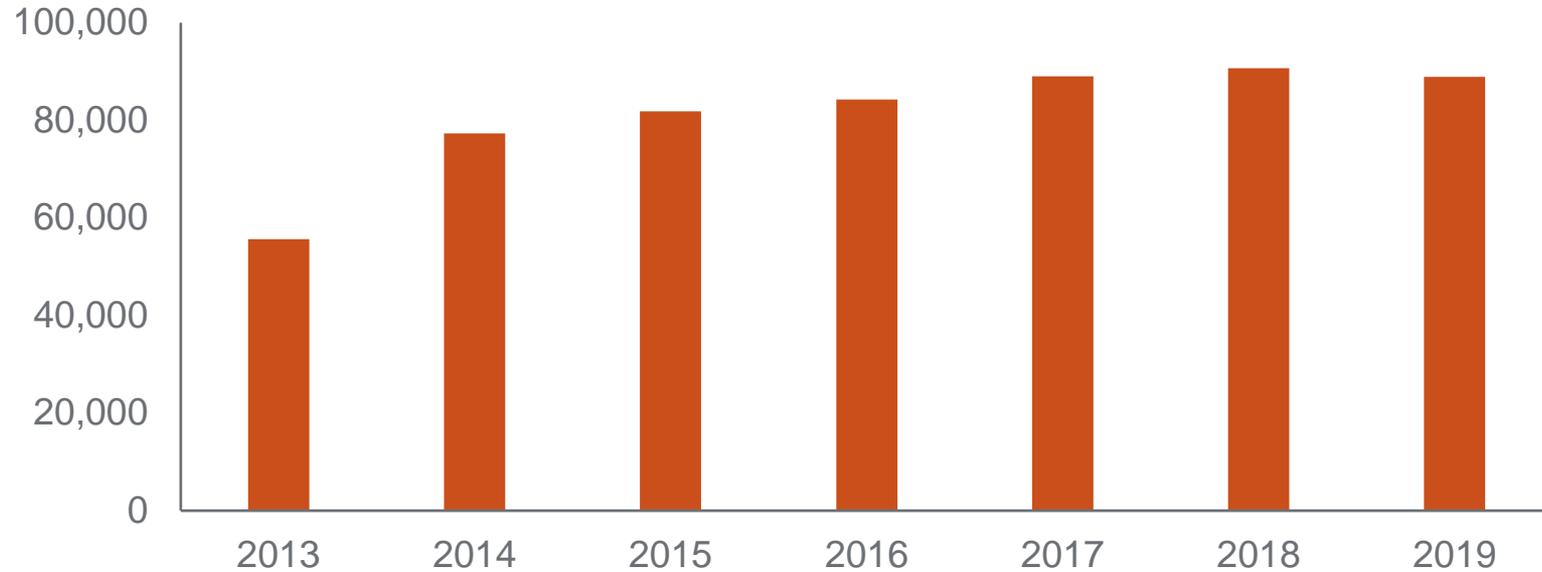
- California started TK in 2012–13 for children who turn 5 in the fall
  - Extra year of kindergarten
  - At least three hours a day
  - Sometimes held in kindergarten classrooms
- Teachers have BAs and early childhood education (ECE) units
- Every district serving kindergarteners must offer TK

## Why TK matters now

- Eligibility will expand to all four-year-olds by 2025–26
  - Currently, about a quarter of four-year-olds are eligible
- Children arrive in kindergarten with a wide range of readiness
  - An extra year can help students who are not at grade level
  - California has lower rates of preschool attendance relative to other states
- Child care and preschool are helpful to families
  - Especially low-income, working families

# TK eligibility and enrollment have expanded

TK enrollment

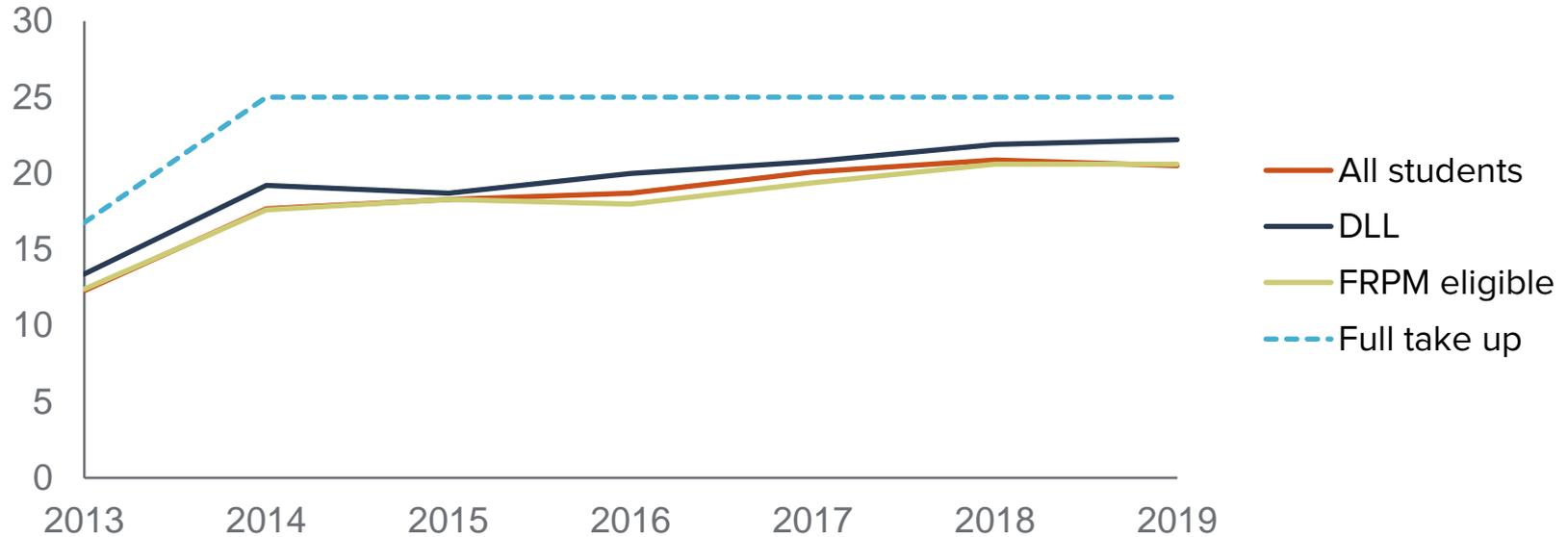


# Research questions on the eve of expansion

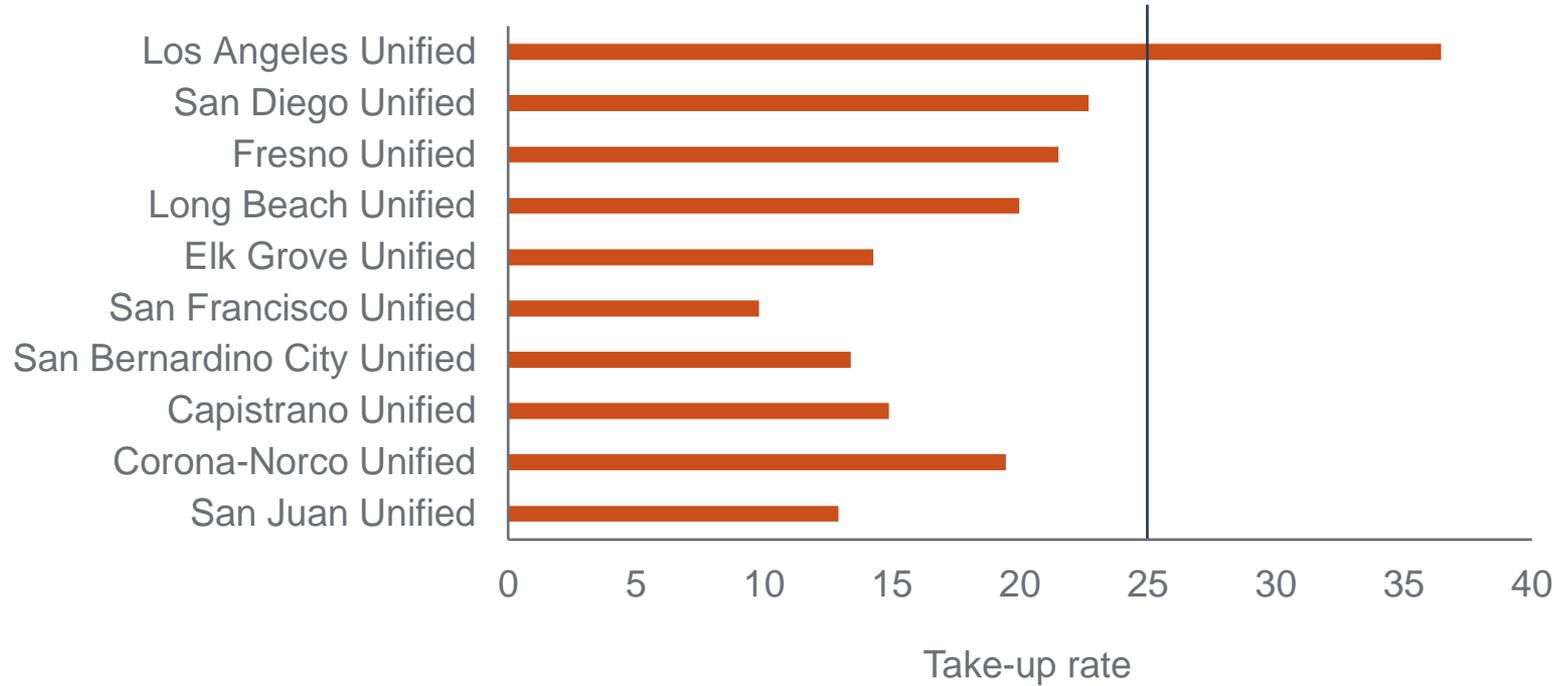
- What are the characteristics of students enrolled in TK?
  - Dual Language Learner (DLL) status
  - Race/ethnicity
  - Socioeconomic status
- What are the characteristics of districts and schools offering TK?
- What are the characteristics of families that appear likely to participate?
- Which equity gaps need to be addressed during TK expansion?

# Dual Language Learners participate in TK at higher rates than students overall

State take-up rate without LA Unified

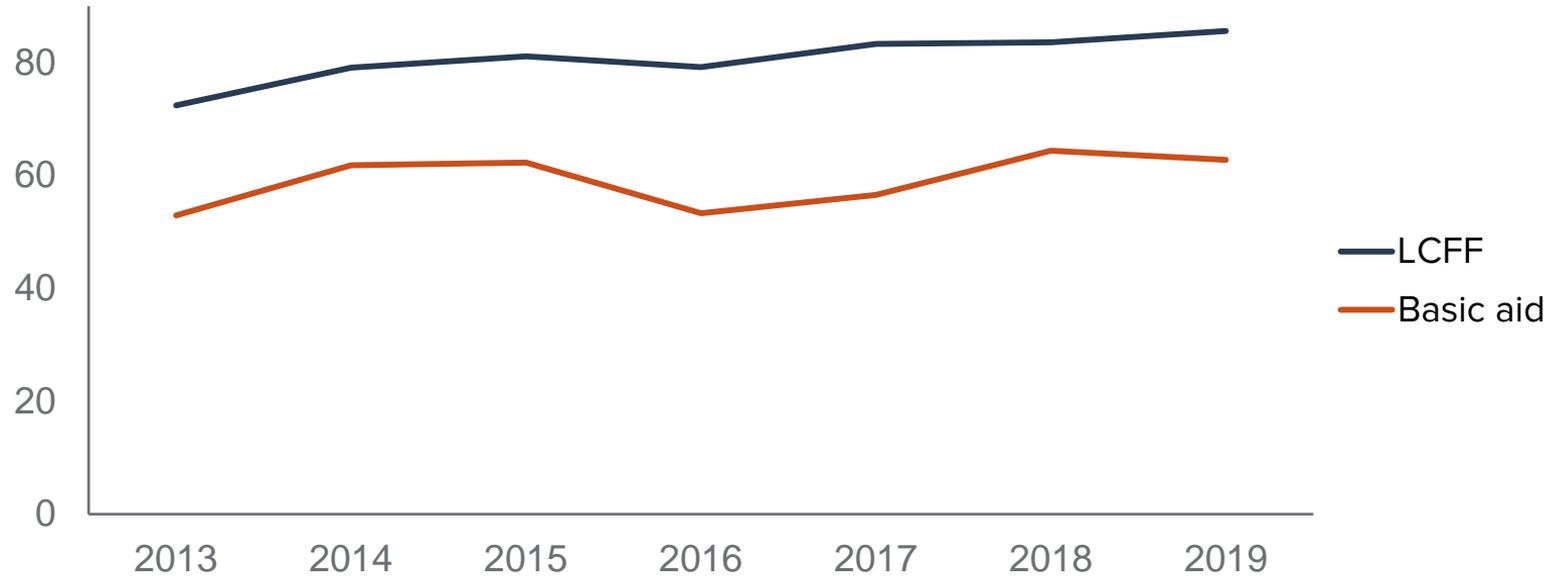


# LA Unified has 17% of the state's TK students



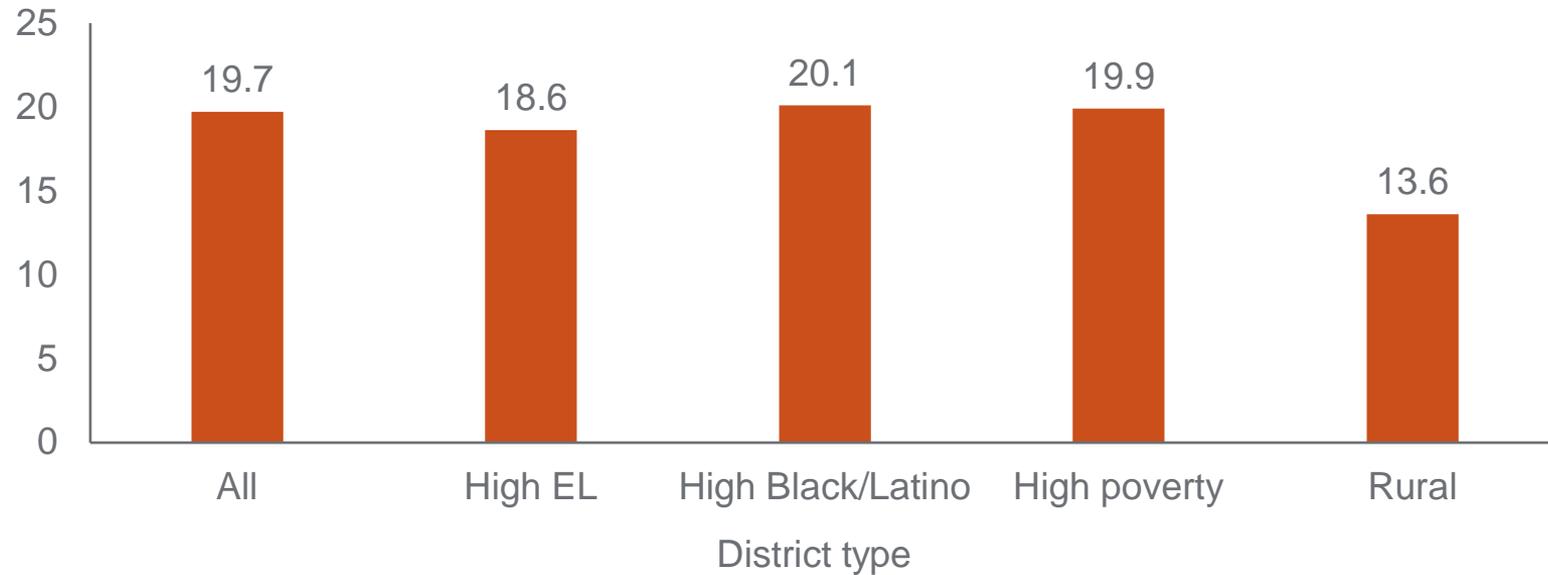
# Not all districts provide TK

Share of districts providing TK



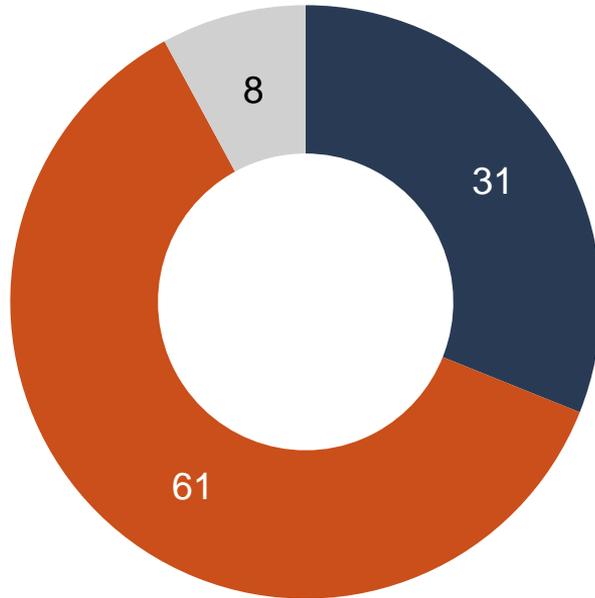
# Dual Language Learners have low take-up rates in rural districts

TK take-up rate for Dual Language Learners



# Most unserved students reside in districts offering TK but in school zones that do not

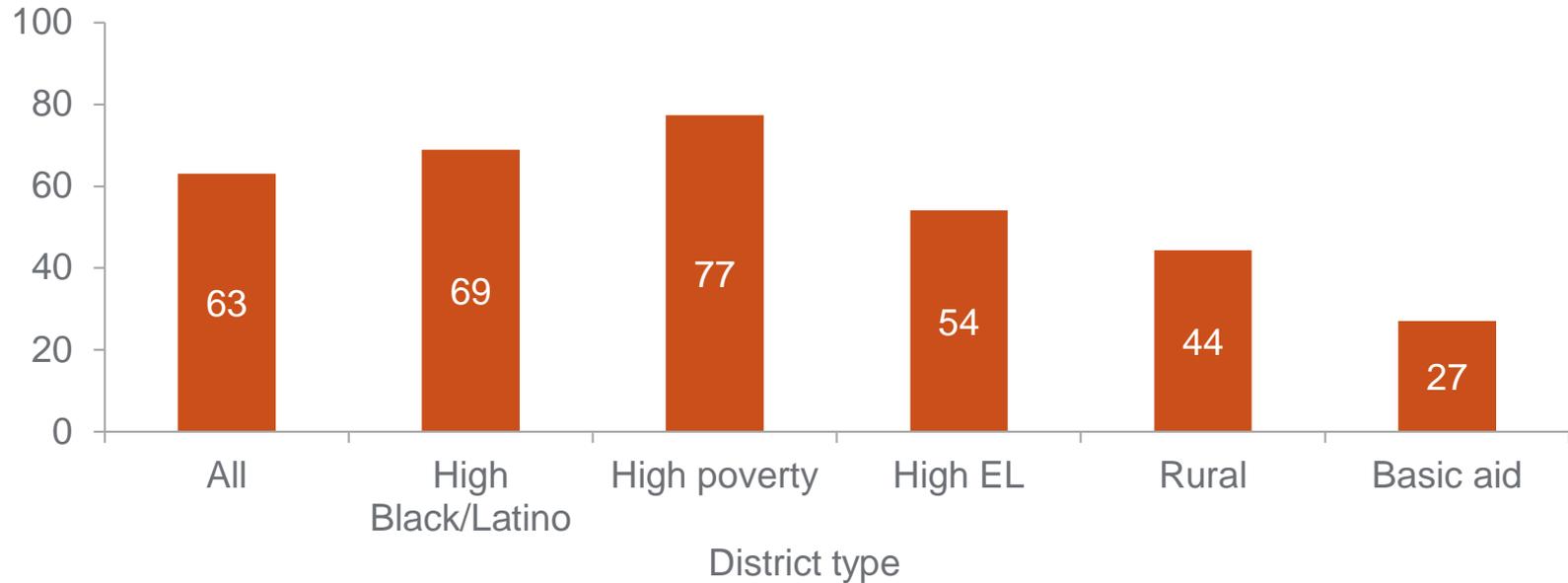
Percent of unserved students



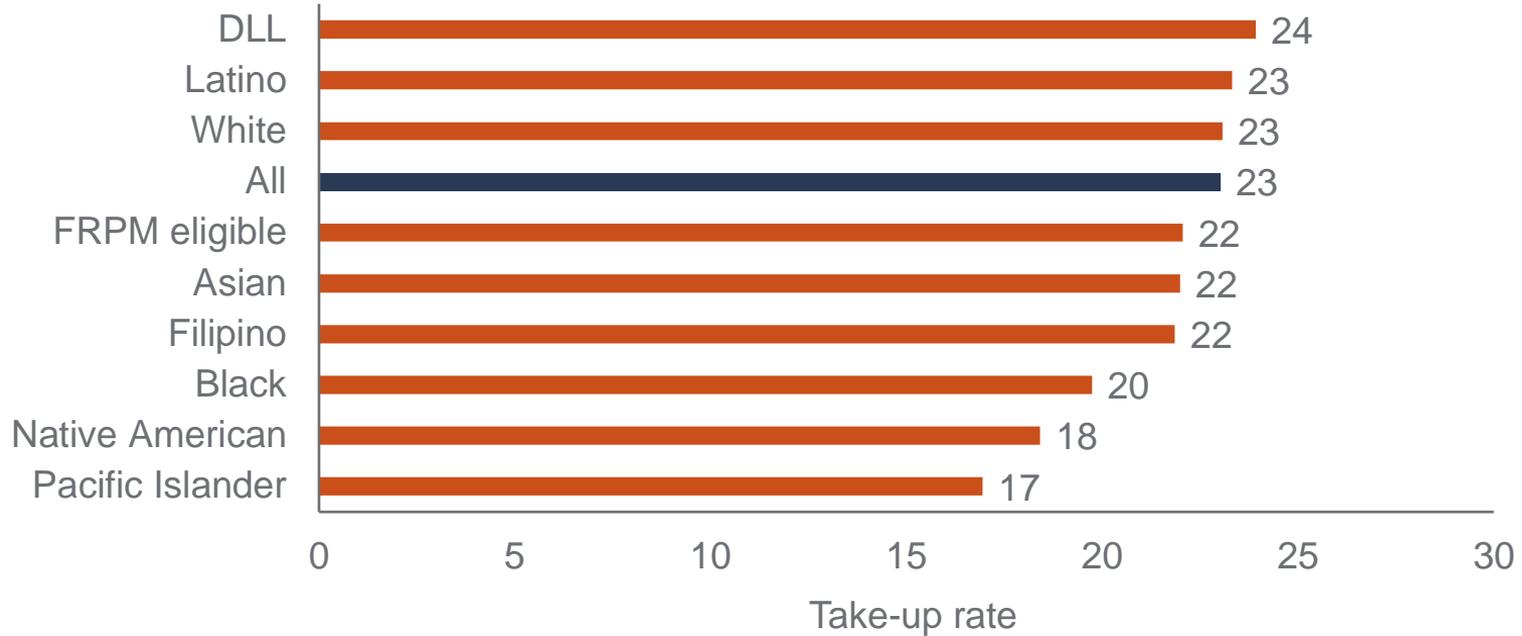
- School provides TK; children not enrolled
- School does not provide TK, but district does provide
- District does not provide TK

# Basic-aid and rural districts are less likely to provide TK at the vast majority of their schools

Percent offering TK at 80% or more of their schools



# Participation varies across groups even when TK is offered at students' schools



# Conclusions

- Dual Language Learners and Latino children participate in TK in relatively high proportions
  - Due to high provision of TK in their districts and schools
- Students from low-income families participate at about the same rate as the average student
- Native American and Pacific Islander children appear underrepresented
  - More likely to attend districts and schools where TK is not offered
  - Participation appears low when their schools do offer TK

# Recommendations

- Provide targeted outreach to groups with low participation, especially Pacific Islander and Native American families
- Report enrollment numbers for TK students with special needs
- Create more incentives for districts to provide TK
  - Consider accountability measures, such as including TK provision in the California School Dashboard
- Encourage rural districts to reach out to TK-eligible families
- Ensure that all schools offering kindergarten also provide TK

# Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.