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## State Update

### A Tribute to Tim Allwein

*Below is a reprinting of the text of Joan Benso's blog from Feb. 28*

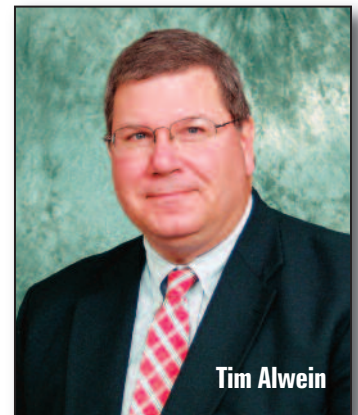
Children lost a true champion with the untimely passing of Tim Allwein, the Assistant Executive Director for Governmental and Member Relations of the PA School Boards Association. Tim was one of the most important players in education policy in our state for the past twenty years.

In a State Capitol that is often riddled with headlines about efforts to amass power and make deals, Tim was a constant force for something that truly matters – a high quality education for every child in Pennsylvania. It was more than a job for Tim – it was his life's work and something he embarked on with great passion.

His vision was simple – every child should have exactly what his beloved 17 year old daughter has – an excellent education that supports her dreams and a circle of supportive adults that put her interests first. Tim's commitment to equity was palpable in everything he did and was vividly demonstrated in how he lived his life .

He treated every person he met with respect regardless of their position. He was comfortable in his own skin and with everyone he met. He had a unique gift of truly listening to you when you spoke, even when he disagreed. He was clear about why he disagreed but he was never disagreeable. Tim valued his relationships beyond all else. Relationships with his family, his colleagues, his friends, and his community. Our lives are enriched because he was our colleague but even more so because we were blessed to call him our friend.

Tim was a big man with a big heart. He had a way of making you laugh even at the most difficult times. The past days have been filled with many stories of his notable achievements and his remarkable spirit. Our world is a little darker without him but we are renewed in the knowledge that he would want us to honor his legacy by continuing the fight for what he believed in most – his child and every child – and their ability to achieve.



**Tim Allwein**

*Published by Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, a strong, effective, and trusted voice to improve the health, education, and well-being of the Commonwealth's children.  
Joan L. Benso, President & CEO.*



### **Governor Announces Reduction in State Education Dollars, Expects Federal Backfill**

Gov. Tom Corbett put \$337.8 million of this year's basic education funding into reserve, expecting that lawmakers will fill the hole with available federal dollars.

Moving a total of \$364.2 million into budgetary reserve – the education funds, plus \$25.7 million for programs with the Department of Community and Economic Development, and \$669,000 for safe water – will prevent a revenue shortfall at the end of 2011-12 and help the state end the year with a surplus, said Budget Secretary Charles Zogby.

Zogby asked legislative leaders to offset the withheld school funds by appropriating federal Education Jobs Fund dollars. "With this action, no school district would receive less funding than was originally included in the enacted budget signed by Governor Rendell on July 6, 2010, including the restoration of \$50 million in Basic Subsidy funding that was placed into budgetary reserve in August 2010," Zogby wrote in a letter to lawmakers.

The decision also makes school districts dependent on about \$1 billion in federal funds in FY 2011-12 that won't be available at the end of this fiscal year. To date, the Corbett Administration has not yet followed up with an official supplemental budget request to legislative leaders and the Appropriations Committees.

### **Senate Committee Moves Voucher Bill**

The Senate Education Committee approved Senate Bill 1, the school voucher bill, with an 8-2 vote on March 1.

The bill would phase in vouchers over three years, directing tuition from home school districts to the schools chosen by families with income through 130 percent of poverty. In the first year, students attending persistently failing schools would qualify. In the second year, eligibility would expand to children currently enrolled in private schools but living within attendance boundaries of persistently failing schools. In year three, all low-income students statewide would be eligible.

The bill would also boost Educational Improvement Tax Credits by \$25 million, to a total of \$100 million. Businesses earn the credits by contributing to scholarship, educational improvement, and prekindergarten scholarship organizations.

Sens. Jeffrey Piccola (R-Dauphin) and Anthony Hardy Williams (D-Philadelphia) are the bill's primary sponsors. The committee rejected amendments that would have required voucher-recipient schools to participate in the PSSA or other nationally normed achievement tests, make AYP, allow voucher students to opt out of religious instruction or ceremonies, and publicly release the costs of compliance. Another rejected amendment would have removed language cutting school districts' basic education subsidies for each of their students enrolled in participating nonpublic schools.

For the first time in its nearly 20-year history, PPC announced a position on school choice. The position contains principles by which PPC will evaluate all voucher proposals put forth by policy-makers. PPC believes that every child has the right to attend a successful school. School vouchers are a viable option for low-income students in persistently failing schools *only if*:

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- A school with demonstrated success in meeting achievement targets is willing to accept the student.
- The accepting school and students adhere to the same educational accountability requirements, such as PSSA and graduation requirements, demanded of any school receiving state funding.
- The program does not diminish financial resources from the low-performing school the child is leaving.
- The program meets constitutional requirements.

### **Business Leaders: PA Gets Large Return on ECE Investments**

Pennsylvania's early care and education system outperforms other important sectors in the economy, returning \$2.06 for every \$1 invested, according to a report issued by national business leaders.

Early care and education programs provide almost \$1 billion in economic activity and employ 45,000 people, according to "Strengthening Pennsylvania's Businesses Through Investments in Early Care and Education" from America's Edge, a coalition of business leaders devoted to investments in children.

Early care and education programs create jobs, increase sales, and help build the skilled workforce needed for long-term economic growth, the report found. As adults, people who went through early childhood education programs, especially high-risk individuals, make \$7 to \$16 more for every dollar invested.

The two-for-one return on investment outpaces manufacturing, construction and transportation. Cuts to early care and education, the report warns, would reduce sales from Pennsylvania businesses and mean \$2 in lost economic activity for every \$1 cut.

Find a link to the report [HERE](#).

### **Unannounced Child Care Inspections Get Committee Nod**

The granddaughter who inspired Rep. Bob Godshall (R-Montgomery) to introduce a bill to require unannounced inspections of child care facilities is about to graduate from college – and Godshall's bill has, once again, moved beyond the committee level.

House Bill 87, approved unanimously by the House Health Committee and supported by PPC, would require annual, unannounced inspections at every child day care facility and unannounced inspections during the first year and at least once every four years at family day care homes.

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### **It's time to register for Early Childhood Action Day!**

Join fellow children's advocates in Harrisburg April 12 to tell legislators how important early learning programs are to children, families, communities and the economy!

[CLICK HERE](#) to register for **Action Day**.



Past objections from religious child care facilities have been addressed, Godshall said, although the bill could fail to win final passage if legislators overload it with amendments, said Godshall.

“We’re doing unannounced inspections in our barbershops and hair salons,” Godshall said. “I just can’t for the life of me understand why we wouldn’t do one unannounced inspection at our child care facilities.”

A recent test by the state Department of Public Welfare found that unannounced inspections revealed problems that hadn’t been found during announced inspections in 60 percent of cases, Godshall said. A department spokesperson said DPW supports the measure if it includes increased funding to conduct more inspections and address the additional problems uncovered.

The bill is waiting for consideration by the full House of Representatives.

### **House Health Committee Votes to Block Insurance Coverage Mandate**

The House Health Committee was divided on passage of House Bill 42, the proposed “Freedom of Choice in Health Care Act.” Sponsored by Rep. Matt Baker (R-Tioga), the measure would prohibit the state from penalizing anyone who doesn’t buy health insurance – a linchpin provision of federal health care reform poised to take effect in 2014.

The Pennsylvania Health Access Network called the bill “a major step backwards” for Pennsylvania and its 1.3 million uninsured residents, plus the 42,000 who have lost adultBasic coverage. Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center Director Sharon Ward noted that peeling back federal coverage mandates prevents key reform provisions from taking effect, “including establishment of health insurance exchanges that will make it easier for individuals and small businesses to shop for affordable insurance.”

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children was among 70 members of the Pennsylvania Health Access Network that signed a letter to Health Committee members urging them to oppose HB 87. The bill passed on a straight party-line vote, Republicans in favor and Democrats opposed, and moved to the House Appropriations Committee.

### **Legislative Study: School Costs Impacted by Harder-to-Educate Students**

High rates of English-language learners, students with IEPs, and economically disadvantaged students significantly impact school districts’ performance on achievement tests, according to a Joint State Government Commission report.

In 2007, a costing-out study commissioned by Gov. Ed Rendell cited a \$4 billion gap in spending on student achievement. Last year, the state Senate reacted by directing the Joint State Government Commission to study why some districts achieve high student performance with low spending.

State Sen. Jeffrey Piccola sought the study to “take a fresh look at what we are spending on our schools, how much we need to spend, and how schools are spending the millions they get.”

The report, released at the end of December, acknowledged the debate over the impact of spending on achievement, citing the fact that 80 percent of Pennsylvania schools have met their federal No Child Left Behind goals.

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“Some policymakers point to this as proof that ‘taxpayers are making a wise investment in public schools,’ and feel the spending goals outlined in the Costing Out Study are achieving results,” the report said.

Common threads among high-performing, low-spending districts include full-day kindergarten, especially for students from lower-income families and those with special needs; tutoring assistance; increased instructional time, including extended-day and summer schooling; teacher education and professional development; monitoring individual student achievement; dual enrollment and other unique educational opportunities; and smaller class sizes or more teacher aides, especially in the lower grades.

However, those 82 high-performing, low-spending districts have smaller populations of the students likeliest to fall short in reading and math achievement tests – English-language learners, students with IEPs, and economically disadvantaged students.

Find the JSGC study by [CLICKING HERE](#).

### [ECE Belongs in Crime-Fighting Strategies, Experts Tell Senate Panel](#)

Quality pre-kindergarten and nurse family partnership programs are among the proven, cost-effective, evidence-based strategies for reducing crime and states’ burgeoning prison costs, experts said at a state Senate hearing.

Pennsylvania’s prison population is 51,000 people and growing, forcing the state to commit \$800 million to build four new prisons, said Senate Judiciary Chairman Stewart Greenleaf (R-Montgomery).

“We can be tough on crime, as we have been here, but we must also be smart on crime,” Greenleaf said.

Pennsylvania was once a leader in crime prevention, but funding has plummeted 88 percent since 2002, juvenile justice consultant Clay Yeager told the committee.

“The daily cost of running our state corrections system is about \$5 million. The daily cost to support programs that will keep kids out of the state corrections system later on is about \$5,000,” Yeager said.

The committee did not take action, but Greenleaf said he agreed with the crime-prevention value of ECE.

“I always thought that we should be changing our efforts to focus more on early childhood intervention,” he said. “It will ultimately pay dividends in less crime and state costs.”

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### [CHIP Enrollment](#)

CHIP enrollment declined to 192,915 in February. There were 14,313 children enrolled in CHIP in February who would not have been eligible prior to the Cover All Kids expansion.



### [Revenue Update](#)

Pennsylvania collected \$1.5 billion in General Fund revenue in February, which was \$20.7 million, or 1.3 percent, less than anticipated. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections total \$15.2 billion, which is \$243.2 million, or 1.6 percent, above estimate.



### **2011-12 Keystone STARS Standards Released**

The 2011-2012 Keystone STARS Performance Standards for Centers, released in December, modify the observation requirement into a developmental screening at STAR 2.

They also align the STAR 3 standard to the Early Learning Network requirements for authentic assessment. Minor changes were made to specific standards such as clarifying the number of professional development hours needed for a certain topic area.

The new standards will be effective July 1. Find details at Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality by [CLICKING HERE](#). Families can also find Keystone STARS providers by [CLICKING HERE](#).

### **PA Budget Watch Series Offers Budget Insight**

Nonprofit leaders in southwestern Pennsylvania can attend the new PA Budget Watch Series to learn from Harrisburg insiders how state budget cuts could affect their organizations.

The first session will feature Karen Snider, former Department of Public Welfare secretary, and Chuck Kolling, noted lobbyist and government relations professional for Buchanan Ingersoll and Rooney PC.

The session will be held at 2 p.m. March 25 at Heinz History Center, 1212 Smallman Street, Pittsburgh, RSVP deadline is March 11. Register by visiting [WWW.CVENT.COM](http://WWW.CVENT.COM) and using the search function to find PA Budget Watch.

The United Way of Allegheny County, Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership, the Forbes Funds, the Pittsburgh Foundation, and Dewey & Kaye are series sponsors.

## **Federal Update**

### **Two-week Stop-Gap Budget Signed — Government Shutdown Avoided**

The Obama Administration and Congressional leaders agreed to a two-week continuing resolution (CR) containing \$4 billion in cuts to avoid a government shutdown. Now lawmakers will go back to the negotiating table to try and resolve a FY 2011 budget solution through the end of the federal fiscal year (September 30). President Obama has tasked Vice President Biden and two other aides to work out a longer term budget solution with Congressional leaders.

While many Democrats in the Senate expressed concerns about voting for the two-week CR, they were unwilling to oppose it and risk being seen as resisting budget cuts or causing a government shutdown. The measure was approved by a vote of 91-9. The Senate vote came a day after the House voted 335-91 to approve the two-week continuing resolution. The cuts in the CR were largely agreed to by both parties and were even proposed as part of President Obama's FY 2012 budget.

The two-week CR comes just a few weeks after Congressional Republicans approved a bill that would make unprecedented cuts in non-security domestic discretionary spending. HR 1 cuts just over \$60 billion in discretionary spending over current FY 2010 funding. This stands \$100 billion below levels in President Obama's FY 2011 spending proposal.

Key children's programs are slashed under the House's budget bill. HR 1 proposes to cut funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program and Head Start by \$1.039 billion

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and \$2.1 billion, respectively. These drastic cuts mean that at least 26,000 Pennsylvania children and their parents will lose child care subsidy and Head Start services, adding to Pennsylvania's child care waiting list of over 12,000 children. Additionally, the Pennsylvania Head Start Association estimates that another 1,000 Head Start staff will lose their jobs.

Additionally, the bill also cuts almost \$694 million in Title I funds for schools with high concentrations of disadvantaged children, \$100 million to support afterschool programs, and \$750 million for the supplemental nutrition for women, infants and children (WIC).

Democratic leaders in the Senate have consistently rejected the House's proposal for a long-term budget solution calling the proposal "draconian."

### **President's Proposed Budget Spares Most Children's Programs**

Total federal spending on children would rise 6 percent, despite a five-year freeze on non-security discretionary spending, under President Barack Obama's proposed FY 2012 budget. Children's share of discretionary funding would rise slightly, from 19.1 percent to 19.6 percent, under the spending plan unveiled Feb. 14, according to First Focus.

Education would receive 4.3 percent funding increase under the FY 2012 proposal – \$2 billion over what President Obama proposed in FY 2011. Specifically, the plan calls for, among other things:

- 350 million for an Early Learning Challenge Fund to boost early-learning programs;
- \$4.3 billion for teacher and principal preparation programs, including formula grants to states, alternative certification, minority teacher recruiting programs, and scholarships for high-achieving students to work in high-need schools;
- \$300 million for the Investing in Innovation program;
- A \$200 million increase for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- A \$300 million increase for Title I schools;
- A \$100 million increase for 21st Century Community Learning Centers;
- \$900 million for the Race to the Top program; and
- \$150 million for the Promise Neighborhoods program, which gives children and families comprehensive support services to increase children's chances for academic success

However, some provisions have caused concern. They include proposed cuts in funding for juvenile justice and the Low-Income Home Energy

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### **Donatucci Sworn in to Late Husband's House Seat**

Rep. Maria Donatucci (D-Philadelphia) was sworn in Feb. 15 — two weeks after a special election to fill her late husband's seat. She will serve the remainder of his term. The late Rep. Robert Donatucci died only a few days after he succeeded in winning his reelection bid in November 2010. He served in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for 30 years.

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**On March 9, watch your inboxes and check PPC's website, [www.papartnerships.org](http://www.papartnerships.org), for a special state budget edition of *CapWatch*.**

**PPC will review Gov. Tom Corbett's proposed budget, released March 8, and analyze the impact on programs serving children and families.**



Assistance Program, and elimination of a program that helps train pediatricians and pediatric specialists in children's hospitals.

The president's proposal includes:

- *Children's health: A 29 percent increase, or \$1 billion more, in funding for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which administers CHIP. The \$318 million program training pediatricians and pediatric specialists at children's hospitals would be eliminated. Funding for Maternal and Child Health Block Grant would decline, but home visiting would get \$250 million, up from \$1 million.*
- *Child nutrition: The spending plan supports implementation of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and increased funding for school meals and other programs. Children's benefits in SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, would get \$37 billion, a 25 percent increase.*
- *Child welfare: The president proposes \$2.5 billion over 10 years for a comprehensive child welfare reform agenda, encouraging states to improve outcomes for children in foster care or receiving in-home child welfare services.*

### **Corbett Joins Medicaid Protest**

Gov. Corbett is joining many of his counterparts from other states in pushing back against pending mandates in the health care reform law.

Corbett joined 32 governors seeking relief from Medicaid's Maintenance of Effort (MOE) mandate – the requirement to expand and cover all people with incomes up to 133 percent of poverty.

Medicaid enrollment is rising as revenues are falling, the governors argued in a letter to President Obama, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, and congressional leaders. Lifting the MOE requirement would give states more flexibility to “make difficult budget decisions,” they wrote.

“The effect of the federal requirements is unconscionable; the federal requirements force Governors to cut other critical state programs, such as education, in order to fund a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to Medicaid,” they wrote.

“As the Medicaid population continues to increase and state revenues continue to not keep pace, the lack of any meaningful flexibility within the program will severely hamper virtually all other aspects of the (Pennsylvania) state budget,” the letter said.

The governors said they support health care reform repeal but, if the new law stands, hope for more flexibility in operating the insurance exchanges from which many Americans will shop for coverage.

Among their requests: Authority to move the non-disabled Medicaid population out of Medicaid and into the exchanges. If granted, that provision could hurt children, who currently benefit from EPSDT, or Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment, through Medicaid.

Sebelius responded that governors can increase co-pays, where co-pays already exist, and cut non-federally mandated benefits. Also, the Department of Health and Human Services is expected to

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announce expedited ways states can apply for Medicaid waivers, as a means of providing more flexibility in state budgets.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee held a hearing this week, where several governors testified, urging the rollback of the MOE provisions.

### **President Obama Backs off Key Part of Health Care Reform Law**

Speaking to governors Feb. 28, President Obama announced that states should be able to request waivers for implementing alternatives to the reform law starting in 2014, three years earlier than the law allows. This position marks a key change in the Obama Administration's position on the health care reform law.

Obama's announcement represents the first specific proposal he supports beyond a change on a tax provision impacting small businesses. The president pledged to support legislation sponsored by Sens. Ron Wyden (D-OR), Scott Brown (R-MA) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA) that would let states obtain waivers to opt out of range of requirements – including the individual mandate to buy health insurance – as soon as it took effect in 2014, as long as they could find another way to expand coverage without driving up health care costs. Under the current law, states must wait until 2017 to obtain waivers.

### **Casey Warns Against Head Start/CCDBG Cuts**

Rollbacks in funding for Head Start and child care would harm U.S. competitiveness and should be averted in 2011, according to a letter from Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA) and 16 other senators.

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“The Child Care and Development Block Grant, Head Start, and Early Head Start benefited from increased funding through federal stimulus funds, and Congress must build on this progress, not reverse it,” senators stated in the letter originally circulated for signatures by Casey and Sens. Al Franken (D-MN) and Patty Murray (D-WA).

“Without sufficient funding, 300,000 or more children will be cut from these programs and classrooms will be at risk of shutting down,” the letter stated. Currently, one eligible child in six receives child care assistance, only 4 percent of eligible infants and toddlers participate in Early Head Start, and fewer than half of eligible children participate in Head Start, the letter noted.

“Cuts to these programs will have drastic long-term effects that will be damaging to our country’s economic competitiveness. CCDBG, Head Start, and Early Head Start are responsible investments that will help us build a smarter, healthier, and stronger America.”

### **Senator Casey Unveils Supporting State Systems of Early Learning Act**

Senator Casey unveiled his legislative proposal which would establish an Early Learning Challenge Fund to help states build and strengthen systems of early learning programs providing high-quality early learning and development programs for low-income children up to five years of age. The legislation creates a two-tiered grant opportunities to states.

Development grants would be made available to states that submit a plan for the development of high-quality early learning systems. Quality Pathway Grants would be made available to states that have made the greatest strides in setting up their high-quality early learning systems. The states awarded the grants would be required to build efforts based on proven methods of early learning, to create efficiencies by unification of child care and pre-K programs funded by state and federal funds, and build tiered program rating and improvement systems that will incentivize improvements in early learning over time.

### **HHS: CHIP Reauthorization Cushions Children from Effects of Recession**

On the second anniversary of the Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced that more than two million more children were served by Medicaid or CHIP during the past year.

Medicaid and CHIP programs serve more than 42 million children. “The increase in the number of children served by these two vital programs is especially significant in the face of the recent economic downturn states are experiencing,” said Sebelius. “Even in times of hardship states have demonstrated their commitment to the health of children by continuing efforts to identify and enroll them in coverage.”

Sebelius also announced \$40 million in new grants to states, community-based organizations, and school systems to support outreach and enrollment. With the grants, states can further streamline administrative systems and create school-based strategies for identifying hard-to-reach children. An estimated 5 million uninsured children are eligible but not enrolled.

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### **Two Studies Confirm ECE's Benefits for Health, Economy**

The long-term benefits of investments in early childhood education extend to the economy and to health behaviors, two new, separate studies have determined.

The Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University conducted one of the few existing studies of the impact of high-quality, intensive early education programs on health. The study found that people who received intensive early education intervention had significantly better health and better health behaviors later in life.

The study compared enrollees from the 1970s Abecedarian Project in North Carolina to a control group, tracking self-reported health problems since 15 years of age, depression, and the number of hospitalizations in the past year. The study also charted behavioral risk factors including traffic safety, drug use, and access to primary care.

The results: Abecedarian participants had significantly better health and health behaviors, independent of IQ, educational attainment, or health insurance status. As early as age 21, the Abecedarian participants showed reduced health risks from smoking and better health outcomes.

“While much remains to be learned about both the pathways linking education to health and the overall effect of education on health, our study provides causal evidence in support of the hypothesis that early education enhancements may improve income, reduce crime, and even enhance the global competitiveness of the American workforce,” said Columbia researcher Dr. Peter Muennig. “These interventions may be more cost effective than many traditional medical and public health approaches to improving population health.”

The study was published in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

In another long-term study, the National Institutes of Health determined that each dollar spent on the Child-Parent Centers in Chicago has returned \$4 to \$11, because enrollees through age 26 more likely to finish high school or college, and they earn more than their peers.

The investments created significant economic benefits for enrollees and taxpayers, the study concluded. Participants were also less likely to be held back, arrested, depressed, involved with drugs, or sick.

The Child-Parent Centers feature heavy parental involvement and education, meals, health services, and home visiting. Children begin preschool at age 3 and continue through third grade.

The NIH study was published in *Child Development*.

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