

# LINC Commission Meeting

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## November 15, 2010

Lights were on at schools all around the Kansas City area on Thursday, October 21st. Children were celebrating the importance of after school programs at LINC Caring Communities sites which are located in 7 school districts, charter schools and neighborhood centers.



(above) Students from the Hickman Mills School District perform "We are the World" as part of Lights On Afterschool.



These Three Trails Elementary students in the Independence School District received flashlights as part of the event. (Photo: Joe Walker)



# Local Investment Commission (LINC) Vision

## Our Shared Vision

A caring community that builds on its strengths to provide meaningful opportunities for children, families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, attain their highest potential, and contribute to the public good.

## Our Mission

To provide leadership and influence to engage the Kansas City Community in creating the best service delivery system to support and strengthen children, families and individuals, holding that system accountable, and changing public attitudes towards the system.

## Our Guiding Principles

1. **COMPREHENSIVENESS:** Provide ready access to a full array of effective services.
2. **PREVENTION:** Emphasize “front-end” services that enhance development and prevent problems, rather than “back-end” crisis intervention.
3. **OUTCOMES:** Measure system performance by improved outcomes for children and families, not simply by the number and kind of services delivered.
4. **INTENSITY:** Offering services to the needed degree and in the appropriate time.
5. **PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT:** Use the needs, concerns, and opinions of individuals who use the service delivery system to drive improvements in the operation of the system.
6. **NEIGHBORHOODS:** Decentralize services to the places where people live, wherever appropriate, and utilize services to strengthen neighborhood capacity.
7. **FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS:** Create a delivery system, including programs and reimbursement mechanisms, that are sufficiently flexible and adaptable to respond to the full spectrum of child, family and individual needs.
8. **COLLABORATION:** Connect public, private and community resources to create an integrated service delivery system.
9. **STRONG FAMILIES:** Work to strengthen families, especially the capacity of parents to support and nurture the development of their children.
10. **RESPECT AND DIGNITY:** Treat families, and the staff who work with them, in a respectful and dignified manner.
11. **INTERDEPENDENCE/MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Balance the need for individuals to be accountable and responsible with the obligation of community to enhance the welfare of all citizens.
12. **CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** Demonstrate the belief that diversity in the historical, cultural, religious and spiritual values of different groups is a source of great strength.
13. **CREATIVITY:** Encourage and allow participants and staff to think and act innovatively, to take risks, and to learn from their experiences and mistakes.
14. **COMPASSION:** Display an unconditional regard and a caring, non-judgmental attitude toward participants that recognizes their strengths and empowers them to meet their own needs.
15. **HONESTY:** Encourage and allow honesty among all people in the system.



Monday, Nov. 15, 2010 | 4 – 6 pm  
Kauffman Foundation  
4801 Rockhill Rd.  
Kansas City, Mo. 64110

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## Agenda

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- I. Welcome and Announcements
- II. Approvals
  - a. Oct minutes (motion)
- III. LINC Finance Committee
  - a. LINC Audit
  - b. LINC Finances
- IV. Superintendent's Reports
- V. LINC President's Report
- VI. LINCWorks Update
- VII. Adjournment



## THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – OCT. 18, 2010

The Local Investment Commission met at the Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City, Mo. **Bailus Tate** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Bert Berkley  
Sharon Cheers  
Jack Craft  
SuEllen Fried  
Kiva Gates  
Rob Givens  
Bart Hakan  
Rosemary Lowe

Sandy Mayer (for Mike Sanders)  
Richard Morris  
Mary Kay McPhee  
Margie Peltier  
David Rock  
David Ross  
Gene Standifer

*A motion to approve the Sept. 20, 2010, LINC Commission meeting minutes was passed unanimously.*

**Gayle A. Hobbs** gave the LINC President's Report:

- The annual Lights on Afterschool celebration will be held this Thursday, Oct. 21. Commissioners are welcome to attend an event at one of the many LINC sites that are holding celebrations.
- LINC staff Robin Gierer reported that LINC has been asked to participate in a U.S. Dept. of Agriculture summer food program. LINC will submit a proposal for a grant to demonstrate the summer food program in the Kansas City, Mo. and Hickman Mills school districts.

**Sandy Mayer** introduced Jackson County staff **Shelley Temple-Kneuvean**, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, and **Amber Reynolds**, GIS Developer, who demonstrated a web-based mapping tool for Jackson County land trust properties. The tool incorporates data from Jackson County, the City of Kansas City, Mo. and other organizations so that neighborhood associations, non-profits and developers can identify abandoned properties which can then be incorporated into neighborhood redevelopment plans.

LINC staff **Brent Schondelmeyer** reported that the GIS mapping project grew out of discussions about home foreclosures in the Kansas City area.

Discussion followed.

Hobbs introduced an update on the LINCWorks welfare case management initiative. A video on LINCWorks start-up efforts was viewed.

Family Support Division regional administrator **Marge Randle** introduced FSD staff involved in the LINCWorks initiative: **Tom Jakopchek**, **Robin Leikam**, **Lucy Torres**, **Becky Hagen** and **Kami Macias**. LINC staff **Brenda Mitchelson** introduced **Bruno Finocchario** of LINCWorks partner Jewish Vocational Service and LINCWorks case managers **Dawn Patterson**, **Nanci Saulsberry**, **Ken Hughlon** and **Janay Reliford**.

LINCWorks committee co-chair Terry Ward outlined the roles of the LINCWorks partners and reported that staff are managing emerging issues during the transition of responsibilities to

LINC.

Swope Health Services vice president **Jimmie Brown** gave a progress report on the new Swope Health South community health clinic. Construction is under way, and the clinic is expected to start providing comprehensive primary medical and preventive health services later this fall.

LINC staff **Trent DeVreugd** introduced a presentation on Active Living Kansas City, a partnership between several City of Kansas City, Mo. departments, Hickman Mills School District and LINC. The initiative seeks to promote walking and biking to school, nutrition and healthy eating, and is funded by a grant from the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City. The initiative kick-off coincided with national Walk to School Day – a video of the event at Ingels Elementary School was shown. DeVreugd introduced city staff **Joanna Sabally, Ashley Winchell** and **Sarah Worthington; Lisa Smith**, Ingels principal; **Gayle Wood**, Hickman Mills School District; and **Angela Myres**, LINC site coordinator at Ingels.

DeVreugd introduced **Nancy Jobe**, CLAIM regional liaison, and **Patricia Wyatt**, Swope Ridge Rehabilitation Center president, who reported that Swope Ridge will host a CLAIM volunteer center to educate low-income residents on Medicaid and other health care programs for the medically indigent.

**Sharon Cheers** announced Kansas City, Mo. School Board president Airick Leonard West will be honored at the NAACP Freedom Luncheon, Oct. 30.

**Rob Givens** thanked **Bert Berkley** for his support of the Opportunity Knocks door-to-door informational campaign in the Kansas City, Mo. School District.

The meeting was adjourned.

## Kansas City meeting with David Hansell, Acting Asst. Sec. ACS

**David Hansell**, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), visited LINC on Oct. 27, 2010, for a discussion of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and LINCWorks, the volunteer-led effort to help area welfare participants move toward employment and self-sufficiency.

Attending were LINC staff and volunteers and representatives of LINCWorks partner agencies including Mo. Family Support Division, Full Employment Council, Community LINC, Jewish Vocational Service, Legal Aid of Western Missouri, Metropolitan Community Colleges and Kansas City Mo. School District.

Hansell expressed a real commitment to improving federal, state and local relationships. Understanding this is how the work is actually done, he supported letting state and local experience inform federal policy and regulations.



“There is only do much you can understand sitting at your desk in Washington, DC,” said Hansell.

He said the current administration is promoting “inter-operability” between agencies and highlighted the growing cooperation between U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Dept. of Education.

LINC highlighted how the work and funding of both those federal agencies is realized in neighborhoods through LINC’s “community schools” – i.e. Caring Communities.

Hansell expressed strong interested in work being done with males. Local examples were provided.

Hansell showed genuine interest in hearing from the Division of Family Services, LINC, the Full Employment Council and other partners about federal policy or regulations that are an impediment to achieving agreed-upon policy ends.

There was an extensive conversation about participation rates and GED.

Other conversation points included:

- **sharing** the history of LINC’s involvement in welfare reform in the early 1990s
- **developing** a community welfare-to-work system focused on the needs of the client and family of the client population
- **redefining** partner roles as welfare case management responsibilities are shifted from state government to local contractors
- **coordinating** the work of several agencies to address needs of clients who have multiple barriers to employment (child care, transportation, domestic violence, outstanding warrants, no high school diploma or equivalent)
- **engaging** the welfare population at the neighborhood level through neighborhood organizing efforts and supportive services (such as Before & After School child care) offered at LINC Caring Communities school sites.

LINC staff expressed appreciation for the participation of regional HHS staff in monthly meetings involving the partners.

The purpose of Hansell’s visit was to learn about local efforts to address issues that are the concern of the Administration for Children and Families.

# LINCWORKS



## Your path to skills & work.

Individuals approved for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) can now get assistance from LINCWORKS — a new system of non-profit community partners and organizations.

Several LINCWORKS locations are now open or opening soon in Jackson, Clay and Platte counties to better serve your needs. (See reverse for locations.)

We are committed to providing personal attention to help you find a path to skills and work.

Call us for help today.

**(816) 303-0660**

### What kind of help can I get?

- Employment assistance if you have skills and are job ready.
- Training and work experience to help you learn valuable work skills.
- Support if there are obstacles that make it difficult to work — child care assistance, transportation and other social supports.

## LINCWORKS Main Office

Penn Tower Building  
3100 Broadway, Suite 325  
Kansas City, MO 64111

**Hours:**

Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 6 pm  
Saturday 8 am - Noon



There is free visitor parking in the Penn Tower garage. Entrances are on Broadway and Pennsylvania. KCATA Bus routes: 31 and 51.

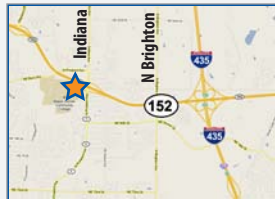
The LINCWORKS main office is located on the 3rd floor mezzanine level. Take the elevator to the 3rd floor, turn left and take the stairs down.

## North Office

3100 NE 83rd St.  
Suite 2100  
Kansas City, MO 64119

**Hours:**

Tuesday 9 am - 1 pm



## Jewish Vocational Service

1608 Baltimore  
Kansas City, MO 64108

**Hours:**

Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 4:30 pm



## East Office

1524 E. 23rd St.  
Independence, MO 64055

**Hours:**

Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 5 pm



## Housing Authority of Kansas City

Chouteau Courts  
1220 Independence Ave.  
Kansas City, MO 64106

**Hours:**

Mon.-Fri. 8 am - 5pm

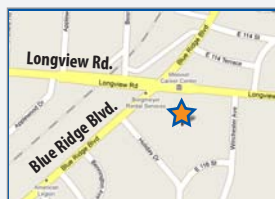


## South Office

6801-A Longview Rd.  
Kansas City, MO 64134

**Hours:**

Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 5 pm



## Community LINC

4016-18 Troost  
Kansas City, MO 64110

**Hours:**

Mon.-Fri. 8 am - 5pm



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# LINCWORKS



Your path to skills & work.

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## 2010 Public Officials of the Year

# The Headmaster

**John Covington** - Superintendent of Schools, Kansas City, Mo.

Read more of the [extended Q&A with John Covington](#).

Schools in Kansas City, Mo., have been suffering for years. The district is only provisionally accredited and meets just four of the state's 14 standards for academic performance. Only a quarter of its students score at the proficient level on state exams. The system has been hemorrhaging students: Enrollment has fallen by half in the past 10 years. And by 2009, the district faced a \$50 million deficit.

What the system needed was nothing short of a complete overhaul. Fortunately, it had John Covington.

Covington was brought on as the district superintendent last year, and he knew he needed to make some drastic decisions. And he wanted to make them fast. "While we're waiting -- you know, three years, five years -- to implement reform initiatives, we can lose a generation of children in the process."

So this summer, Covington essentially rebuilt the school system from the ground up. He closed nearly half of the city's 61 schools, ended more than 5,000 vendor contracts and cut the workforce by nearly a third. He rewrote curriculums and shifted the seventh and eighth grades out of elementary schools and into high schools.



On top of that, Covington is pioneering an innovative "standards-based" approach at five elementary schools in the city. The new method does away with traditional letter grades. And it eliminates grade levels altogether, grouping students instead by what they've learned.

No other school district in the country has made such wholesale reforms, and cities everywhere are watching to see if Covington's bold experiment pays off. Missouri education officials say they're encouraged by Kansas City's progress so far. For Covington, though, the decision was clear: Go big and do it now. "[We have to] move with all deliberate speed and continue to make those decisions that we know are going to be in the best interest of children," he says. "Why wait?"

## 2010 Public Officials of the Year

# Interview

## Q&A: John Covington

*John Covington ([full profile](#)) is superintendent of the Kansas City, Mo., school district. Governing Staff Writer Tina Trenkner spoke with Covington near the beginning of the school year to ask the Alabama native what made him want to become an urban school superintendent. Here is an abridged and edited version of the interview:*

### **What factors made you decide you wanted to become an educator?**

When I was growing up in Enterprise (Ala.), basically most of the role models in Enterprise at the time were teachers. And I decided about the eighth grade I wanted to become a teacher.

### **Was there a particular teacher that influenced you in eighth grade?**

No, it's just from the time I started school in '60 ... '62, '63, up until 1969, the public schools in Enterprise were basically segregated. Forced integration didn't come until 1969, '70. I think it was '70, '71, at which point schools were integrated. So when I was actually going through elementary school, I always toyed with the notion of one day ... becoming a teacher and I really decided on that in eighth grade.

### **School started three weeks ago, how's everything been going?**

Right now, everything is going extremely, extremely well. In fact, we opened school on Aug. 30, and our first day as well as our first week exceeded my expectations. I was really worried about it. Anytime you close half your schools and three additional call centers for a total of approximately 30 facilities -- that's a lot of work to do over the course of the summer. You're talking about drawing new school attendance boundaries, new attendance zones, moving materials supplies and equipment from 26 closed schools to the schools that will be remaining open, slashing our employee pool by approximately a thousand employees, making sure that teachers are appropriately assigned to schools, making sure that notices are being sent from the district office to parents so that they'll know exactly which schools they are to report to on the first day of school.... It's really a monumental task. And as a result of having an exceptional leadership team that the school board allowed me to bring in at the inception of my tenure, we were able to really open school on Aug. 30 with minor problems.

### **Because of so many changes in the school district that you previously outlined, how did you lead through all those logistical challenges?**

I realized if we're going to be successful everyone had to put forth a concerted effort to make it happen. So in terms of leadership, I made sure all the appropriate stakeholders were brought to the table. We looked at insurmountable amounts of data to make our case. I then took our arguments for the necessity of shutting down half the schools to the community, the City Council, the NAACP, the churches, various community groups, elected officials....

Of course, the board had to be a key player in all of this, and then we had to do our due diligence in giving members of the community an opportunity to vent. Anytime you talk about closing one school, that certainly evokes a very, very passionate argument, so you can imagine what it was like when I made the announcement that I would be recommending to the school board that we close 26 schools and 3 or 4 additional call centers.

It really took the community by surprise. I think it was shocking. It was a very painful process, but I just knew that I had to be in the forefront giving various parents and other community stakeholders who were against the closure of so many schools an opportunity to vent and have their say.

**What did you do to get the support from the different stakeholders like the school board, the teachers and the parents, and how did you show that you took their concerns under consideration while moving quickly to action?**

Well, we primarily used the data to make our argument. First of all, Kansas City has less than 18,000 students and we were operating about 66 schools. When I was in Pueblo [County, Colo.], we had more students in Pueblo than we have here in Kansas City. Pueblo had more than 18,000 students, and for 18,000 students we had 32 schools and not all of them were full. So even when I interviewed for the job, I knew that the Kansas City, Mo., school district, from a financial standpoint, had a very, very strained budget.

When I was able to finally get my leadership team together, we really began to look at all facets of school district operation and realized early on that the budget was so strained, or strained to the point that we were looking at approximately a \$50 million shortfall. If we had not done what we did, we would have found ourselves looking at intervention from the state. We had Susan Montee, who was the state [auditor] give a report to the community ... and she reported the exact same thing I'm reporting to you.

That was one case we made. The second case we made was: When you look at measurable student academic achievement, we only had 25 percent of the children in the school district who were scoring at the proficient level on the state test. When you look at the manner in which we were operating -- greatly living beyond our finances and maintaining an employee pool of approximately 3,900 employees which resulted in a 14-to-1 student-teacher ratio -- yet still only 25 percent of the children in the district scoring at the proficient level on the state test? There is something terribly wrong with that picture. I mean, that is almost criminal.

And then the third thing is: By the time we were going through school closures I think we had over 6,000 contracts. When did an analysis of those contracts, we found that many of them added no educational value to the school district. So we reduced contracts from over 6,000 to around maybe 925 with the understanding that we would then take any revenue that we were saving, and put that revenue back into teaching and learning across the district. If you are operating less

schools, that gives you a greater ability to then spread your resources over fewer schools to help achieve the goals, objectives and certainly the mission of the school district.

**Can you outline what your typical day on the job has been for you?**

Oh my god. That'll be pretty difficult. I meet a lot, I go through tons of mail, answer a large amount of phone calls... One of the primary things that I do however is look at the work of the various divisions that make up the Kansas City, Mo., school district. I watch this very, very closely to make sure that our various divisions are staying on target and that they are meeting established benchmarks for achieving the goals and objectives that those respective divisions have outlined in our school district's transformation plan. That's very, very critical.

Members of my staff and I on a regular basis work in excess of 13- to 14-hours-a-day. Last year we were going through the right-sizing initiative, and it was not uncommon for us to put in anywhere from 16- to 18-hours-a-day. It takes that kind of work in a school district like Kansas City where there is so much to be done to get the school district back on the right course of looking like and behaving like an effective school district. The problems we have in Kansas City should never be considered to be germane to Kansas City. The problems we have here are certainly the same as most urban school districts experience throughout the country, including Detroit, Washington D.C., Birmingham and other similar school districts.

**I wanted to ask you about standards-based education. Can you explain what this is and why you are piloting this type of education in five schools?**

I really believe that those of us in public education throughout the country are continuing to hold on to an outdated system of providing educational programs and services to children enrolled in the nation's public schools which should have long since abandoned. When you walk through the corridors of most high schools throughout the country, and elementary schools as well, they will mirror exactly what we were doing in the '50s, '40s, '30s, '20s and even the last part of the last century. When we talk about making sure that our nation remains economically strong and certainly globally competitive, we're not going to be able to do that if we don't make sure that children enrolled in the nation's public schools become assets in achieving that goal, rather than liabilities. We're unable to make that kind of assurance when we're consistently trying to provide them with an outdated model and outdated structure [of education]. Standards-based, in my mind, is the best way to do that.

So in other words, rather than saying to a child you have to do nine months in the first grade and then you're promoted to the second grade.... Well, in the standards-based system, children are able to move through various levels at their own pace and you give children that which they need individually rather than trying to teach to the entire group and holding all children to the same set of standards. Standards-based eliminates grade levels as well as A, B, C, D and F grades. It places the focus on allowing children to move through levels based on their ability to demonstrate that they have mastered the skills, and they're also able to demonstrate [what] they can do as a result of what is they know. They become, the student becomes, the center and the focus of the teaching and the learning experience.

**Is standards-based education on track to be expanded throughout the school system or to be implemented slowly?**

Well, that is our goal. However, because of the summer of changes we had throughout the school district our first year, we didn't want to do too much too quickly. We identified five schools where we would pioneer or pilot the standards-based program. We want to do that so that we can work out all the bugs and the kinks before expanding the standards-based model to other schools. So we monitor it on a daily and weekly basis, working out any problems that we didn't anticipate to be assured it is working before we expand to other schools within the district.

**One of the problems with education reform is that often changes are made very slowly. Yet you developed this reputation for decisiveness and quick action. What factors have helped you implement change so quickly and what sort of advice do you have for other education leaders that are trying to implement reforms?**

One of the primary drivers for me in moving quickly is because while we toy with the idea of educational reform, we have to consider the impact that those decisions are going to have on the lives of children. While we're waiting you know, three years, five years to implement reform initiatives that we really believe can work, we can lose a generation of children in the process.

I think when we move forward with all deliberate speed and continue to make those decisions that we know are going to be in the best interest of children, why wait?

**How does it feel to know that representatives from the U.S. Department of Education and other education policy researchers are watching what you're doing with Kansas City?**

To some extent, Tina, that's somewhat flattering but that's not our motive and we really don't -- my senior leadership team and I -- focus on that. While it is good to be recognized, our primary focus has to be on the work of Kansas City and it has to be focused on not only the work but making sure that we're doing what we do well, so it can have positive outcomes for children. I guess the biggest recognition of our work is to have what we're doing in Kansas City be replicated by others so that children in other school districts throughout this country can have the same kind of opportunities that we're trying to afford the children in Kansas City.

*Photo by Steve Puppe*

# Historic East Neighborhood Coalition

In July 2009 the Palestine Neighborhood Development Corporation joined forces with 9 other neighborhood associations, congregations and business stakeholders to form the Historic East Neighborhoods Coalition (HENC).

The coalition formed to address the needs that Palestine residents share with members of each of these neighborhoods. The idea is that together the groups can accomplish bigger and broader goals than working independently; awards are more often given to groups that are already collaborating with each other.

The ten neighborhood associations are 23rd Street PAC, Boston Heights/Mount Hope, Key Coalition, Oak Park, Palestine, Santa Fe, Seven Oaks, South Round Top, Vineyard, and Washington Wheatley. For more information contact your local neighborhood association.

HENC has identified three strategic initiatives to work around: education, economic development and employment, and workforce housing.

The Coalition will work to accomplish these goals by working with and attracting new partnerships with local businesses to increase employment opportunities for residents. Work will also focus on engaging the community in the life of the school with volunteer opportunities and other means of support.

The Catholic Charities Grant was recently awarded to help with set-up and organization costs incurred by the group.

The \$15,000 grant will be used to set up the group’s leadership board, establish strategic plans, engaging the community via social media, and creating a brand, such as the logo above.

A website and Facebook page have also been established. Visit [www.henc.org](http://www.henc.org) or search HENC on Facebook. LINC is assisting with development of the HENC logo, website and other materials.



## **Palestine Neighborhood Development Corporation gets \$150,000 Community Development Block Grant**

This October, the Palestine Neighborhood Development Corporation (PNDC) was awarded a \$150,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the City of Kansas City, Mo to be used for renovations of the Palestine Resource Center and creation of a community Learning Center.

The PNDC plans to use the grant money to convert a vacant house into a modern learning center available to the community and nearby Central High School students. Many different activities and programs will be housed in the center including the RISE UP school-aged afterschool program, a high school educational opportunities, and adult literacy classes.



A partnership with the **Full Employment Council** will also use the center as a Shared Network Access Point to give people more resources to look for jobs and assistance. The Missouri Reentry Program will also provide a literacy program for ex-offenders based out of the center.

All renovations on the Resource Center will work towards making it more energy-efficient. The ultimate goal is to be a model for small commercial and residential renovation.

In doing so PNDC will free up funds spent on energy and enable them to put more resources into programs and services for area residents.

Palestine is a neighborhood LINC Caring Communities site funded by the City of Kansas City, Mo. DeWayne Bright is the LINC site coordinator.

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9 am - 1 pm**



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list of the prescription drugs you take. Walk-ins welcome!

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