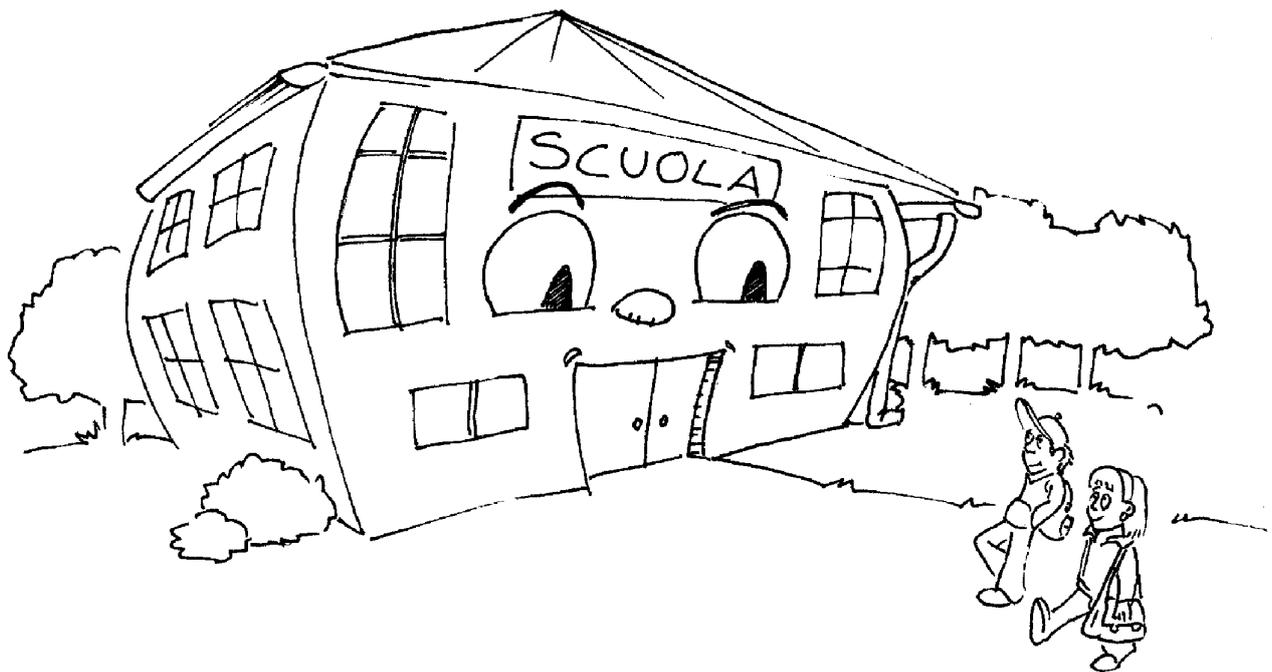


Inglese

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN TRENTINO

PARENTS' INFORMATION GUIDE



Provincia autonoma di Trento
Assessorato all'istruzione
e politiche giovanili



giugno 2006
didascalie *QUADERNI*

Provincia autonoma di Trento
Assessorato all'Istruzione e alle Politiche giovanili
Servizio per lo sviluppo e l'innovazione del sistema scolastico e formativo

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WELCOME TO SCHOOL

First of all, let us

“*WELCOME YOU TO SCHOOL*”.

Primary school in Italy is a child's right as well as an obligation, no matter which country the child is from or the language he or she speaks.

At any time of the year, when a child arrives in Italy, he or she has the right/obligation to enrol in school.

This is why school is for free, so as to allow everyone the chance to attend.

School is a place for learning and for mutual cohabitation and respect, a place where different cultures have equal value and dignity.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide parents with all of the basic information they require about the school system in Trentino, with the hope that the school itself may increasingly become a place where different civilizations, cultures and traditions may interact and become mutually enriched, learning to live together and appreciate each other.

1. AGES FOR ATTENDING SCHOOL

AGED UP TO SIX

a. ASILO NIDO (NURSERY

Aged up to 3

SCHOOL)

b. SCUOLA DELL'INFANZIA
(KINDERGARTEN)

From 3 to 6 years old

THE FIRST 'CYCLE' OF STUDIES

- Primary school
(Elementary school))
- 1st level Secondary school
(Junior high-school)

From 6 to 11 years old

From 11 to 14 years old

THE SECOND 'CYCLE' OF STUDIES

- (Higher Secondary School)
- 2nd level Secondary school
(Various Licei and
Technical institutes)

From 14 to 19 years old

Or

- Vocational training
school

From 14 up to 18 years old, even

2. NURSERY SCHOOL

This nursery school is open to children aged 3 months to 3 years.

Attendance is not compulsory.

In those towns that offer this service, children are admitted according to a ranking system based on the application forms submitted by the families when enrolling their child.

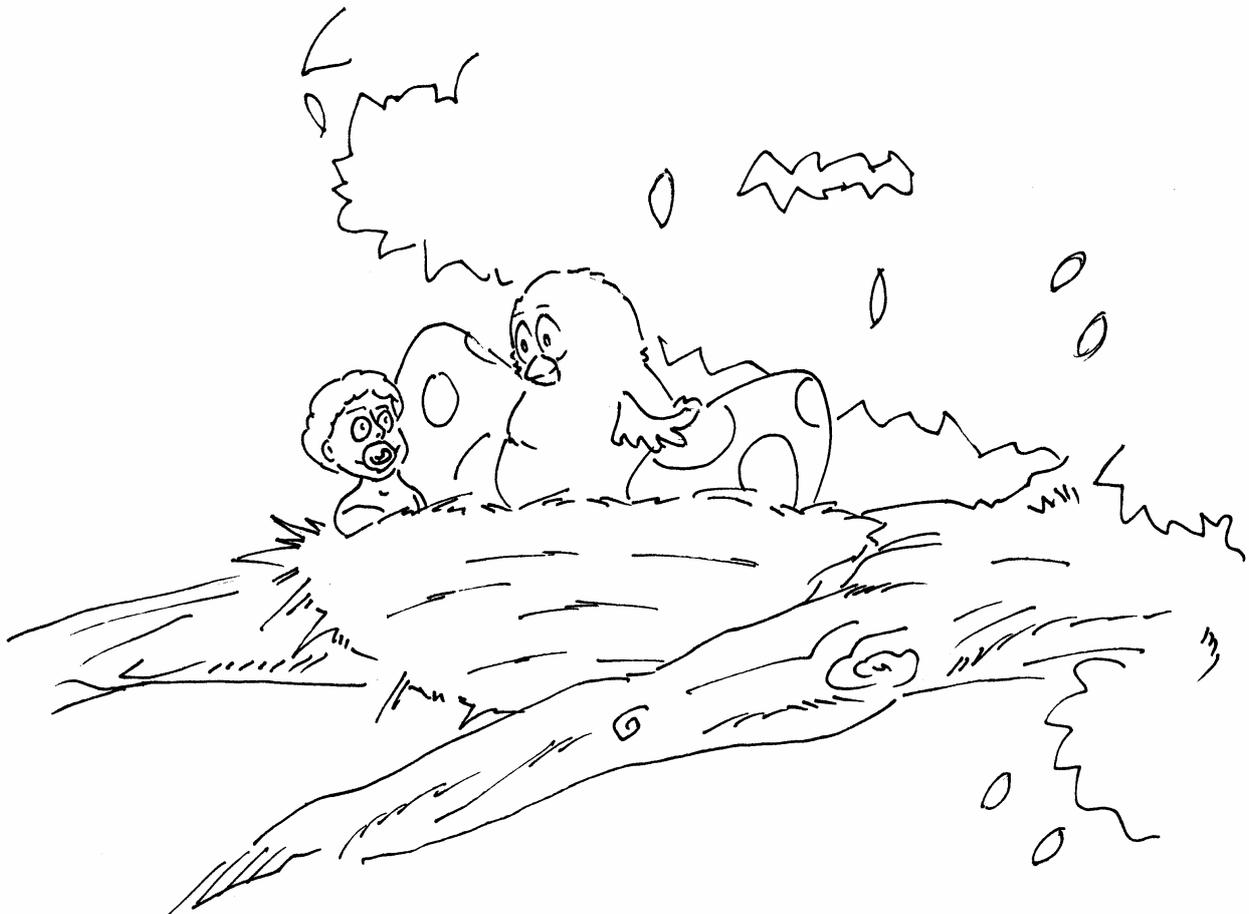
Monthly rates vary according to the family's income.

Children attend the pre-school for the whole day or for half the day.

Meals are included in the service.

Each nursery school is operated by teachers who work with the support of a pedagogical coordinator.

In order to involve parents in the educational choices of the nursery school, the service organizes general assemblies, section meetings, individual interviews, parties, excursions, etc..



3. KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten lasts three years and is not compulsory.

The school period starts on September 1st and ends on June 30th of each year.

Normally, children can be enrolled if they reach the age of 3 by January of that year, although on request parents may anticipate the enrolment of their child at 2.5 years of age.

It is important to know that:

- Introduction to the school is done gradually.
- Application must be submitted by the parents on specific printed forms.
- The kindergarten is open five days a week, seven hours a day.
- Parents working longer than the school's schedule can take advantage of a pre-hours and after-hours system with a margin of maximum 3 hours. Parents who intend to use this extended hours service must request it when compiling the application form and are charged an additional fee.
- The kindergarten is organized into sections and each section has two teachers.
- Meals are included, paid by the families via an additional fee.
- Disabled children are provided with additional support teachers.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT THE KINDERGARTEN OF YOUR TOWN
OR CITY DISTRICT



4. THE FIRST 'CYCLE' OF STUDIES

4.1 PRIMARY SCHOOL AND FIRST LEVEL SECONDARY SCHOOL (FORMERLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL)

Children reaching the age of 6 by the end of February of the following year can enrol in primary school. The school lasts 5 years, is divided into classes, and to each class are assigned 3 to 4 teachers, each one of which can teach various subjects.

1st level secondary school starts when the student is 11 and lasts 3 years; it too is divided into classes. In each class the professors each teach a specific subject.

The child passes from primary school to 1st level secondary school when he or she receives a positive evaluation at the end of the fifth year of primary school, while at the end of the third year of 1st level secondary school the child is required to pass a State examination.

The school is for free. Primary school books are supplied by the school, while in 1st level secondary school the books are supplied on loan. Families are required to buy notebooks, writing and colouring materials.



4.2 SCHOOL YEAR

School begins mid September and ends around mid June.

Each school has its own weekly schedule distributed over 5 days (Monday to Friday) or 6 days (Monday to Saturday), including several afternoons, according to the school's choice.

Some hours are optional, therefore not compulsory, and parents may decide which subjects to choose and whether or not to enrol the child.

The school year includes two long holiday periods:

- two weeks around Christmas time (usually from December 23rd to January 7th)
- one week for Easter (in March or April).

4.3 ENROLMENT

Enrolment in the primary and 1st level secondary schools is done in the month of January of the previous year.

Children arriving in Italy when the school year has already started have the right to enrol at any time of the year, no matter what their stay permit situation is.

- The following papers are required to enrol the child:
 - a) The student's ID (passport, birth certificate) or a written and signed self-declaration by the parent or the person responsible for the minor.
 - b) Education certificates from the schools in the country of origin or statement by the parent or by the person responsible for the minor, stating the class and type of school attended by the child.
 - c) Compulsory vaccination certifications:
 - Polio
 - Diphtheria + tetanus
 - Hepatitis B

Students lacking the necessary certification must be enrolled in the school anyhow, and the parents are expected to take the child to the Local Health Unit (ASL) – Vaccinations Department, in order to verify which vaccinations have already been administered and which still need to be done.

- In order to enrol the child, the following forms are to be compiled:
 - a) Choice of school hours;
 - b) Request for midday meal service;
 - c) Request for catholic religion classes.



4.4 SCHOOL MEALS

In almost all schools, when students have afternoon classes, a midday meal service is offered. In order to receive this service, when enrolling their child parents must compile the specific form given them by the school secretariat. Choice of the midday meal service is not compulsory and special diets may be requested for health or religious reasons.

Should you require discounts on school meal fees, contact the relating Social Services or the Servizio Istruzione dei Comprensori (District Education Service) offices.

It is a good idea to always ask the school secretary for information.

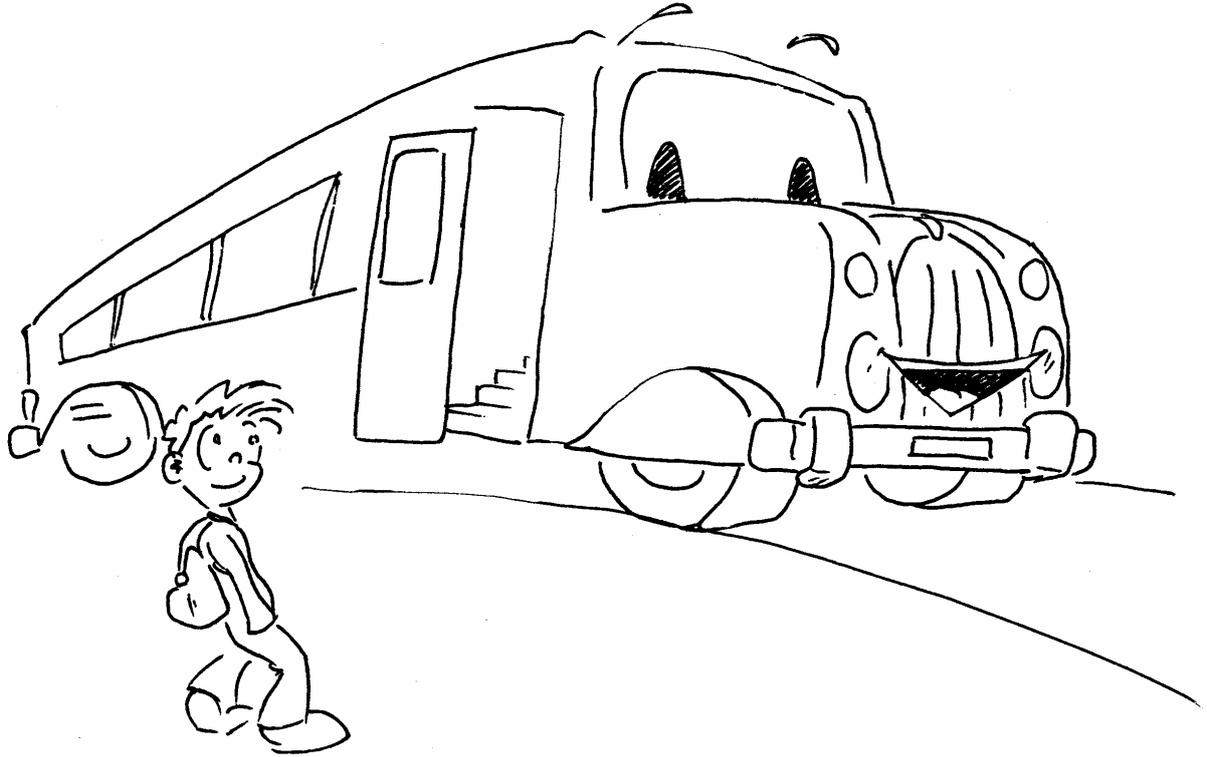
4.5 THE ALTERNATIVE TO CATHOLIC RELIGION AS A SUBJECT

For two hours a week in Primary school and for one hour a week in Secondary school, the school curriculum envisages the teaching of the Catholic religion as a subject.

When enrolling their child, parents are required to choose whether they want their child to attend these lessons or not by compiling the specific form.

As an alternative to the hours of Catholic religion, parents may choose among the following activities:

1. educational and training activities;
2. individual study and/or research activities with the assistance of teaching staff;
3. free study and/or research activities without the assistance of teaching staff.



4.6 SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

If the child lives more than 1 Km away from the school, he or she can use the school transport system. We suggest parents always ask the school's secretariat for specific information regarding the school transport service.

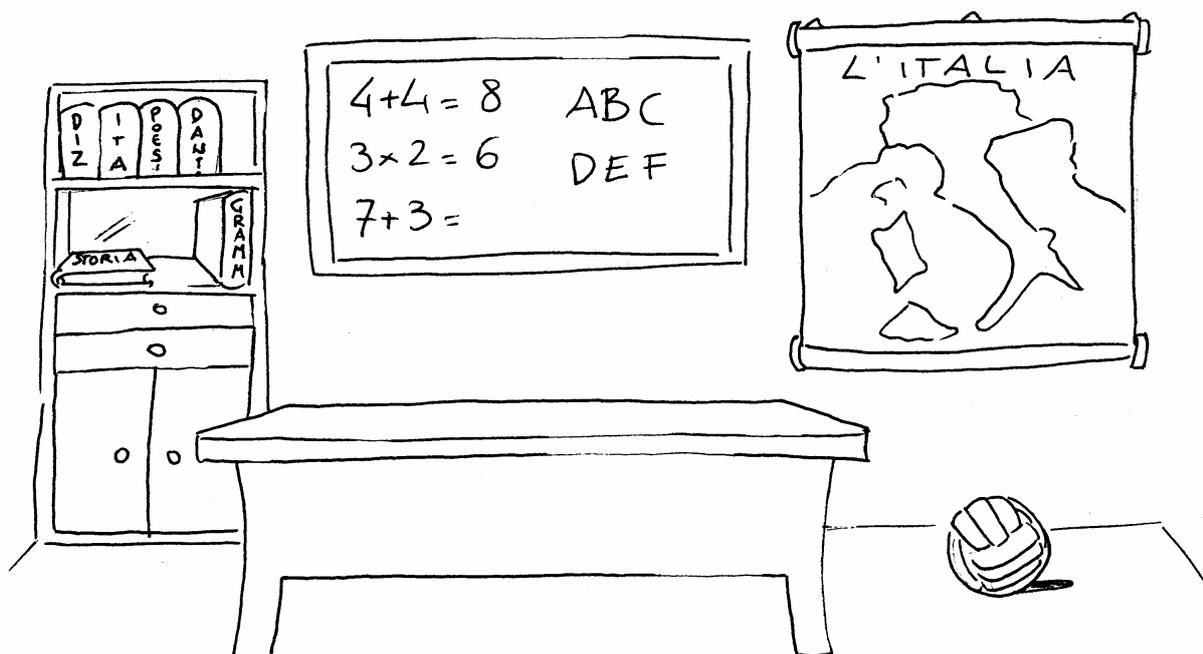
4.7 BOYS/GIRLS WITH HANDICAPS

In Italy, the law states that all children have the right to attend school, despite their having any physical or mental handicaps. It is the school's responsibility to organize, together with additional support personnel or teachers, specific learning paths and all necessary facilitations. In order to ensure a seamless introduction of the child to the school, parents are advised to inform the school about this special requirement well before the start of the school year.

4.8 SCHOOL SUBJECTS

The subjects of the First cycle of studies are:

PRIMARY SCHOOL (formerly ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)	1 ST LEVEL SECONDARY SCHOOL (formerly MIDDLE SCHOOL)
1. Italian	1. Italian
2. German or English	2. German
3. English or German <i>(taught from 3rd year, according to each single school's availability)</i>	4. English <i>(French in some schools)</i>
4. History	5. History
5. Geography	6. Geography
6. Mathematics	7. Mathematics
7. Science	8. Science
8. Technology and computer science	9. Technology
9. Music	10. Computer science
10. Art and image	11. Music
11. Physical education	12. Art and image
12. Optional activities	13. Physical education
	14. Optional activities



4.9 LEARNING ITALIAN

Good knowledge of the Italian language is fundamental in ensuring a successful school year. For this reason, Italian schools organize personalized Italian lessons for any student in need of them, in order to make the student capable of communicating or of perfecting the use of the Italian language in specific school subjects.

Each school has its own methods, that take into account the diversities of the original communicative abilities of the student. This is why the class teachers plan specific individual programmes. Ask the class teachers for more information.

4.10 INTERCULTURAL MEDIATION

The school may request the collaboration of an intercultural mediator and set up a project concerning any of the following areas:

- a) Streamlining of communication between school and family when required;
- b) Comparison between the school system of origin and the Italian one;
- c) Favouring of understanding of the student's school skills in the language of origin;
- d) Fostering of an intercultural climate in the target class;
- e) Creation of a programme for the support, consolidation and teaching of the language of origin.

4.11 SCHOOL RESULTS

Each school year is divided into 4-month or 3-month terms.

At the end of each term, the teachers provide their evaluation of the educational results achieved by each student. The child's family receives an "evaluation paper".

The evaluation paper (PERSONAL SHEET or SCHOOL REPORT), that is an official certificate, contains the assessments regarding each single school subject and an overall evaluation regarding the child's degree of maturity and conduct. The evaluations scale is as follows:

- insufficient
- sufficient
- good
- very good
- excellent.



The State examination at the end of the 3rd year of 1st level secondary school covers all of the subjects studied during the same school year.

The following tests are envisaged:

- Italian, written examination;
- Each of the two foreign languages studied, written examinations;
- Mathematics, written examination;
- Intradisciplinary oral examination covering school subjects.

4.12 EDUCATIONAL TRIPS

Each year, the schools organize at least one school trip for the classes, with the aim of enriching the theoretical lessons with direct experience.

The subjects of these trips can vary greatly, ranging from archeological excavations to nature trips, from architecture and art to monuments.

Educational trips vary in duration according to destination. Participation in these trips is not compulsory, but highly recommended.

Normally, each family is asked to contribute a fee that can be discounted or annulled in case of need as a result of the family's application to teachers and/or the school secretariat.

4.13 ABSENCES

Every absence from school on the part of the student must be backed by the parents' absence note. Even when entering the school late or when requiring to leave the school early, the student must show a written justification or request signed by his or her parents.

4.14 MEETINGS WITH THE TEACHERS

Teachers, usually in the first term of the school year (around October), summon the parents to a meeting to discuss the class programme, to talk about the children and about their progress and difficulties, if any. On such an occasion, parents elect their class representatives.

These meetings are vital for the fruitful cooperation between family and school in view of the successful education of their children.

Individual meetings between parents and teachers are equally important. Each teacher notifies parents the specific days when they can receive them to talk about the child's progress. Parents also may request a meeting with a teacher.

5. KEY TERMS IN THE ITALIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

1. **Ammissione/Non-ammissione (Admission/Non-admission):** admission (pass) means the student is admitted to attend the next school year, while non-admission (fail) means the student is to repeat the year just completed when he or she does not meet minimum pass requirements.
2. **Attività facoltative (Optional activities):** educational activities selected by each school as an educational proposal. Non-compulsory.
3. **Bidello/a (Janitor):** a person who takes care of the school building and makes sure that it is safe, clean and working properly.
4. **Collegio docenti (Teaching staff):** the group of teachers on staff in a school.
5. **Curricolo/curricolare (Curriculum/Curricular):** the study plan for each subject.
6. **Dirigente scolastico (Principal):** in charge of running the school.
7. **Discipline (Subjects):** the various topics included in the school curriculum.
8. **Insegnanti o docenti (Teachers):** divided into teachers for the primary school and professors for the first and second levels of secondary school.
9. **Iscrizione (Enrolment):** each student enrolls in the school he or she wishes to attend. Enrolment is done through the school secretariat.
10. **Istituto Comprensivo scolastico (School complex):** group of schools that are run by the same manager.
11. **Mensa (Midday meal service):** students can have their midday meal served in school when there are afternoon classes.
12. **Moduli (Forms):** printed forms to be filled in and signed.
13. **Personale di Segreteria (Secretariat personnel):** employees carrying out specific school secretariat and organization duties.
14. **Quadrimestre (4-month term):** two for each school year. At the end of each 4-month term the student receives an evaluation.
15. **Rappresentante di classe (Class representative):** a parent, elected at the beginning of each school year, who represents all other parents of a class.
16. **Ricreazione (Break):** mid-morning rest period dedicated to recreational activities or a snack.
17. **Segreteria Scolastica (School Secretariat):** office where students are enrolled in the school. The secretariat provides all of the information necessary for understanding school regulations and services. Parents are invited to take note of the School Secretariat's weekly schedule.
18. **Scheda di valutazione (Evaluation paper):** contains the 4-monthly and year-end assessments about a student's performance and achievements.
19. **Trimestre (3-month term):** three for each school year. Evaluation is provided at the end of each 3-month term (as an alternative to the 4-month term system).
20. **Valutazione (Evaluation):** it is the opinion given regarding a student's progress in terms of educational achievements and of personal maturity. The student is required to show his or her family the evaluation paper and have it signed by them at the end of each 4-month term (or 3-month term), and then given to the family at the end of the school year.

6. FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, please contact:

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