GWI Mock Trial
CSW65 Parallel Event
Tuesday, March 16, 2021, 3:30-5:00pm Central European Time
Outcome Document

Planning Committee

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Moderator

Gabrielle Marceau, *(Swiss Federation of University Women, Geneva (AGFDU)*

Judges

Cynthia Burek, Convenor GWI International Fellowship Committee, *(British Federation of Women Graduates)*
Rokhaya Daba Fall, *(Association Sénégalise des Femmes Diplomées des Universités)*
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Statement I

E- learning and digitalization is the solution, at all educational stages, to decrease inequalities, and serve as a panacea to gaps in education caused by sudden global disruptions to the education system, for example diseases, migration or any natural catastrophes.

Pro Debaters Statement I (Purple Team)

Jyotika Kalra, (Indian Federation of University Women's Associations)
Confidence Dikgole, Member GWI Education Committee, (South African Association of Women Graduates)
Janis Wong, (Women Graduates Scotland)

Pro Debater Statement I - Jyotika Kalra

Education is not only a fundamental human right. It is an enabling right with direct impact on the realization of all other human rights. In 2020, the World witnessed sudden global disruptions to the education system. COVID 19 social distancing guidelines forced

unprecedented school shutdowns worldwide, blocking some 1.6 billion learners at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels from the classroom. Had the E-learning and digitalisation not been there, all these children would have lost access to education completely and most of them would have become vagabond and clueless. E learning and digitalisation, emerged as a necessary resource and created adaptation of education methods to digital platforms. Studies have found that e-learning requires 40 to 60% less time to learn than in a traditional classroom, it allows students to work at their own pace and to focus on concepts of interest. Post-COVID 19 requires governments to place large-scale infrastructure in E-learning. The Goal should be to Eliminate the technology gap in education globally such that best distance learning practices reach children and youth, especially girls and young women, who are most at risk. GWI appealed to the 45th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council to urge Member States to: Partner with telecom companies and invest in expanding the Internet network to extend coverage and broadband quality of public WiFi and allow free access in all cities and municipalities and reliable connectivity.

Pro Debater Statement I - Confidence Dikgole

E- learning and digitalization is the solution, at all educational stages, to decrease inequalities, and serve as a panacea to gaps in education caused by sudden global disruptions to the education system, for example diseases, migration or any natural catastrophes.

1.   COVID 19 was a serious wake up call to the entire education system across the globe. It made it very clear that there is an urgent need to reconsider the current strategies used for delivery of teaching and learning.
2.   I agree without a shadow of doubt that e-learning and digitalization is long overdue.
3.   What is digitalization you may ask?: there are many definitions but I found this one very apt: The expression "digitalization" or "digital transformation" refers to "changes associated with the application of digital technology in all aspects of human society". Digitalization is also accepted as "the ability to transform existing products or services into digital variants, thus offering advantages over the tangible product" (Parviainen, Tihinen, Kääriäinen, & Teppola, 2017, p.64).
4.   Digitalization is transforming all facets of society, not just work environments, and in terms of educational contexts, the transformation is occurring with or without strategic initiatives that ensure ongoing quality of teaching and learning environments. Integration of technology into teaching and learning is not new, but the rapid rate and pace of technological advancement is new, especially regarding new Internet, ICT and digital technologies. The field of education is mainly reactive, as new disruptive technologies develop in other industries and are then applied and accommodated into existing educational cultures and systems. (Schmidt & Tang, 2020)
5.   One of the most successful ways of realising digitalization is through E-learning where we utilize electronic technologies to access educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom. Here we talk about online schooling, virtual schooling.
6.   The benefits associated with virtual schooling are expanding educational access, providing high-quality learning opportunities, improving student outcomes and skills, allowing for educational choice, and achieving administrative efficiency.

7.   Sustainable Developmental Goal (SDG) 4 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'

8.   Target 4.3: of the SDG4 provides that by 2030, we need to ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

9.   Indicative strategy provides as follows: "Develop policies and programmes for the provision of quality distance learning in tertiary education, with appropriate financing and use of technology, including the Internet, massive open online courses and other modalities that meet accepted quality standards to improve access." (UNESCO, 2016)

10.   One of the indicative strategies in terms of Target 4.5 of the said document provides as follows: "Provide distance learning, ICT training, access to appropriate technology and necessary infrastructure to facilitate a learning environment at home and in conflict zones and remote areas, particularly for girls, women, vulnerable boys and youth, and other marginalized groups." (UNESCO, 2016).

11.   For these SDG 4 indicative strategies to be realised there must be an urgent mindset shift and review of education policies and legislation.

12.   Allow me to share the South Africa experience. Our education legislation and policies currently do not accommodate online education. Providers of online education operate outside the legal framework and this has come with all sorts of challenges for them.

13.   As I said, COVID19 has catapulted the education to action – we are now developing a framework for what we call virtual schooling, which will speak to the registration and accreditation of online providers.

14.   To date we have been able to establish that since March 2020 to date the online space has increased remarkably – parents have moved children from classroom attendance to online schools where they can learn from the comforts of their homes.

15.   Why are we advocating for e-learning and digitalization?:

15.1   It's flexible: Online education enables the teacher and the student to set their own learning pace, and there's the added flexibility of setting a schedule that fits everyone's agenda. As a result, using an online educational platform allows for a better balance of work and studies, so there's no need to give anything up. Studying online teaches you vital time management skills, which makes finding a good work-study balance easier. Having a common agenda between the student and teacher can also prompt both parties to accept new responsibilities and have more autonomy.

15.2   It offers a wide selection of programs: In a space as vast and wide as the internet, there are infinite skills and subjects to teach and learn. A growing number of universities and higher education schools are offering online versions of their programs for various levels and disciplines. From music composition to quantum physics, there are options for every type of student. Studying your program online is also a great option for getting an official certificate, diploma, or degree without physically setting foot on a university campus.

15.3   It's accessible: Online education enables you to study or teach from anywhere in the world. This means there's no need to commute from one place to another, or follow a rigid schedule. On top of that, not only do you save time, but you also save money, which can be spent on other priorities. The virtual classroom is also available anywhere there's an internet connection, and a good way to take advantage of this is to travel. For example, if you're studying abroad and want to get a job, online education is a great choice. There's no reason to give up on working or studying while exploring new and exotic places.

15.4 It allows for a customized learning experience: We've mentioned before how flexibility can help you to set your own study pace. But online education is also flexible for each student's individual requirements and level of ability. Online classes tend to be smaller than conventional class size. Most of the time, online learning platforms only allow one student at a time, and in almost all cases, this allows for greater interaction and more feedback between you and your tutor. There's often access to very diverse material such as videos, photos, and eBooks online as well, and tutors can also integrate other formats like forums or discussions to improve their lessons. And this extra content is available at any moment from anywhere, which will offer you a more dynamic and tailor-made education.

15.5 It's more cost-effective than traditional education: Unlike in-person education methods, online education tends to be more affordable. There's also often a wide range of payment options let you pay in installments or per class. This allows for better budget management. Many of you may also be subject to discounts or scholarships, so the price is rarely high. You can also save money from the commute and class materials, which are often available for free. In other words, the monetary investment is less, but the results can be better than other options.

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Unesco (2016): Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Pro Debater Statement I - Janis Wong

When we think of education, we think of people across all walks of life studying to alleviate themselves and their families from poverty, to enter into their dream profession, and to give back to their own communities. Now imagine that, but with the support of innovative and transformative technologies that brings us all closer together.

E-learning and digitalization in education can help decrease inequalities and support access to education. According to the UK Office for Students 'Gravity assist' report published this month, the Department for Education found that online learning resulted in increased flexibility, personalized learning experiences, increased career prospects through the development of digital skills, pedagogical opportunities, and global learning opportunities for students and teachers.

With the adoption of online learning, everyone can benefit from a more flexible, open-ended, and creative classroom, unrestricted by four physical walls. Learning can become more

diverse, as educators can enter the online classroom from all four corners of the globe, just like our event today.

Although there may be concerns about lack of internet and digital access, in a report I contributed to as part of the Berkman Klein Centre at Harvard University, we found that e-learning and digitization can be a safer, more secure, and more cost-effective way to foster a more dynamic way of learning, particularly where women and girls may find access to education difficult due to caretaking, family, or social responsibilities. In this way, enabling e-learning helps support communities who face migration, discrimination, and marginalization to access the classroom.

Whether we like it or not, a digital, hybrid education is the future. As a result, we should embrace e-learning and digitization of education, so long as we also preserve the fundamental rights to accessing education, protecting everyone's personal data, and preserving human dignity. Thank you.

Contra Debaters Statement I (Orange Team)

Sudha Srivastava, Coordinator International Relations, *(British Federation of Women Graduates)*
Zoya Apevalova, (Federation of University Women (Russia)*
Nneka Chiedozie, Member Membership Committee *(Nigerian Association of University Women)*

Contra Debater Statement I- Sudha Srivastava

Greetings to Honourable Judges, fellow Debaters and Audience!

The opposing panel will present the evidences on the ground of digital inequality, low ICT skills, role of parents, disability, online privacy and abuse

1. Digitalisation is not the solution at all stages of learning due to the <u>widened digital divide</u> experienced over the last 12 months of pandemic. ITU's latest report *Measuring Digital Developments: facts and figures 2020* - shows that 1/3 of young people do not have any internet connection. Many more lack the 1) regular internet access, 2) appropriate device, 3) enough data, 4) faster/reliable connection. According to UNICEF, 2.2 billion young people are without the stable access they need to learn online. Situation here in UK is no different. How can we achieve the SDG 4 and leaving no one behind with such disparities! <u>Digital gender-gap</u> is large in developing economies owing to cultural expectations and traditional gender roles. A household with one device is preferably given to male learner in the family rather female! GWI stresses that without access to the right technology, millions of women and girls, will be unjustly prevented from the education opportunities offered by online learning.
2. I further stress that the <u>Low ICT Skills</u> remain a barrier to meaningful participation

3. I would like to draw attention that <u>Skills and Time of Parents</u> has significant role in digital learning. Especially at primary level, children need help and support of parent which becomes challenging for working parents and also for parents who themselves are not skilled or educated enough to support.

4. <u>Not to forget, Online Privacy and Abuse</u>: On the occasion of the 32 years of Web, Sir Tim Berners-Lee (British Inventor of the Web), expressed concerns over misinformation and abuse on the web aimed at young women. Online gender-based violence of hacking private information, GPS locations, using chat rooms for trafficking purposes are concerning in digital learning.

Thank you for your attention. I now pass on to my colleague.

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- OECD *Response, recovery and prevention in the coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic in developing countries: Women and girls on the frontlines*, *https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/en/policy-responses*
- GWI Resource - *Distance Learning: COVID 19 and the Digital Gap in Technology & Education*
- GWI Resource - SGD4 Framework for Action

Contra Debater Statement I- Zoya Apevalova

A point that I would like to highlight concerns physically challenged people - sight disabled, people with hearing disabilities, people with mental and intellectual disabilities. Today we know many examples that show how parents struggle with distance learning for their kids with disabilities.

UN Policy Brief 'A Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID 19' states, that the focus on online learning means that many learners with disabilities are left behind.

Most of the mental health problems make distance learning ineffective, as the real supportive Assistive technologies for people with disabilities include tools, hardware and software that serve to adapt computers and other devices so that persons with disabilities can use them. The majority of families raising children with disabilities obviously do not have access to special technical training aids.

Everything that a child with mental problems receives less than due in distance learning falls on the shoulders of his parents. So, for example, if we are talking about a child with autism or disorder of autistic spectrum: behavioral therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, physical therapy, attention of paraprofessionals and intervention teachers and support facilitation teachers – it's all the parents' responsibility now. When those services can be offered virtually, parents must still facilitate the meetings, supervise and try to schedule it all in. This is almost impossible if we are talking about working parents.

Liz Kolb, professor of education technologies and teacher education at the University of Michigan, has studied the problems of distance learning for children with mental disabilities and came to the conclusion that gaps in equity increased by online learning and virtual instruction.

I would like to conclude my reasoning with a quotation from the official UNESCO Twitter «Distance learning solutions cannot be limited to online means. The world must leave no one behind»

Contra Debater Statement I - Nneka Chiedozie

To buttress the points of my colleagues, I will take us to the SDG 4 which is to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all".

Sure, the intention of this goal is to "leave no one behind". But how can this be achieved when there exist.

Digital inequalities in relation to the skills of teachers on digital teaching and learning. The saying that "you do not give what you do not have" comes to play here. This is because digital learning requires teachers to move to online delivery of lessons and the question now is, how many teachers have the skill to teach online.

According to the United Nations, REPORT, the COVID 19 crisis has highlighted that both initial and in-service teacher education is in need of reform to better train teachers in new methods of education delivery

At the onset of the pandemic, teachers across the globe were largely unprepared to support continuity of learning and adapt to new teaching methodologies. In sub-Saharan Africa, only 64 percent of primary and 50 percent of secondary teachers have received minimum training, which often does not include basic digital skills. Even in contexts with adequate infrastructure and connectivity, many educators lack the most basic ICT skills, meaning they will likely

struggle with their own ongoing professional development, let alone with facilitating quality distance learning.

Another point is the Learning Environment - Women working and studying remotely are more likely than men to spend time on housework and care work, preventing them from solely concentrating on work or studies. Hence women and girls are at higher risk of dropping out of digital learning.

Consequently, in the attempt to digitalize education, the socialization aspect of education will be undermined which further causes exclusion and results in the standardization of thoughts. This, GWI in its submission to the UN General Assembly warns against.   THANK YOU

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Statement II
Classrooms will give way to IT based home education by IT trained teachers. School buildings and premises will then be mainly used for social interactions, sports, practical arts and sciences, and extra-curricular activities.

Pro Debaters Statement II (Purple Team)
Shirley Gillett, Convenor GWI Education Committee, *(Graduate Women New Zealand)*
Shaila Rao Mistry, Member GWI Education Committee, *(Women Graduates-USA)*
Radwa Mohamed, *(Egyptian Association of Graduate Women)*

Pro Debater Statement II - Shirley Gillett

Education is both an internationally recognised human right, as well as a fundamental enabler to achieve economic growth, human development, peace and stability. But what is education = (educare to draw out) it should be creative where child learns at their own pace following their own interests. This is impossible in the traditional classroom.

Margaret Mead said, "My grandmother wanted me to have an education so she kept me out of school".

I will present 3 theorists advocating against the traditional classroom.

Ivan Illich in Deschooling Society argued that schools are a political instruments for reproducing the status quo and argued for learning at home at ones own pace individualized accompanied by learning centres with specialized experts. Ivan Illich's groundbreaking book offers a radical critique of the institutionalization of education within modern societies. Illich believed that we wrongly identify education with schooling, since most of our education happens outside of the school environment. He advocated restructuring education to provide people with multiple opportunities for learning outside of school. "What are needed," he wrote, "are new networks, readily available to the public and designed to spread equal opportunity for learning and teaching".

Everett Reimer who wrote the book "School is dead" argued that schools are institutional props for learning Alternative education is required for true learning; true creativity; true democracy.

Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator who wrote "Pedagogy of the oppressed", argued just that – that the classroom oppresses children. He described traditional schools as political instruments not for teaching true literacy and that conscientisation happened away from school.

Unschooling is a current form of home-schooling, which is the education of children at home or other places rather than in a school. It involves teaching children based on their interests rather than a set curriculum. "they benefited from having had the time and freedom to discover and pursue their personal interests, giving them a head start on figuring out their career preferences and developing expertise in relevant subjects". (enwikipedia.org)

COVID has provided the chance to experience school from the home environment.

Systemic change means that change has to be fundamental and affects how the whole system functions. As a classroom teacher I observe large amounts of time off task, time wasted on behaviour management and frivolities. I would argue the classroom destroys true intellectual and cognitive learning. This is reinforced recently in the Guardian:

Learning at home using IT has shown measurable success to the point they say, "We see this as "a little bit like the Education Reform Act of 1944 that came out of the second world war – about how we can be transformative in terms of improving opportunities for young people". ICT makes education more flexible and accessible, allowing disenfranchised populations to cross the systemic barriers they face to access quality lifelong education.

References:
Illich, I 1971, Deschooling Society
Reimer, E. 1971, School is Dead

Freire, P, 1978, Pedagogy of the Oppressed
Guardian, 2 March 2021. McInerney, L By accident, lockdown has shown English schools the secret of closing the achievement gap

Pro Debater Statement II - Shaila Rao Mistry

Statement II Classrooms will give way to IT based home education by IT trained teachers. School buildings and premises will then be mainly used for social interactions, sports, practical arts and sciences, and extra-curricular activities.

1. The Futurist perspective of Education is already here.

So, let us take a macro view of current education through the lens of changing dynamics of technology and belief systems. Technology is driving education and requires us to learn new skills and new ways to learn

- Advances in robotics and Artificial Intelligence, means 85% of today's learners will be in jobs that are not invented yet.
- We need to equip Individuals, to meet the future

2. We have two Futures to serve, the one that is here, and the one that is fast emerging.

Both require individuals to be equipped with enhanced ability of learning as embedded in Selective Emotional learning by

- Developing right brain and left characteristics for Value education for Problem solving, collaboration, communication.
- Mindfulness of Imagination, compassion, and judgement.

3. Traditional curriculums- delivery of education are constructs of a long-gone era

- The traditional information dump is not a viable application. Technology provides information and knowledge.
- COVID moved education into the home -Technology AND students became drivers of their learning.
4. We should Invest in developing the mind, and active organic learning in all settings, not just classroom,

Education will move to a hybrid model of Technology based education combined with selective on-site teachings for social interaction.

Pro Debater Statement 2 - Radwa Mohamed Abdel Fattah

Greetings everyone,

In the recent decades in my country and many other similar countries, as a result of the overpopulation, there has been a serious overcrowding problem in school classrooms which provides unhealthy school atmosphere both physically and psychologically for developing children.

There has also been a serious negligence to all extracurricular activities; including arts, recreational activities, science, reading…..etc, in all grades of education. The parents also sacrifice these activities for sake of children studying curricular subjects; they regard them as waste of children's time.

As a result, we have a youth with no hoppies and undiscovered talents and potentials, this absence of useful potential outlets has left our youth subjected to other useless or even harmful ones. As a community the standard of all cultural activities as writing, music, drama, dancing….etc have deteriorated compared to the last century, we have become to suffer from lack of talents and innovation.

Using schools as a space for different extracurricular activities will be a great solution for both these problems; this unhygienic overcrowded school atmosphere will be abolished to make room for discovering and generating talents and unleashing various potentials, without the burden of an extra cost of creating such spaces. The classroom symbol will transform and represent a message to children, parents and the whole community of the importance of such overlooked activities side by side to the traditional school subjects. Thank you.

Contra Debaters Statement II (Orange Team)

Cecilia Zhang, (British Federation Women Graduates)

Irene Kafui, (Ghana Association of University Women)

Sudha Srivastava, Coordinator International Relations, (British Federation Women Graduates)

Contra Debater Statement II- Cecilia Zhang

First of all, if the classroom became virtual, you are stripping away social face to face interaction with your fellow classmates. Assume it's 8 hours in the classroom per day, 5 days per week, 40 teaching weeks per year, that is one thousand and six hundred hours of missing social interaction each year. It leads to a reduced circle of potential friends a student could gain if everything is online. Realistically, people have closed knit groups they will talk to on a regular basis. With classrooms online, this potential impact on their social circle will not be so apparent. For shy student and those who have social disorders, being in that safe space at home means they can potentially sink further into their personal space.

On the other side, as it's not easy to separate the social interaction and the process of learning and teaching into two things, it also means that lack of face-to-face interaction would have a negative influence on education. During the pandemic, it's very common that the universities lower their criteria of passing, which is clear evidence that education is not as effective as the universities used to provide.

Last but not least, there are many classrooms built up in schools and universities. It'll be a waste of space since classrooms take up a considerable percentage of the space on campus. It's not easy to put these indoor space into other uses, giving the number of the students wouldn't have significant growth. Therefore, it would require a lot of reconstruction if we move to the classroom online.

Contra Debater Statement II- Irene Kafui

Greetings! Honourable judges, fellow debaters, dear audience!

To buttress the first opposing argument, Classrooms will forever remain necessary and useful physical resource. According to Fisher 2008, classrooms help students and teachers organize student work, boost collaboration, foster better communication and offer socialization skills needed for societal integration thus, solving SDG goal 4 (i.e. quality education).

Virtual classrooms may have some advantages (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015) but it possess challenges in the light of inadequate funds for buying IT based gadgets/resources and training for integrating both parents and students in ICT. In line with UN News, 2019, this further expands the poverty gap as only the rich benefits. This unfortunately, defeats SDG goal 1, as poverty index rises in the light of this evil pandemic (UNDP report, 2020).

Moreover, some abused and hungry students seek solace in school so they can get a meal a day and socialize with friends and teachers.

Dear audience, the 7 ways classroom teaching is better than online education (India Today Web Desk, 2017) are:

1. It promotes collaborative learning
2. Enhances critical thinking skills
3. Improves social skills
4. Builds organizational skills
5. Keeps students stimulated
6. Develops important personality and career building skills
7. And teaching style can be modified according to the student's needs

The opposing team for statement II can only suggest a mixed method of teaching using both the physical classrooms and virtual classroom until everyone in the world is given an equal chance to compete and get educated.

Contra Debater Statement II- Sudha Srivastava

Greetings again everyone!
I continue to support and build further the arguments of my colleagues:

1. <u>Classrooms are irreplaceable</u> specially in case of early years and foundation stage learning. Young children learn and retain better with face-to-face interactions. Online learning will miss out the essential social bond girls develop at schools. Further to stress that <u>longer hours on screen</u> will result in various health issues along with the concern of mental well-being all stages of learning.

2. UN report suggests that <u>school buildings provide a protected environment</u> and all the <u>facilities to learn</u>. Schools are seen as safe haven in case of fleeing from everyday domestic abuse. School closures make girls and young women more vulnerable to child marriage, early pregnancy, and gender-based violence – all of which decrease their likelihood of continuing their education (World Bank and UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020[30]) and (ONU and Delegation de France, 2020[24]) (OECD, 2020[31])

3. Women and Girls learning from home are <u>distracted with household chores and sibling care</u> due to the cultural expectations and traditional gender roles and likely to drop out from distance learning! This will affect the ability of girls to stay engaged in education in the longer term. <u>UN Women highlighted that</u> women face the double burden of work as they carry out paid activities and unpaid care work — including childcare, cooking, cleaning and farming — essential for households and economies to function.

In conclusion, I would like to recommend a hybrid model of learning for women and girls in order to achieve the SDGs - 1, 3, 4 and 5.

Thank you for your attention.

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- Global Schools Forum - *Estimating the Impact of COVID 19 on the Non-State Education Sector in Low- and Middle-Income Countries- A Rapid Review*, https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.globalschoolsforum.org/resource/resmgr/resources/v 2report_estimating_the_impa.pdf

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- OECD *Response, recovery and prevention in the coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic in developing countries: Women and girls on the frontlines,* https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/en/policy-responses
- GWI Resource - *Distance Learning: COVID 19 and the Digital Gap in Technology & Education*

Supplemental Documentation for Statements

GWI 2020 Advocacy Campaign Diversity in Teaching 2019 Resolution 1
https://graduatewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GWI-2020-Advocacy-Campaign-DIversity-in-Teaching-2019-Resolution-1-01.07.2021.pdf

GWI 2020 Advocacy Campaign Peace through Education 2019 Resolution 2
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