

**EVALUATION OF JOB SHARING  
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:  
TENURED EMPLOYEE PAIRINGS  
AND PUBLIC LIBRARIANS**

**A Report to the Legislature of the State of Hawaii**

**Submitted by the  
Legislative Auditor of the State of Hawaii**

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## FOREWORD

In 1978, the Legislature authorized the establishment of a job sharing pilot project in the Department of Education as an employment option for classroom teachers. That project, which paired tenured teachers with new hires, was initially piloted for three years and was then extended to the current school year. Our office monitored and evaluated the pilot project and submitted three reports to the Legislature, concluding that the project was beneficial.

Subsequently, the Legislature in 1982 expanded job sharing to include pairings of tenured employees with other tenured employees and to allow public librarians to participate. The laws which authorized these additional job sharing opportunities also directed our office to evaluate the latest modifications.

This particular report presents our evaluation of the tenured/tenured job sharing pairings in the Department of Education and the pilot testing of job sharing for public librarians. We conclude our report with some observation as to the general direction which job sharing in state government could take.

We acknowledge with thanks the excellent cooperation and assistance which was extended to our office by the teachers, principals and staff personnel of the Department of Education; the officials and employees of the public library system; the representatives of the collective bargaining units; and the Department of Personnel Services.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Some employees prefer to have more time for leisure and their own personal needs. For many of these people, the traditional 40-hour work week may not be necessary or desirable. A more flexible work schedule would be preferred. This need, together with the sizable number of trained persons who are unable to enter the already crowded labor market in their chosen fields, has led to the idea of job sharing as an employment option. Thus, job sharing has evolved as a viable means of increasing part-time employment opportunities for workers.

#### **Pilot Project for Teachers**

In 1978, the State Legislature introduced the concept of job sharing to the public sector. Act 150, SLH 1978, established a job sharing pilot project in the Department of Education (DOE). The purpose of the act was to test the feasibility of job sharing as an employment option for classroom teachers and to provide job opportunities for unemployed teachers.

The act defined job sharing as “the voluntary sharing of a full-time employee’s position with another employee, with each working one-half of the total number of hours of work required per week, and with each receiving half of the salary to which each is respectively entitled and at least half of each employee benefit afforded to full-time employees.”

Act 150 directed the Office of the Legislative Auditor to monitor and evaluate the project and to present its findings and recommendations to the Legislature in a series of status reports. Accordingly, three such reports were submitted to the Legislature in 1979, 1980, and 1981.<sup>1</sup>

1. Legislative Auditor, State of Hawaii, *Status Report on the Implementation of Job Sharing in the Department of Education*, Special Report No. 79-3, March 1979; Legislative Auditor, State of Hawaii, *Evaluation of the Job Sharing Pilot Project in the Department of Education*, Report No. 80-10, March 1980; and Legislative Auditor, State of Hawaii, *Job Sharing Pilot Project in the Department of Education: Final Evaluation*, Report No. 81-10, March 1981.

**Summary of previous evaluations.** The following are among the findings reported in our previous evaluations:

1. Job sharing is a feasible and desirable employment option for teachers.
2. Job sharing increases the number of available teaching positions for unemployed teachers and provides them with meaningful employment opportunities, although its impact is minimal in reducing the large number of unemployed teachers.
3. Job sharing creates a more stimulating environment for tenured teachers who report an increase in job satisfaction, work productivity, and quality of work.
4. Parents, job sharers, and school principals are satisfied with the quality of education provided under job sharing.
5. Job sharing has resulted in significant cost savings although the reduction in teaching costs has not been an objective of the project.

We concluded generally that there is a strong case for establishing job sharing as a permanent employment option in the Department of Education.

**Additional option for tenured employees.** In 1982, Act 128 modified the project design by allowing for the first time, job sharing teams consisting of two tenured employees (tenured/tenured job sharing teams or pairings). Previous to this, job sharing teams were restricted to pairing a tenured employee with a new hire.<sup>2</sup>

Act 128 directs our office to evaluate this latest modification to the project. Rather than having to reevaluate the entire job sharing project, we are directed to focus specifically on evaluating the merits of utilizing job sharing teams composed of two tenured employees.

2. The term "new hire" refers to the nontenured, new teacher participating as a job sharing partner in the project.

## **Pilot Project for Public Librarians**

Because of the success of job sharing among teachers and because public librarians wanted a similar option, the Legislature enacted Act 139 in 1982 which established a job sharing pilot project within the public library system. The act stipulates that this new pilot project is to be administered by the Board of Education for fiscal years 1982-83 and 1983-84.

Act 139 also directs the Office of the Legislative Auditor to monitor and evaluate this new pilot project for public librarians and to submit a status report to the Legislature during the 1984 regular session.

## **Objectives of the Evaluation**

The objectives of this evaluation are as follows:

1. To assess the feasibility and desirability of using job sharing teams composed of two tenured teachers.
2. To assess the implementation of the new job sharing pilot project for librarians in the public library system.
3. To identify any issues and problems related to either of the two pilot projects.

## **Evaluation Methodology**

For the evaluation of the new DOE job sharing teams, we obtained appropriate information and data from the DOE state office. We also interviewed each of the tenured/tenured job sharing team participants from the 1982-83 and 1983-84 school years. In addition, we interviewed their respective principals, DOE state and district personnel involved in administering the project, and representatives from the teachers' and principals' collective bargaining units.

For our evaluation of the job sharing pilot project in the public library system, we interviewed each of the job sharing participants, their respective supervisors and district heads, other nonparticipating librarians and library technicians, personnel from the Office of Library Services, and other personnel from the DOE and the Department of Personnel Services.

## **Organization of the Report**

This report is organized in two chapters. Chapter 1 is this introduction. Chapter 2 presents our evaluation of the two pilot projects, including our findings and recommendations.

## Chapter 2

### EVALUATION OF JOB SHARING

In this chapter, we evaluate job sharing in the Department of Education (DOE). The chapter consists of two parts. The first part consists of our evaluation of the new tenured/tenured pairing. The second part presents our evaluation of the library system's job sharing pilot project. Each part includes some background information, a summary of findings, the substance of the evaluation, and our recommendation. We conclude the chapter with some observations as to the general direction which job sharing in state government could follow.

#### Part I

#### JOB SHARING BETWEEN TENURED EMPLOYEES

##### Background

The 1982-83 school year was the first year in which tenured DOE employees could job share with each other. During that year, there were 105 job sharing teams statewide. Of these 105 teams, one consisted of a tenured/tenured pairing. During the current 1983-84 school year, there are a total of 98 job sharing teams. Five of these teams consist of tenured/tenured pairings. All told, the 12 participants in these tenured/tenured pairings for the two years include 10 classroom teachers and two school librarians. (To facilitate the discussion in this report, we treat the two 1982-83 participants as if they were among the current year's participants.) The following paragraphs summarize the demographic characteristics of these participants.

**Geographic distribution.** The six tenured/tenured pairings are located at six different schools. Of the six schools, four have participated previously in the job

sharing pilot project. All four DOE districts on Oahu are represented by at least one tenured/tenured team. However, Hawaii is the only neighbor island district with a tenured/tenured pairing.

**Grade level and subject matter.** All but one of the six tenured/tenured job sharing teams are located at high schools. The remaining team is at an elementary school. As in previous reports, the distribution of subject areas taught by the job sharers is fairly dispersed with no discipline showing a preponderance of participants.

**Distribution by sex.** Of the 12 tenured/tenured job sharing participants, 11 are female and one is male. This predominance of female participation has been the pattern since the beginning of the pilot project.

**Distribution by age.** The age levels of the participants fall into definite patterns. As in our previous reports, we find that most of the tenured participants fall into the 30-39 age bracket. Nine of the 12 participants fall into that age group. The three others fall into the 40-49 age bracket. Although it was initially believed that tenured employees close to retirement would be interested in job sharing, our previous reports noted that very few of these individuals were participating. This pattern seems to be holding true. None of the participants in our evaluation are over the age of 50.

**Distribution by ethnic background.** The DOE is required to record the ethnic background of all applicants for employment. Of the 12 participants, nine are Japanese, two are Caucasian, and one is Korean.

**Distribution by length of service.** As in our previous reports, we find that tenured participants are concentrated in two groups. Ten participants have 11-15 years of service; two have 6-10 years of service.

**Summary.** Generally, the tenured job sharers evaluated in this report reflect the demographic characteristics of previous participants. Several trends are apparent. Most of the tenured participants are female, fall into the 30-49 age bracket, and have between 6-15 years of service in the DOE. Very few tenured employees near retirement, either by age or length of service, have participated in the pilot project.

## Summary of Findings

We find that:

1. Job sharing teams composed of two tenured employees provide a feasible pairing option. The participants generally experienced few problems in selecting job sharing partners, developing work schedules, or sharing work responsibilities.
2. There are several advantages in allowing two tenured employees to job share. These include: (a) having job sharing teams composed of two experienced employees; (b) the greater likelihood of compatibility when job sharing participants are allowed to select their own partners; and (c) creating vacant full-time positions.
3. While participation in tenured/tenured pairings has been low, this has been due, in part, to the relative newness of the option. It is likely that participation will increase as the option becomes better known. There is strong support for the option among the job sharers, their principals, DOE administrators, and union officials.

## Feasibility of Tenured Teacher Pairings

**Partner selection.** Our evaluation indicates that the participants had little difficulty finding suitable and qualified job sharing partners. This may be due to the fact that in five of the six job sharing teams, the partners were either from the same school or had known or worked with each other previously. Consequently, the participants were able to meet informally, consult with each other, and finalize job sharing arrangements without the added burden of having to deal with a stranger.

The selection of a partner in a tenured/tenured pairing is different than in a tenured/new hire pairing. In the former pairing, all qualified tenured employees interested in job sharing are placed on an "Eligible List."<sup>1</sup> The employees are then given a copy of the list and are responsible for contacting and selecting their own partners.

1. The "Eligible List" is prepared by the DOE's personnel services office and contains the name and address of the prospective job sharer, present school and grade or subject taught, and districts in which the employee wishes to job share.

In a tenured/new hire pairing, the tenured employee's principal interviews interested new hire applicants from a list of eligible applicants provided by the department's personnel services office. The principal has final responsibility in selecting an appropriate new hire to job share with the tenured employee.

It appears, then, that one of the advantages of a tenured/tenured pairing is that it provides participants with the freedom to select their own job partners. This selection process also benefits the principals by relieving them of the responsibility of having to interview numerous new hire applicants. One principal summarized this advantage: "I didn't have to really provide any assistance to . . . in selecting a partner. It was pretty much up to her. I see that as one of the pluses of the program. The success of the match lies with the employee."

**Work schedule.** Three of the six tenured/tenured pairings selected a schedule in which each partner works full days but less than five days per week. In two of these pairings, the partners work an alternating schedule. Each partner works three full days one week and two days the next. In the other pairing, each partner works two and one-half days per week.

In the other three pairings, the partners work five days a week but for only a portion of each day. In one of these pairings, both partners work five days a week but in the mornings only. In another pairing, the partners split the work day—one works in the morning and the other in the afternoon. In the last pairing, the partners started the year using one schedule but mutually agreed to switch to a more convenient one after the first quarter. The two partners started the year by each working two and one-half days per week. Their schedule now has each partner working five days per week with one working in the mornings and the other in the afternoons.

According to the participants and their principals, there were no problems developing the work schedules. Both the job sharers and their principals thought the work schedules were generally fair to both partners. One of the participants notes that she had a duty-free preparation period each day, but her partner did not. To compensate for this, she assumed other additional duties to relieve her partner.

**Sharing work responsibilities.** Our evaluation indicates that the participants experienced no real problems sharing work responsibilities. Several of the job sharers working in secondary schools note that since they teach separate

classes and students from their partners, there was no overlap in work and little need to coordinate activities. The following is a summary of how the participants divided work responsibilities in several different areas.

*Grading.* The job sharers working in secondary schools generally agreed that each partner would be responsible for grading only one's own students. This occurred in four of the six job sharing teams. In the other two pairings, the partners agreed to consult with each other and work cooperatively when assigning grades.

*Parent-teacher conferences.* Generally, the job sharers agreed to confer only with the parents of students in their respective classes.

*Extracurricular activities.* The participants generally agreed to share the responsibilities for extracurricular activities.

*Lesson plans.* Developing lesson plans for classes was generally the responsibility of each participant. In one of the pairings, the partners agreed that the major goals of each student would be developed jointly. Each partner, however, was responsible for developing daily lesson plans to achieve the established goals.

*Committee responsibilities.* The participants generally agreed to share all committee responsibilities. When necessary, the partners agreed to communicate and share relevant information.

*Campus supervision.* The participants generally agreed to share campus supervision responsibilities.

*Faculty meetings.* The participants generally agreed that the partner working on the meeting day would be responsible for attending the faculty meeting. In one pairing, both partners agreed to alternate and further agreed that, when necessary, both would attend the meetings. In another pairing, both partners agreed to attend all faculty meetings.

### **Advantages of Tenured/Tenured Pairings**

Our evaluation indicates several advantages in allowing two tenured employees to job share. One advantage is having job sharing teams composed of two proven and experienced employees. This kind of pairing can provide obvious benefits for the partners and their students. There are also benefits for the principal. In a

tenured/tenured pairing, the principal is relieved of the burden of having to interview a number of new hire job sharing applicants. Additionally, the principal generally has to spend far less time orienting and supervising two tenured and experienced partners.

A tenured/tenured pairing is more likely to be compatible, because it allows an employee to select a preferred partner who is known by the worker. This usually cannot be done in a tenured/new hire pairing. In one pairing this year, a tenured employee specifically requested to job share with another experienced employee rather than a new hire because of the complexity of her work and her belief that a new hire might have difficulty working with the students. This employee stated that she would not have job shared if she had been unable to find a suitable and experienced partner.

Another benefit in pairing two tenured employees is the creation of a vacant full-time position. This position, depending on the master schedule and needs of the school, may be utilized in a variety of ways. It could be filled by hiring a new unemployed teacher or the vacancy could be used to accommodate unassigned tenured teachers. Under current practice, because of DOE contractual obligations, unassigned tenured teachers have first priority in being offered the position. Probationary teachers are next in line followed by any new teacher applicants.

Of the six tenured/tenured pairings in our evaluation, one directly resulted in a vacant full-time position. That position was filled by a new hire. The remaining pairings generated no vacant positions because one of the partners in each of those pairings was either an unassigned or half-time tenured teacher who did not hold a full-time permanent position.

### **Extent of Participation**

During the 1982-83 school year, there were a total of 105 job sharing teams. Of these 105 teams, one consisted of a tenured/tenured job sharing team. In this current school year, there are a total of 98 job sharing teams. Of these 98 teams, five consist of tenured/tenured pairings.

Our evaluation indicates that the low number of tenured/tenured participants is probably due to the relative newness of the pairing option, the fact that many

employees are unaware that they can job share with another tenured employee, and the possibility that a tenured/new hire pairing, for some employees in certain situations, may be more appealing.

Because Act 128 was enacted late in the Spring of 1982, the DOE had to work at an accelerated pace to prepare the new tenured/tenured option for implementation in the 1982-83 school year. As a result of the abbreviated lead time and limited opportunity to publicize the new pairing option, there were very few employees who applied for a tenured/tenured job sharing position that first school year.

One official notes that there is normally a "lag period" when the DOE implements a new program or a program change. An example would be the job sharing pilot project itself. There were only 20 participants in 1978, the first year of the project. In the 1979-80 school year there were 55, in 1980-81 there were 73, in the 1981-82 school year there were 100, and last school year there were 105. With additional second semester participants, the final figure for this school year is expected to equal, if not surpass, last year's total.

Several of the participants noted that many of their colleagues, although familiar with the job sharing project and the tenured/new hire pairings, were unaware that the new pairing option existed. Several of the participants reported that they themselves were unaware of the new option until just before their participation in the project. Although the DOE state office has publicized the program through memos and vacancy announcements, it was suggested by several participating job sharers as well as district and school officials that a more intense and sustained publicity effort be undertaken to publicize the new project option.

Finally, there is the possibility that certain employees find a tenured/new hire pairing more appealing and advantageous than a tenured/tenured pairing. In a tenured/new hire pairing, the tenured employee automatically serves as the "host" and continues to work at his or her regular school. Also, the tenured employee can develop a preferred work schedule which the new hire must usually accept.

Although participation has thus far been limited, we believe some of the aforementioned factors help account for the low participation rates. None of the participants or other involved personnel expressed any concern over the low rates. They generally anticipate that participation will increase steadily as the new tenured/tenured option becomes more well known and accepted by the employees.

## Support for Job Sharing

The 12 participants in tenured/tenured pairings were asked if they would job share again in the future if the pilot project were established as a permanent DOE program. Each of the participants expressed an interest in job sharing again. Of the 12 participants, four stated they would prefer a tenured/tenured pairing if they were to job share again; seven were unsure or said it made no difference what kind of pairing was used; and one participant explained that she would probably elect to job share with a new hire.

While only one-third of the participants, if they were to job share again, preferred to be paired with another tenured employee, this is probably because 10 of the 12 participants worked in secondary schools and taught separate classes from their partners. Given such a situation, several explained that it really did not matter whether the partner was a tenured employee or a new hire.

The participating job sharers, their principals, involved district personnel, other DOE officials, and representatives from the employees' collective bargaining units were polled regarding their feelings generally about the job sharing project and particularly about the tenured/tenured pairings. The general response was very positive for both the project as a whole and the use of the new pairing option.

One job sharer states: "I feel very positive about job sharing—it provides teachers with a choice, an option. It's a good morale booster. I like the tenured/tenured option." A principal describes his feelings as follows: "I think it has been extremely successful. It's met my objective of operating the school smoothly . . . I've had no problems with tenured/tenured pairings." Finally, a DOE official states: "Job sharing is a good 'tool' to have because it gives the teachers more options and avenues. I think job sharing will help prevent teacher burnout. The tenured/tenured option is a good one."

These same individuals were also polled whether job sharing should be established as a permanent program in the DOE and whether tenured/tenured pairings should be included as a permanent component of the program. The respondents were generally very supportive of both.

## ***Recommendation***

*We recommend that the tenured/tenured pairing option be included as a component of a permanent job sharing program for Department of Education personnel.*

## **Part II**

### **JOB SHARING OF PUBLIC LIBRARIANS**

#### **Background**

In establishing a pilot project of job sharing for public librarians, Act 139, SLH 1982, defines job sharing as "the voluntary equal division of one full-time permanent position between two employees, each performing one-half of the work required for the permanent position." The act limits the pilot project to FY 1982-83 and FY 1983-84, and it restricts the number of positions which can be shared to 50 full-time positions. Most implementation details are left up to the Board of Education and the State Librarian.

In February 1983, the Office of Library Services (OLS) completed preliminary guidelines for the project. There would be two types of job sharing teams, those involving a permanent employee sharing the position with another permanent employee and those having a permanent employee sharing the position with a temporary new hire. In either case, a contract for job sharing would run for six months. Time on the job would be equally split within each 40-hour week.

Limits by districts and libraries were placed on the number of positions available for job sharing. In the event more than one librarian applied for job sharing within any one unit, priority criteria were provided for the selection of the job sharing librarian. Branch or section head approval would be required. The State Librarian would have the right to terminate a job sharing arrangement if problems arose that might prove detrimental to library operations and public service.

In September 1983, two librarian positions were implemented for job sharing. In each case, the permanent employee is sharing the job with a new hire, with both new hires having had prior experience in the library system. The job sharing

arrangements for the two teams were initiated under six-month contracts, and one team has since extended the contract to 10 months. Under the job sharing work schedule, each of the four participants works two full days and one half day per week.

During the period of our evaluation, there were only four participants, although an additional two positions were being processed for job sharing. Due to the limited number of actual job sharers involved, it would be inappropriate to report as statistically significant any demographic data such as ethnicity, geographical distribution, age and absentee rates of participants. In our evaluation, we focused basically on two questions: (1) whether the limited participation in the job sharing pilot project is due to some deficiency in the project's implementation; and (2) whether the participants, their supervisors, and other involved or interested parties find job sharing beneficial.

### **Summary of Findings**

1. The limited participation in the job sharing pilot project to date is due primarily to the newness of the project, uncertain financial times, the restriction of the project to public librarians, and not to any inherent deficiency in the project's implementation.

2. The participants, their supervisors, and most other library personnel generally support the view that job sharing is beneficial and should be continued as an option for public librarians and opened up to other library personnel.

### **Limited Participation**

When the job sharing bill was being heard in the Legislature during the 1982 session, it received strong support from various public librarians. Thus, to some it may be something of a surprise to learn that there are only two positions being shared in the entire library system. From our interviews, it became evident, however, that few people within OLS—even the strongest supporters of job sharing—expected a much larger response initially.

As far as we were able to ascertain, the limited participation is not due to a systems deficiency. We reviewed the OLS guidelines for job sharing and other implementation procedures and found them to be reasonable enough. Due to a

vacancy in OLS's personnel manager position, there was some initial delay in getting the project started, but progress was made after the vacancy was filled.

Other underlying reasons appear to account for the limited participation to date. Some librarians expressed the view that the uncertain financial times and their own personal financial situations prevented them from job sharing at this time, although they were interested in doing so. To some, the pilot project is still new, and they would be willing to consider job sharing once it is conducted on a permanent basis. Other librarians felt constrained from applying because they were supervisors or because their library was undergoing automation.

Finally, there probably would have been more participants if the project had not been restricted to public librarians but had been open to other library personnel such as library assistants and library technicians. We found that some of these personnel feel that job sharing is at least as desirable and as viable an option for them as for the professionals.

### **Benefits of Job Sharing**

Evaluating whether job sharing produced benefits had to depend on judgments. Since a survey of library patrons would have been impractical, we relied on an assessment of observations expressed by the participants themselves and their colleagues and supervisors.

The participants and their supervisors found it easier to cover public services over a six-day week with two job sharers than with one full-time employee. Both could spread their respective 20 hours of work over three days without the hardship experienced by requiring one employee to spread a 40-hour work week over six days.

In our interviews, we were informed that burnout ranks as a serious occupational hazard among public librarians. Without job sharing, the librarians' options are few: either to quit while the public loses their experience and expertise, or to hang on to the job but at a reduced level of enthusiasm, commitment, and effectiveness. With job sharing, the stresses and strains of the job can be sufficiently reduced for long enough to allow an employee a chance for recovery. Generally, it was said that job sharing increases morale and enthusiasm. This, in turn, leads to greater work productivity and a happier disposition for meeting and serving the public.

Since all of the pilot project's shared positions involves new hires, the State coincidentally realizes a slight financial saving. New hires begin at salaries lower than that paid the regular employee giving up half pay. Cost savings was not the intent of job sharing, but it does occur for librarians as it does for teachers.

The participants, their supervisors, and most other library personnel support the view that job sharing is beneficial and should be continued as an option for public librarians and opened up to other library personnel. From our assessment, it would be beneficial to authorize job sharing on a permanent basis for the entire library system. With positive leadership and support at supervisory levels, job sharing offers sufficient benefits to more than warrant incurring the small amount of additional administration, supervision, and support entailed.

### ***Recommendation***

*We recommend that job sharing be allowed on a permanent basis in the public library system and that job sharing opportunities be extended beyond public librarians to library technicians, library assistants, and other library personnel.*

## **CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

This is the sixth year that job sharing is being pilot tested in Hawaii. In initiating the pilot project, the Legislature selected one of the most difficult fields for job sharing—teaching, where continuity and coordination of instruction are so important, especially in the elementary grades. Nonetheless, job sharing has been successful among teachers, as verified by our three previous evaluations and the evaluation of the latest configuration involving tenured teacher pairings. Our view is that if job sharing can be successfully applied in teaching, its chances for success are good for almost any other occupation.

We believe that the time has arrived to remove the job sharing project from pilot status and to authorize job sharing on a permanent basis. Pilot testing is almost always useful, because many of the problems associated with installation of a new program or system can be detected, anticipated, and alleviated before full-scale implementation or expansion commences. In the case of the job sharing pilot

project, we believe it has been more than sufficiently tested and evaluated and that there can be confidence in establishing job sharing as a permanent option for state employees.

We believe that the best approach would be to enact a statute which would provide broad policy guidelines and authorize job sharing generally for all the agencies of state government, leaving it up to the agency heads to approve the specific jobs and the individual arrangements for job sharing. In this way, the individual departments could conduct their own pilot tests of the sharing of specific jobs. They would have the flexibility of continuing to authorize those arrangements that work and suspending those that do not.

In this way, job sharing would be conducted in a larger and more flexible context with the potential of its benefits being extended far beyond what the pilot project has provided.