

2.1 Approval of March 14, 2025, Open Session Minutes



The State Bar of California

Committee of Bar Examiners Teleconference

Open Session Minutes
Friday, March 14, 2025
9:03 a.m.–4:19 p.m.

Time Meeting Commenced:

The Committee of Bar Examiners meeting commenced in open session at 9:03 a.m. The committee moved to closed session at 11:32 a.m. The committee returned to open session at 12:08 p.m. The committee moved to closed session at 3:38 p.m. The committee returned to open session at 4:18 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Time Meeting Adjourned:

4:19 p.m.

Chair:

Alex Chan

Committee Coordinator:

Devan McFarland

Members Present:

James A. Bolton, Ph.D., Michael Cao, M.D, Alex H. Chan, Kareem Gongora [joined late], Larry Kaplan, Paul A. Kramer, Alexander C. Lawrence, Jr, Esther Lin [joined late], Justice Shama H. Mesiwala, Bethany J. Peak [joined late], Ashley Silva-Guzman, Judge Renee C. Reyna, Vincent Reyes, Alan Yochelson

Members Absent:

None

State Bar Executive Staff Present:

Donna Hershkowitz, Leah Wilson

OPEN SESSION

ROLL CALL

The Committee of Bar Examiners meeting was called to order by Chair Chan. Roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Chan called for public comment, inquiring as to whether there were person(s) who wished to comment on any agenda item. The following comments were provided to the Committee:

1. Benjamin Kohn

Urged the State Bar to address unsafe in-person testing conditions, including past incidents involving medical emergencies and COVID-19 risks. Criticized Meazure Learning for failures in both remote and in-person formats. Advocated for reliable remote testing and urged the State Bar to petition the California Supreme Court for clear remedies and to avoid passing remediation costs to future applicants.

2. Karla Pavese
Suggested lowering the cut score and expressed concern about improper uploads and unfair second reads. Argued for California to adopt the UBE to align with other states and reduce applicant delays.
3. Eugene Stevens
Called for full licensure for attorneys already licensed in other jurisdictions and provisional licenses for all others, without another exam. Criticized the State Bar's grading and psychometric methods.
4. Katie Moran, Associated Professor, University of San Francisco School of Law
Delivered a joint statement on behalf of California bar prep professors. Raised concerns about Kaplan's multiple-choice questions, lack of vetting, and fairness for February examinees. Emphasized the need to prevent similar issues for July 2025 California Bar Examination.
5. Mitzi
Rejected psychometric analysis and advocated for full licensure, especially under supervision. Criticized the State Bar's proposal to eliminate grading phases, called for accountability, and questioned lack of resignations.
6. Ray Hayden
Proposed an alternative intensive training program for new attorneys to ensure readiness. Supported Benjamin Kohn's comments and urged the Committee to evaluate the submitted program.
7. Jessica Jacobs
Challenged denial of Law Office Study credits due to internal errors and miscommunication.
8. Ann Camacho, Assistant Professor, Pepperdine Caruso School of Law
Continued the California bar prep professors' joint statement, criticizing Kaplan's expanded question content and errors. Stressed the illegitimacy of testing unvetted material not aligned with NCBE standards.
9. Marcus Friedman, Administrative Director, Consumer Protection Policy Center, University of San Diego School of Law
Suggested the Portfolio Bar Exam as a remedy and proposed emergency legislation allowing its temporary use. Urged the State Bar to consider alternative licensure pathways to reduce costs and assist impacted applicants.
10. Farida
Shared experience as a February 2025 Bar Exam handwriting test taker. Described stress from last-minute location changes and hotel costs. Cited disruptive exam conditions and flawed Kaplan materials. Supported concerns about question error rates.

11. Mary Basick, Assistant Dean of Academic Skills, UC Irvine School of Law
Voiced concern over Kaplan's added topics and lack of preparation time for examinees. Noted significant flaws even in revised materials and criticized exclusion of expert faculty from the vetting process.
12. Ana Parkvon Simun
Echoed concerns about Kaplan's flawed questions, typos, grammatical errors, and incorrect law. Criticized lack of transparency in question development and called for use of subject-matter experts.
13. Robert Dukas
Asked when the results of the November 2024 experimental exam would be released. Suggested awarding full 40 points to participants due to poor question quality and fairness concerns.
14. Douglas Sangster
Described stress and distractions during the February 2025 Bar Exam that cannot be captured by psychometric data. Emphasized the emotional and time investment applicants made and called for score adjustments or provisional licenses, not retakes.
15. Todd Hill
Condemned the February 2025 Bar Exam as a systemic failure resulting from years of neglect. Criticized the focus on data and secrecy, and called for full transparency, accountability, and public remedies.
16. Victoria N.
Represented attorney applicants who did not take the MBE. Requested reciprocal admission, flat score increases, and a limited retake focusing only on PT and PR sections. Emphasized unique hardships and limited remedy options.
17. Reza
Described how accommodations were denied due to platform issues and technical failures. Urged the committee to provide score adjustments or provisional licensure, acknowledging the significant sacrifices made.
18. Nadine Ellman
Highlighted how submission statistics ignore the stress and technical chaos examinees faced. Urged the committee to pass all February 2025 Bar Exam applicants based on the adversity overcome.

19. April Vincent, Associate Dean, *The Colleges of Law*
Continued the California bar prep professors' joint statement. Opposed electronic multiple-choice testing and supported a return to paper exams for clarity, fairness, and accessibility.
20. Nydia Johnson, Associate Dean for Academic Success and Bar Prep, *Southwestern Law School*
Called for expert review of Kaplan's multiple-choice questions and adjustments to the passing score to account for question quality issues and technical disruptions. Supported professor involvement in scoring review.
21. Katie Yemane
Described the exam as a foreseeable disaster and urged fair remedies. Criticized the State Bar's lack of foresight and empathy, citing personal and family sacrifices made.
22. Bryce Woolley, Associate Professor, *Southwestern Law School*
Recommended adjusted rubrics and grading only the top four essays to account for disruption. Suggested free retakes and reciprocity for attorney applicants.
23. Ashley R.
Requested full refunds due to misrepresentation of technical readiness. Expressed concerns over the practicality of provisional licensing for those with stable jobs and urged alternatives.
24. Mia Mogavero
Supported revival of the Portfolio Bar Exam and cited successful prior use of provisional licensing. Shared petition support for alternatives to testing. Endorsed Marcus Friedman's proposal.
25. Suzanne Freyer, Assistant Professor, *Pepperdine Caruso School of Law*
Reinforced that all applicants should be allowed to retake the Performance Test portion of the February 2025 Bar Exam and emphasized performance under stress demonstrated competence.
26. Andrea L.
Criticized Meazure Learning's platform, highlighted grading inequities, and shared experience of being denied a complete exam.
27. Laura Price
Criticized reliance on outdated psychometric models. Urged transparency around AI grading, opposed shortened grading timelines, and emphasized the need for fair and individualized scoring.

28. María D. Domínguez, California La Raza Lawyers Association
Called for urgent reform, accountability, and attention to how the crisis disproportionately harms Latino applicants.
29. Ami Lovell
Proposed motion-based admission for practicing attorneys to reduce bar exam complexity, preserve exam space, and maintain representation quality during a turbulent cycle.
30. Sonia Chen
Reported technical issues during a mock retake exam, including unqualified proctors. Questioned fairness of limited retake eligibility and discrimination against disabled applicants.
31. Jeamilette Castro-Gallo
Described repeated denials of testing accommodations, citing discriminatory practices and financial burdens. Urged the committee to act fairly and avoid repeating past failures.
32. Becky Hoffman
Echoed concerns about fairness and inclusion, especially for nontraditional students. Called out unprofessional behavior by a Board of Trustee and asked for accountability.
33. A's iPhone 777
Requested a chance to finish the Performance Test portion of the February 2025 Bar Exam or be allowed to retake it, citing prior strong Performance Test performance.
34. Zack Defazio Farrell
Reported technical issues, proctor interference, and incomplete exam access. Demanded full licensure or provisional licensing with refunds and highlighted inequities of forced retakes.
35. Chris Haines
Claimed to have had the “best” exam experience and still faced major issues, including disconnections and faulty questions during the February 2025 Bar Exam. Called for the State Bar to acknowledge widespread failure.
36. Lin
Supported continuing remote testing as an option, especially for those who relied on the October 2024 announcement. Proposed remote testing, refunds, and travel cost coverage.
37. Mekyla Robinson
Spoke on behalf of accommodated February 2025 Bar Exam applicants, noting far travel distances and lack of support for medical needs during testing. Expressed appreciation for staff efforts to assist.

38. Isaí Ambrosio
Detailed financial sacrifices, technical issues, and emotional strain. Called for score adjustments or provisional licensing to acknowledge the toll on applicants.
39. Claire Solot
Advocated for supervised practice as a fair alternative to grading adjustments. Suggested offering retakes or portfolio exam pathways to reduce July 2025 Bar Exam crowding and support those already serving underserved populations.
40. Jolan Storch
A foreign-educated attorney who questioned scoring equity and fairness given reused questions and uneven rollout. Criticized psychometric models as unsuitable for this context.
41. David's iPhone
Condemned leadership failures and emphasized the need for systemic reform. Called for transparency, accountability, and real leadership in protecting the profession and public.
42. Jared Jackson
Licensed in another state, described life disruptions and delay in career progression due to uncertainty around the July 2025 Bar Exam. Requested clarity and assurance for working professionals.
43. Pierre H.
Opposed giving unilateral remedial authority to committee leadership. Called for public meetings and stakeholder input before implementing remedies.
44. KC5
Voiced frustration over the inability to register for the July 2025 Bar Exam. Called for cutting ties with Kaplan or offering fully transparent preparation materials.
45. Edward Brickell
Recounted significant life sacrifices and delays. Emphasized that individual issues cannot be addressed through blanket psychometric solutions.
46. Giselle Bahrami
Shared concerns about in-person testing, especially for hybrid law students who studied remotely. Urged the State Bar to maintain a remote option for those unaccustomed to in-person formats.
47. Tamir Sukkary
Described interruptions, disconnections, and proctor issues. Requested score adjustments, provisional licensing, and free retakes. Emphasized months of preparation were wasted.

48. Larry Tran

Opposed near-term retakes due to exam fatigue and inequity. Suggested a portfolio bar exam instead and noted personal sacrifices like delaying life milestones.

49. Andrew Noseworthy

Criticized Meazure Learning and warned against AI grading. Called for accountability and transparency from the State Bar.

50. Jennifer Andrade

Asked State Bar officials to experience the exam themselves and explore partnerships with universities to create more affordable and stable testing platforms.

51. Ali Roseboro

Criticized the scoring advantage granted to November experimental exam participants. Called the system inherently unfair and urged reevaluation of that benefit.

52. Chelsea Daniel

Said the State Bar should have offered a pilot traditional exam to test the platform. Expressed need for compensation and meaningful remedies for time and resources lost.

53. Tonya

Raised concerns about privacy breaches from ProctorU/Meazure software, alleging personal information may have been compromised.

54. Nadine Mazard

An experienced attorney licensed in multiple states, described the experience as emotionally distressing. Advocated for reciprocity for attorney applicants and structural reform.

55. Alyssa Reyes

Noted anxiety even from minimal technical issues. Emphasized the financial and employment consequences of exam delays and urged the State Bar to consider applicants' personal hardships.

56. Dana Allen

Described difficulties obtaining accommodations and criticized the Bar's budgeting and lack of transparency.

57. S.K.

Asked the State Bar to honor commitments made to November experimental exam participants and provide remedies that reflect the February 2025 Bar Exam experience.

58. Tyisha Morris

A first-time applicant planning to take the July 2025 Bar Exam and parent of ten, urged that February errors do not result in higher fees or burdens for July applicants. Requested fairness and functionality in the exam system.

59. Geovanna Medel

Previously denied accommodations despite appropriate documentation, which contributed to failure. Advocated for systemic responsibility, transparency, and justice for affected communities.

60. Arlene R.

Spoke as a member of the public. Opposed diploma privilege and emphasized the need to maintain standards and accountability to protect public trust.

61. Farrah Ghaffarirafi

Requested that retakers' prior scores be considered and proposed a "superscore" model. Warned that provisional licenses may hurt employability. Offered to submit a collective report.

62. Feb 2025 Examinee

Criticized Meazure Learning's performance and the resulting technical failures. Urged the State Bar to provide unprecedented remedies for unprecedented harm.

63. Zoom User

Supported California's independence from NCBE initially but criticized the State Bar's use of psychometricians and flawed implementation of Meazure Learning.

64. Kris

A dual JD/PhD graduate criticized the misuse of psychometrics and lack of transparency. Questioned the State Bar's competency and urged full data disclosure.

65. Amirah Muhammad

A long-time paralegal and accommodated test taker, described major issues despite accommodations. Reported being blocked, harassed, and ignored by proctors.

66. Salai Escobar

Lost Performance Test time due to being logged into another person's exam. Expressed anxiety and concern over how psychometricians could account for such issues.

67. Patricia Eghbali

Proposed making the California Bar Exam entirely multiple choice to reduce cost and grading time, while maintaining competency standards.

68. D.H.

Condemned the State Bar's leadership and rejected psychometric grading. Called for resignations, accountability, and criticized Measure Learning's preliminary data.

69. Nicole Carrier

Called for the State Bar to return to the NCBE's MBE format to ensure exam stability for July 2025 Bar Exam applicants. Emphasized stress, travel, and financial burdens.

70. Ana Carballido

A foreign-trained attorney who had a panic attack during the exam due to technical failures. Opposed psychometric scoring and advocated for refunds and provisional licensure.

71. Priyanka Ghosh

A foreign attorney and parent who missed the November experimental exam due to miscommunication. Reported technical problems during the February 2025 Bar Exam and requested updates.

72. Tatevik Asilbekyan

Described extreme personal sacrifices and rejected retakes as a fair solution. Called for provisional licensure and thanked the State Bar for listening.

73. Mercedes

Proposed a multi-part remedy including lowering the cut score, grading only four essays, and adjusting Performance Test scoring to account for flawed conditions.

74. Leslie Estrada Flynn

A bar exam retaker with accommodations who experienced poor physical setup and delays. Urged the State Bar to lower the passing score due to cumulative harm.

1. Chair's Report

1.1 Discussion of Committee of Bar Examiners Work Plan

Discussion only.

2. Open Session Minutes

2.1 Approval of January 31, 2025, Open Session Minutes

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners approves and adopts the January 31, 2025, Committee of Bar Examiners revised public meeting minutes.

Moved by Cao, seconded by Mesiwala

Ayes – (11) Bolton, Cao, Gongora, Kaplan, Kramer, Lawrence, Lin, Mesiwala, Silva-Guzman, Reyna, Yochelson
Noes – (0)
Abstain – (2) Peak, Reyes
Recuse – (0)
Absent – (1) Chan

Minutes adopted.

3. Consent Calendar

3.1 Report on Administrative Updates Regarding Law Schools

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners receive and file the Report of Administrative Updates Regarding Law Schools.

3.2 Approval of Technical Report on the October 2024 First-Year Law Students' Exam (FYLSX)

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners receive and file the technical report on the October 2024 First-Year Law Students' Exam, prepared by ACS Ventures, LLC.

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners approve the consent calendar.

Consent calendar moved by Reyes, seconded by Cao

Ayes – (13) Bolton, Cao, Gongora, Kaplan, Kramer, Lawrence, Lin, Mesiwala, Peak, Silva-Guzman, Reyna, Reyes, Yochelson
Noes – (0)
Abstain – (0)
Recuse – (0)
Absent – (1) Chan

Motion passes.

4. Business

4.1 Update, Discussion, and Potential Action Related to the February 2025 California Bar Examination Administration, Including General Overview of Psychometric Analysis and Past Practice

RESOLVED, that if the timing for making a recommendation on any scoring adjustment for the February 2025 Bar Exam does not align with a regularly scheduled meeting of the committee, and a meeting of the committee cannot be timely scheduled, the committee delegates authority to make a recommendation on scoring adjustments to the Chair and

Vice Chair. Any recommendation regarding the scoring adjustment made pursuant to this delegation shall be reported to the full committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting and shall be submitted to the Supreme Court for approval. Any scoring adjustment recommended shall be guided by the mission of public protection; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, that if any issue relating to the February 2025 Bar Exam or the March retest emerges which requires action by the Committee of Bar Examiners, and the time in which that action must be made does not align with a regularly scheduled meeting of the committee, and a meeting of the committee cannot be timely scheduled, the committee delegates authority to the Chair and Vice Chair to take action. Any action taken pursuant to this delegation shall be reported to the full committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Any actions that require approval by the Supreme Court shall be presented to Court for such approval. Any such action shall be guided by the mission of public protection; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners recommends to the Board of Trustees that the Supreme Court expand the Provisional Licensure Program to include test takers who took the February 2025 bar exam or who withdrew from the February 2025 bar exam.

Moved by Kramer, seconded by Silva-Guzman

Ayes – (12) Bolton, Cao, Gongora, Kaplan, Kramer, Lawrence, Lin, Mesiwala, Peak, Silva-Guzman, Reyes, Yochelson

Noes – (0)

Abstain – (0)

Recuse – (1) Chan

Absent – (1) Reyna

Motion passes.

4.2 Update and Action on Approval of the Plan for the July 2025 California Bar Examination Administration

RESOLVED, that consistent with the Supreme Court’s direction as articulated in the [Court’s March 4, 2025, statement](#), the Committee of Bar Examiners supports and confirms the return to in-person exam administration for the July 2025 California bar examination.

Moved by Cao, seconded by Lawrence

Ayes – (11) Bolton, Cao, Gongora, Kaplan, Kramer, Lawrence, Lin, Mesiwala, Reyna, Reyes, Yochelson

Noes – (1) Silva- Guzman

Abstain – (0)

Recuse – (0)

Absent – (2) Chan, Peak

Motion passes.

4.3 Action on Application for Accreditation – Lincoln Law School of San Jose

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners receives and adopts the inspection report of Lincoln Law School of San Jose including all of its recommendations as set forth in Attachment A and receives and files the law school’s response as set forth in Attachment B; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, effective March 14, 2025, that the law school be accredited by the State Bar of California, with approval to operate a four-year part-time JD program in fixed-facility format consistent with the Rules for Accredited Law Schools, with this decision based upon findings that the law school is in compliance with both the core rules stated in Rule 4.147 (C) and the remaining rules and has attested that it will take the monitoring steps required of accredited law schools as identified in the rules and the inspection report.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the law school’s next inspection be set for winter 2027.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the law school be directed to cooperate with staff in reviewing its new handbooks, disclosures, student schedules, and related items necessary to ensure a smooth and immediate transition.

Moved by Cao, seconded by Lawrence

Ayes – (13) Bolton, Cao, Gongora, Kaplan, Kramer, Lawrence, Lin, Mesiwala, Peak, Silva Guzman, Reyna, Reyes, Yochelson

Noes – (0)

Abstain – (0)

Recuse – (0)

Absent – (1) Chan

Motion passes.

4.4 Action on Revisions to the Practical Training of Law Students and Law Office Study Rules: Recommendation to Circulate Revised Rules for Public Comment

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners recommends to the Board of Trustees to circulate the proposed rule revisions set forth in Attachments B–H for a 60-day public comment period.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners authorizes staff to make nonsubstantive, grammatical changes to the proposed rule revisions set forth in Attachments B–H, if necessary, before the Board of Trustees reviews the proposed rule revisions.

Moved by Kramer, seconded by Mesiwala

Ayes – (13) Bolton, Cao, Gongora, Kaplan, Kramer, Lawrence, Lin, Mesiwala, Peak, Silva-Guzman, Reyna, Reyes, Yochelson

Noes – (0)

Abstain – (0)

Recuse – (0)

Absent – (1) Chan

Motion passes.

4.5 Action on Inspection Report – Oak Brook College of Law and Government Policy

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners receives and adopts the inspection report of OBCL including all of its recommendations as set forth in Attachment A and receives and files the law school’s response as set forth in Attachment B; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners renews the registration of Oak Brook College of Law and Government Policy and sets its next inspection for winter 2027; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the law school submit as part of its 2025 annual report, evidence documenting the completion of all recommendations included in the inspection report; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the law school also advise in its annual report whether or not it has enrolled a fall 2025 class and whether plans to enroll future classes.

Moved by Cao, seconded by Lawrence

Ayes – (13) Bolton, Cao, Gongora, Kaplan, Kramer, Lawrence, Lin, Mesiwala, Peak, Silva-Guzman, Reyna, Reyes, Yochelson

Noes – (0)

Abstain – (0)

Recuse – (0)

Absent – (1) Chan

Motion passes.

5. Director’s Report

5.1 Update on the June 2025 First-Year Law Students’ Examination

Amy Nunez provided a presentation and oral report.

5.2 Update on Multiple Choice Questions Content Validation

Amy Nunez provided a presentation and oral report.

5.3 Update on Standard Validation Study

Amy Nunez provided a presentation and oral report.

CLOSED SESSION

1. Closed Session Minutes

1.1. Approval of January 31, 2025, Closed Session Minutes

**Closed pursuant Business and Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(3)-(4) and Government Code §§ 11126(c)(1) and 11126(e)(1)]*

2. Closed Session Consent Calendar

2.1 Report of Staff Moral Character Determinations

**Closed pursuant to Business and Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(4)]*

2.2 Report on State Bar Court Decisions

**Closed pursuant to Business and Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(4)]*

2.3 Report on Status of Pending Moral Character State Bar Court Cases

**Closed pursuant to Business and Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(4)]*

3. Closed Business

3.1 Conference with Legal Counsel– Existing Litigation

Brewer v. State Bar, et. al, E.D. Cal. Case No. 2:23-cv-00860-TLN-JDP; 9th Circuit Case No. 24-2151

**Closed pursuant to Government Code § 11126(e)(1)]*

3.2 Conference with Legal Counsel– Existing Litigation

Hill v. Peoples College of Law, et al., C.D. Cal., Case No. 2:23CV1298

**Closed pursuant to Government Code § 11126(e)(1)]*

3.3 Update and Action on Administration, and Grading of Examination Materials, and Security of Test Administration for the February 2025 California Bar Examination, Including Potential Remediation Measures to Address Technical Issues

**Closed pursuant to Business and Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(3) and Government Code § 11126(c)(1)*

3.4 Update and Action on Administration, Preparation, and Grading of Examination Materials, and Security of Test Administration for the July 2025 California Bar Examination

**Closed pursuant to Business and Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(3) and Government Code § 11126(c)(1)*

3.5 WITHDRAWN - Action on Operation & Management Appeals

**Closed pursuant to Business & Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(3) and Government Code § 11126(c)(1)]*

3.6 Action on Testing Accommodation Appeals

**Closed pursuant to Business and Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(3) and Government Code § 11126(c)(1)*

3.7 Action on Moral Character Cases Pending Administrative Review

**Closed pursuant to Business and Professions Code § 6026.7(c)(3) and Government Code § 11126(c)(1)*

ADJOURNMENT