



# The State Bar of California

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## **OPEN SESSION**

### **AGENDA ITEM O-403**

**MARCH 2021**

### **COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS**

**DATE:** March 26, 2021

**TO:** Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

**FROM:** Natalie Leonard, Principal Program Analyst

**SUBJECT:** Report on 2020-2021 Educational Standards Goals

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Below the list of goals for Educational Standards for 2020-2021.

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1. Maintain law school engagement by conducting meetings with the Committee on State Bar Accredited and Registered Schools (CSBARS) and the Law School Council (LSC), publishing the Law School Deans' eNewsletter, and hosting annual Law School Assembly and Registrars' Meetings.

**The Law School Council met on December 2 and next meets on April 21. CSBARS last met on March 24 and next meets on April 21. The Annual Registrars' Meeting and Law School Assembly were held online for the first time on December 9, with strong attendance, active participation, and positive feedback about the online format. They will next take place on September 28 and 29, respectively. The most recent quarterly Law School Deans' e-Newsletter was distributed in January 2021 and the next issue will be distributed in May 2020.**

2. Recommend a proposal to revise the Accredited Law School Rules to: 1) create a modified "jointly accredited" status for law schools that earn accreditation from a regional accreditor and also meet specified State Bar responsibilities and disclosures; 2) ensure rules embody best practices in accreditation; 3) address requests from the Committee.

The Board of Trustees posted the Committee's recommended Accredited Law School Rules for public comment through February 15, 2021, and those comments are being presented for discussion at this Committee meeting. CSBARS has begun a review of potential guidelines to accompany and interpret a new rule set when adopted. ([Board of Trustees' Directive, January 2019, Item 702, p.5](#))

3. Review petitions for registration and accreditation, as well as existing registered and accredited schools' petitions for changes.

**Ongoing as received.**

4. Regulate law schools by monitoring compliance through inspections, reporting, and other actions as directed by the Committee, addressing noncompliance as needed.

**Three law schools have been inspected pursuant to Notices of Noncompliance with Rule 4.160(N), the Minimum, Cumulative Five-Year Bar Exam Passage Rate.**

**Four schools have inspections in progress: Abraham Lincoln University School of Law, Humphreys University – Drivon School of Law, Thomas Jefferson School of Law, and Trinity Law School.**

5. Support the State Bar's strategic initiatives related to law school diversity, retention, and performance on the Bar examination.

**The State Bar has received data from all but one of the unaccredited and accredited law schools as part of the 2020 Annual Report templates collecting demographic and attrition data against these new categories, and staff continues to follow up with that law school. The data gathered from these new templates more readily compares with data at schools approved by the Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar of the American Bar Association. (Goals 4g and 4h)**

6. Continue to pursue mandatory accreditation for unaccredited law schools in accordance with the Rules and Guidelines approved by the Committee of Bar Examiners and the Board of Trustees. Review the existing rules and guidelines to update them as necessary.

**TBD.**

## **FISCAL/PERSONNEL IMPACT**

None

## **AMENDMENTS TO RULES OF THE STATE BAR**

None

## **AMENDMENTS TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY MANUAL**

None

## **STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

Goal: None - core business operations

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee of Bar Examiners approve the report on the 2020 – 2021 Educational Standards goals set forth above.

## **PROPOSED MOTION**

Should the Committee of Bar Examiners agree with the staff recommendations, the following motion should be made:

**MOVE**, that the report on the 2020 – 2021 Educational Standards goals be approved.