



ISSUE MEMORANDUM

DATE	December 8, 2023
TO	Board Members, California State Board of Optometry (CSBO)
FROM	Gregory Pruden, Executive Officer
SUBJECT	Agenda Item #5 – Discussion and Possible Action on CSBO Strategic Plan Supplemental Regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Board will receive a presentation from Department of Consumer Affairs Strategic Planning staff.

Attachment A: CSBO DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan Report

Attachment B: CSBO DEI Supplemental Workbook

Attachment C: CSBO 2021-2025 Strategic Plan

Attachment A



Environmental Scan

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)
Supplement

2023

*Prepared by
SOLID Planning Solutions
for the California State Board of Optometry*



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Introduction

In September of 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom, through Executive Order N-16-22, strengthened the State's commitment to a "California For All" by directing state agencies and departments to take additional actions to embed equity analysis and considerations into its policies and practices, including but not limited to the strategic planning process.

At the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), we are driven by our consumer protection mission and common goal to support our employees and the people and communities across California. As part of advancing the Governor's Executive Order, DCA's strategic planning process reflects our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), incorporating inclusive public engagement and enhanced data collection and analysis.

DCA DEI Mission Statement: To advance a diverse, equitable, and inclusive California Department of Consumer Affairs for all.

Diversity: The inherent and acquired qualities, characteristics, and experiences that make us unique as individuals and the groups to which we belong.

Equity: Creating pathways to equal outcomes.

Inclusion: A practice to maintain a positive environment where all individuals feel recognized, understood, and valued.

DCA encourages the California State Board of Optometry (CSBO) to consider DEI impacts of policy decisions when reviewing the feedback from this report and when revising or developing strategic objectives.

In 2020, SOLID facilitated the development of CSBO's 2021-2025 strategic plan, a strategic plan which covers 2021 – 2025. In support of the Governor's mandate, SOLID conducted a new DEI focused scan and analysis during September and October of 2023. This report is a summary of the feedback obtained during this survey-based scan, which will be used to assist CSBO in adding a diversity, equity, and inclusion perspective to its current strategic plan.

This supplemental environmental scan survey consisted of specific questions designed to assist strategic planning participants in considering the DEI impacts of policy decisions such as regulatory, statutory, and continuing education requirements. Feedback was solicited from external stakeholders, board members, and the Board's leadership and staff.

As you read through this report, you are encouraged to consider:

- Who will benefit from or be burdened by the particular decision or proposal?
- Are there needs that may be different for various demographic or geographic groups?
- Once implemented, how will the Board measure the effect on impacted populations?
- What data/metrics will be used to evaluate the impacts?

This document summarizes trends, including areas where stakeholders agree and disagree, while providing insight to assist the Board in considering strategic plan objectives.

At the upcoming supplemental planning session, the board members and leadership will discuss and evaluate this information as a group to help create or modify objectives that the Board will include in its work during this ongoing strategic plan period.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Ann Fisher with SOLID Planning at Ann.Fisher@dca.ca.gov .

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scan Summary

Trends in Gaining Different Perspectives

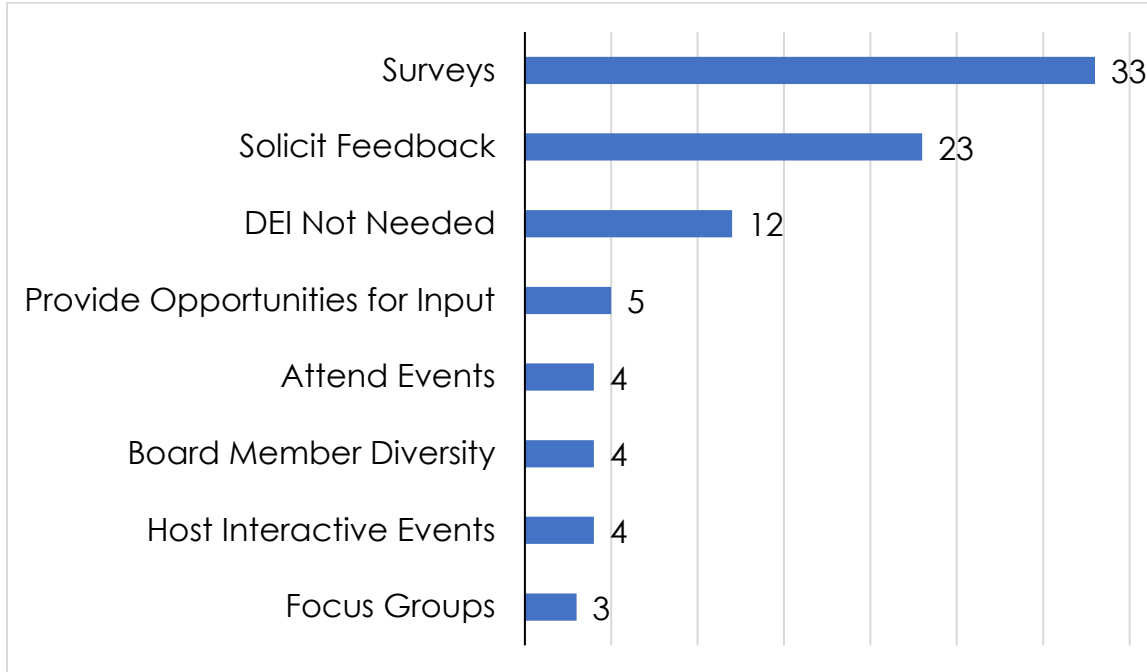
Survey question: What are ways CSBO can gain different perspectives about ideas and priorities related to the Board's activities?

Summary of Stakeholder Comments

1. Both external stakeholders and leadership and staff suggest using surveys to get various perspectives on activities of the Board.
2. All three stakeholder groups suggest requesting feedback from professional organizations about the ideas and priorities the associations have identified.
3. All stakeholders mention soliciting feedback from those in an educational setting, including students, prospective licensees, colleges, and universities.
4. Other groups that board members would like to hear from include licensees and students, while external stakeholders prefer to hear from a diverse pool of people.

The chart below lists the top trends along with the corresponding number of comments for feedback provided by external stakeholders.

External Stakeholder Comment Trends



Board Member Comment Trends

The list below displays terms that summarize comments.

- Solicit feedback from:
 - consumer groups
 - licensees
 - local communities
 - professional organizations
 - students and prospective licensees

Leadership and Staff Comment Trends

The list below displays terms that summarize comments.

- Be open to staff input
- Email
- Provide opportunities for input during board meetings
- Social media
- Solicit feedback from:
 - professional organizations
 - schools and universities
- Surveys

Trends in Unnecessary Requirements or Barriers to Licensure

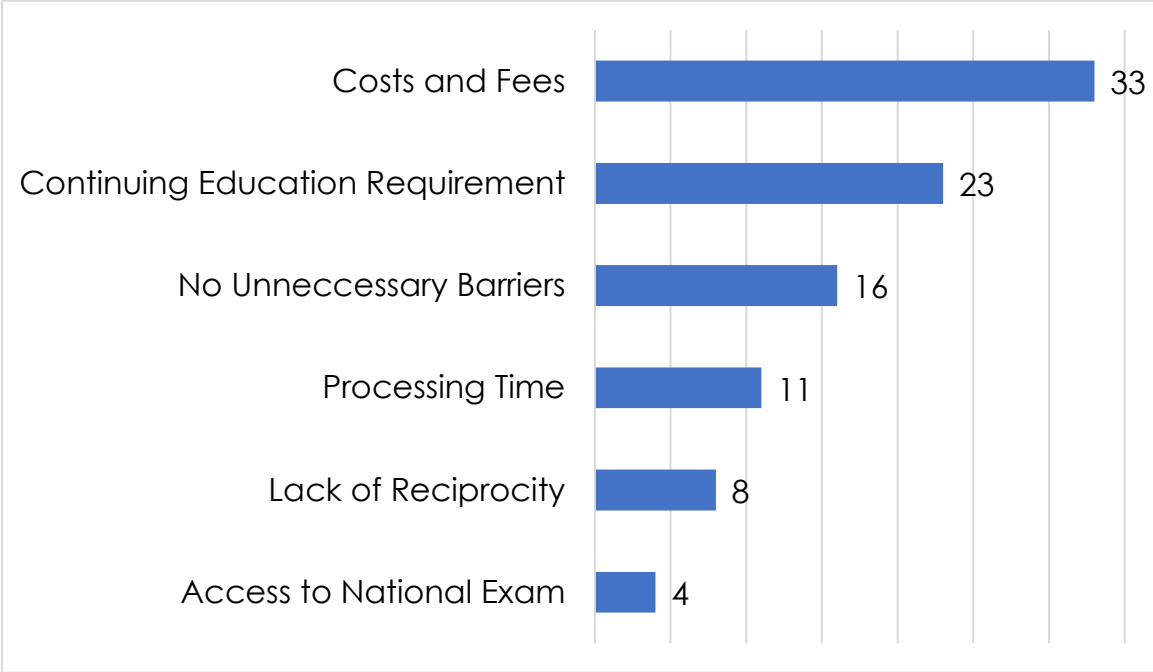
Survey question: Are there unnecessary requirements or barriers to licensure (e.g., education, experience, examination, continuing education, cost of licensure, processing time)?

Summary of Stakeholder Comments

1. Both external stakeholders and leadership and staff cite a lack of reciprocity as being an unnecessary barrier to licensure in California.
2. External stakeholders report that high costs and fees are the primary unnecessary barrier, with the licensing fee being mentioned most often.
3. External stakeholders mention that the continuing education requirements are a barrier, stating the required hours as excessive and expressing the impracticality of requiring in-person instruction.
4. Some board members and external stakeholders feel that there are no unnecessary barriers for licensure.

The chart below lists the top trends along with the corresponding number of comments for feedback provided by external stakeholders.

External Stakeholder Comment Trends



The lists below display terms that summarize comments provided by board members and by Board leadership and staff.

Board Member Comment Trends

No comments received.

Leadership and Staff Comment Trends

- Lack of reciprocity
- Scope limitation through restrictive laws

Ways to Increase Outreach and Connection to All California Communities Trends

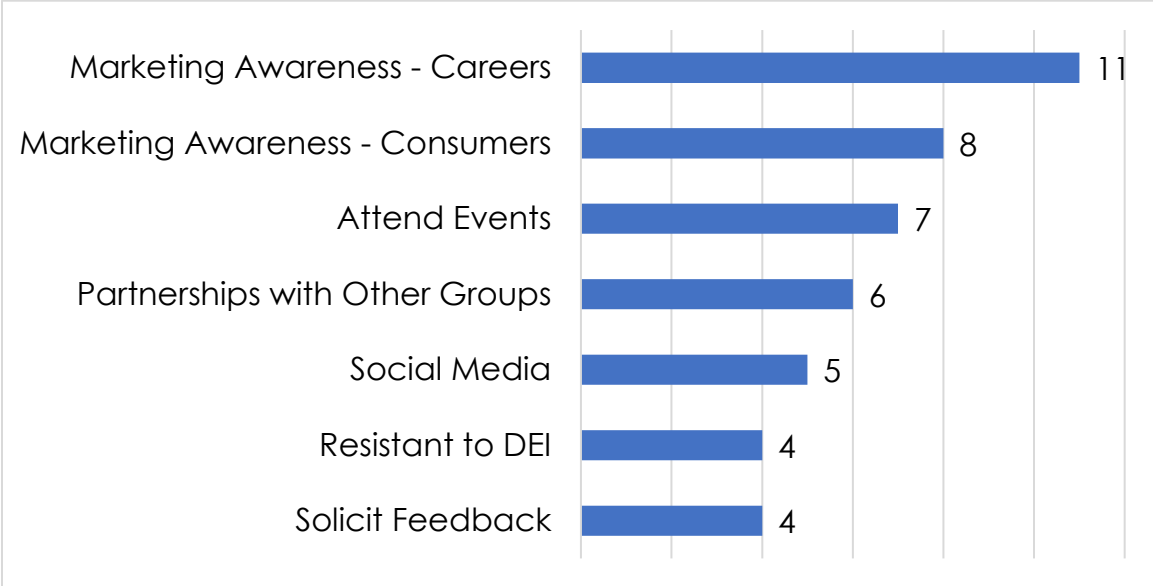
Survey question: What are ways that CSBO can increase its outreach and connection to all California communities?

Summary of Stakeholder Comments

1. External stakeholders and board members suggest attending meetings of professional associations and societies.
2. All stakeholder groups see value in attending local and community events throughout the state.
3. External stakeholders and board members would like to see a marketing and awareness campaign. External stakeholders prioritize targeting schools and students, as well as under-represented groups, highlighting the career path of optometry. Multiple board members mention outreach to schools and students to offer career information.
4. External stakeholders suggest a marketing and awareness program for consumers, specifically addressing community groups and highlighting the value of individual private practitioners.

The chart below lists the top trends along with the corresponding number of comments for feedback provided by external stakeholders.

External Stakeholder Comment Trends



The lists below display terms that summarize comments provided by board members and by Board leadership and staff.

Board Member Comment Trends

- Attend:
 - community meetings
 - consumer group events
 - professional association events
 - school events
- Host informative events for students

Leadership and Staff Comment Trends

- Attend events:
 - in regions of the state
 - to distribute information
- Form a Board Outreach Committee to guide targeted outreach
- Offer more resources in more languages
- Increase social media presence

Other Actions to Take to Further Equal Access to Opportunities

Survey question: What other actions should CSBO take to further equal access to opportunities (e.g., entry into the profession, education/training opportunities, apprenticeships/ mentorships)?

Summary of Stakeholder Comments

1. All stakeholder groups suggest the use of mentorship, apprenticeship, and internship programs to assist entry into the profession.
2. External stakeholders and board leadership and staff express a concern that equal access to opportunities is not the responsibility or function of the Board. External stakeholders urge adherence to objective standards for entry into the profession.
3. External stakeholders feel that marketing and awareness about career pathways will further access to opportunities. Offering this information to high school and undergraduate students is noted most often.
4. External stakeholders mention the financial burden of becoming established in the profession, and suggest financial assistance, both to students and those who agree to work in under-served communities.

The chart below lists the top trends along with the corresponding number of comments for feedback provided by external stakeholders.

External Stakeholder Comment Trends



The lists below display terms that summarize comments provided by board members and by Board leadership and staff.

Board Member Comment Trends

- Mentor-Apprentice-Intern program.
- Solicit input from schools and their diversity groups.

Leadership and Staff Comment Trends

- Mentor-Apprentice-Intern program.
- DEI is not the focus of the Board; DEI is not needed.

Appendix A – Acronym List

Acronym	Definition
CSBO	California State Board of Optometry
DCA	Department of Consumer Affairs
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Appendix B – Data Collection Method

Data for this report was gathered by surveying stakeholder groups that are important to the success of the Board. Stakeholders include any individual or group who is influenced by or influences a program. Information for this survey was gathered by surveying external stakeholders and internal stakeholders using an online survey.

Classification of Stakeholder Relationship with CSBO

Relationship with CSBO	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Leadership	2	100%
Staff	13	100%
Board Member	5	63%
Licensee	287	1.8%
Consumer	10	1
Government Agency	2	1
Professional Association/Group	20	1
Educational/School Association/Group	32	1
Other ²	29	1

¹ A response rate cannot be determined for these external stakeholders because of the undetermined number having access to the survey link.

² Respondents listed in the “Other” category identified themselves as follows:

- Retired licensee: 16
- Optician: 3
- Student: 3
- Optometrist (including in other states): 2
- Former CSBO staff: 1
- Former CSBO board member: 1
- Former licensed optician: 1
- Former Exam Panelist: 1
- “yy”: 1

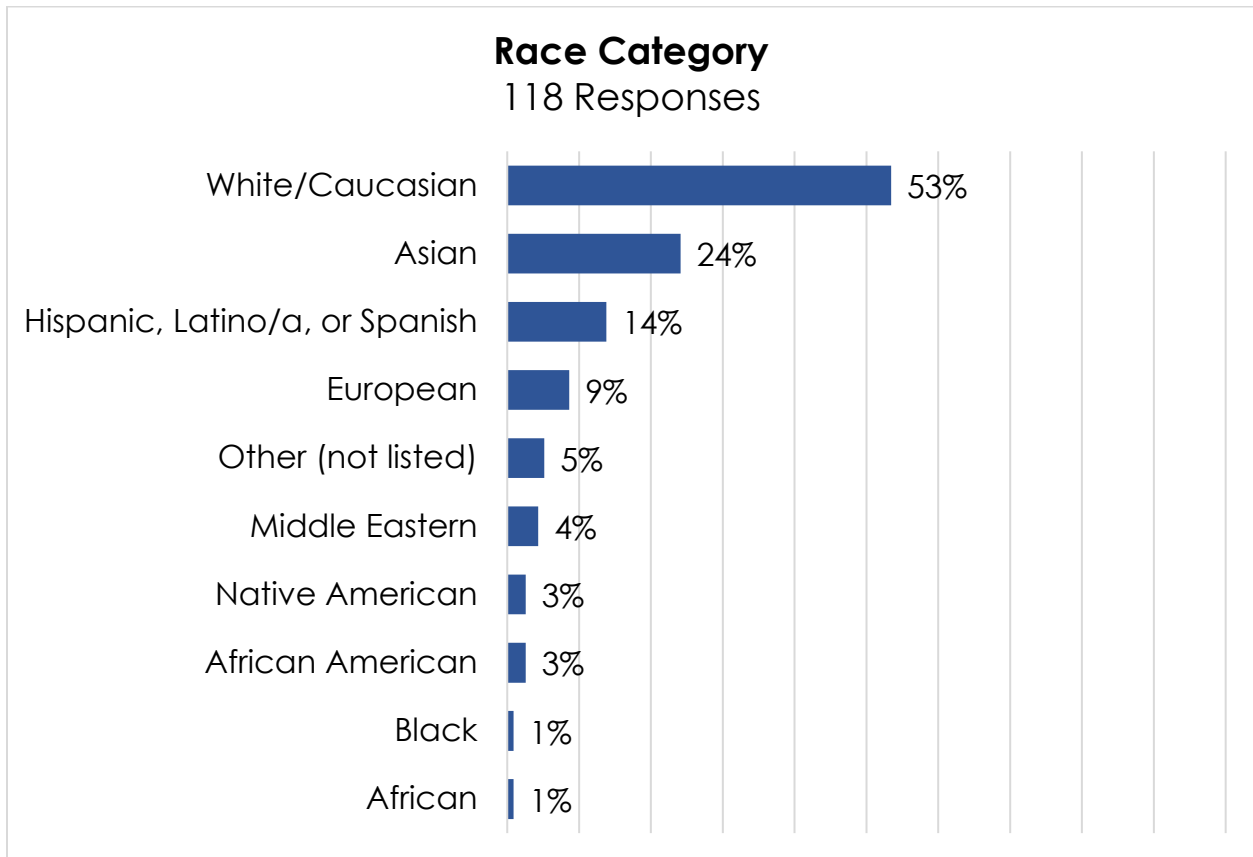
Appendix C – Demographic Data

Demographic questions were marked as optional. Given the small percentage of external stakeholders who did choose to answer these questions, we provide them for information only.

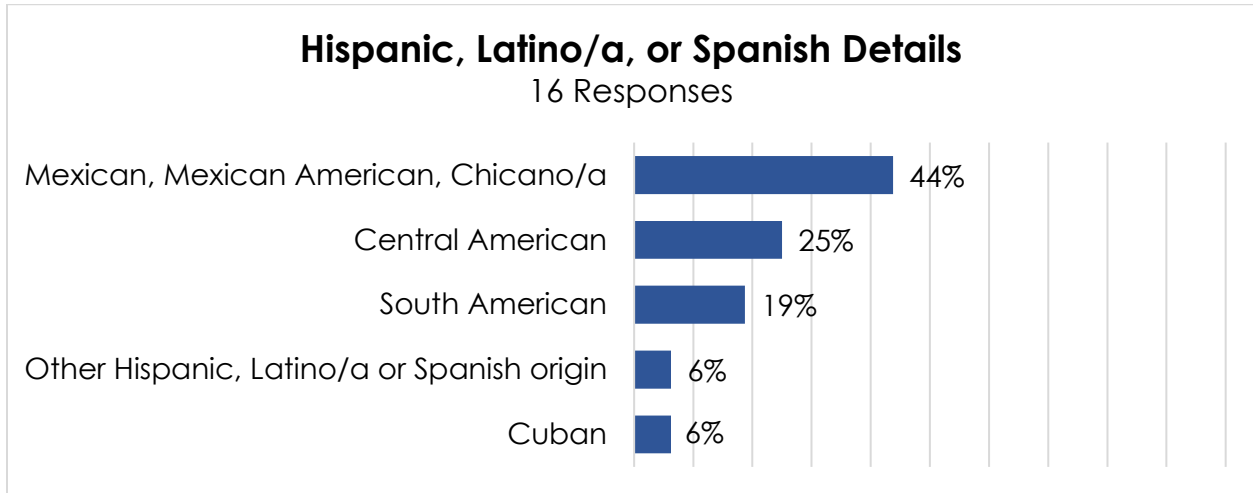
Race

Races Stakeholders Identified With.

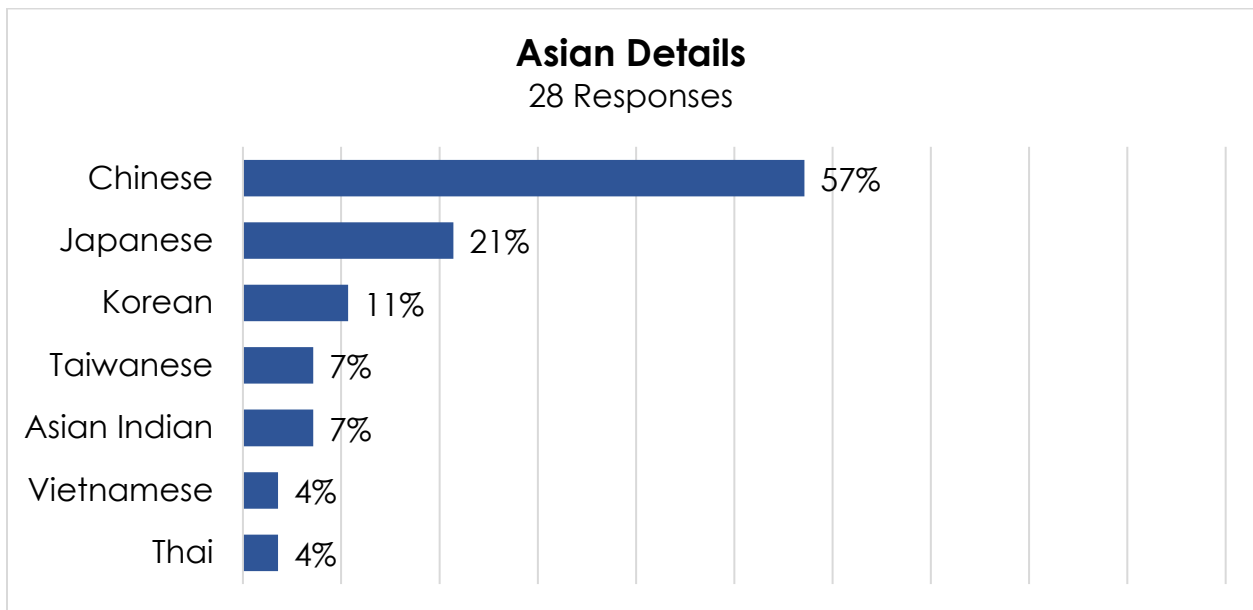
* Multiple options could be selected, so results may not total 100%.



Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish Stakeholders Identified With



Asian Stakeholders Identified With

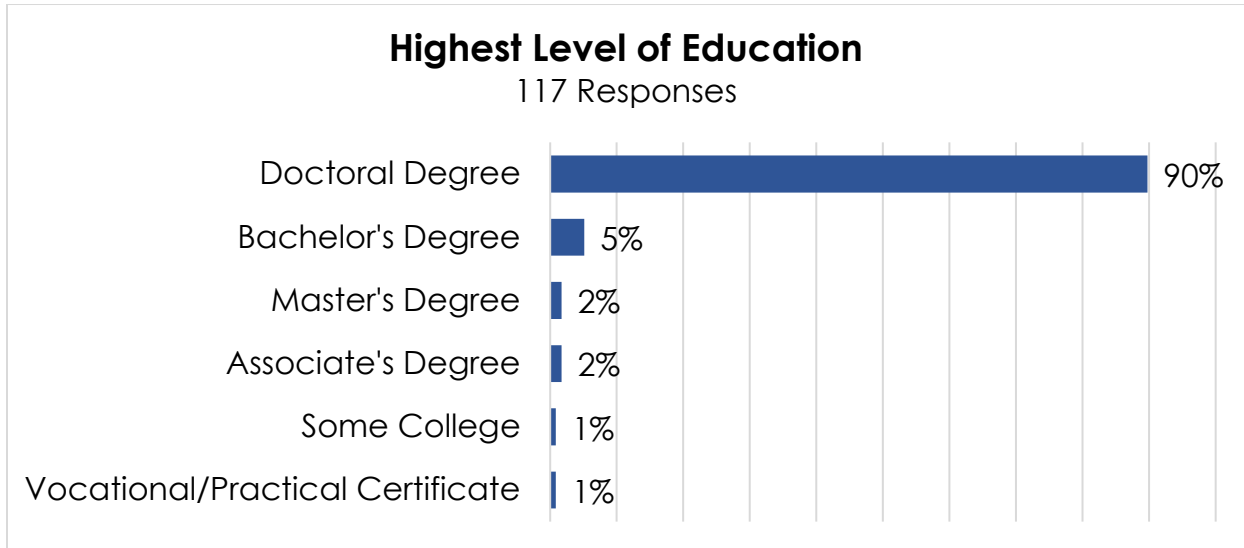


Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Stakeholders Identify With

None

Education

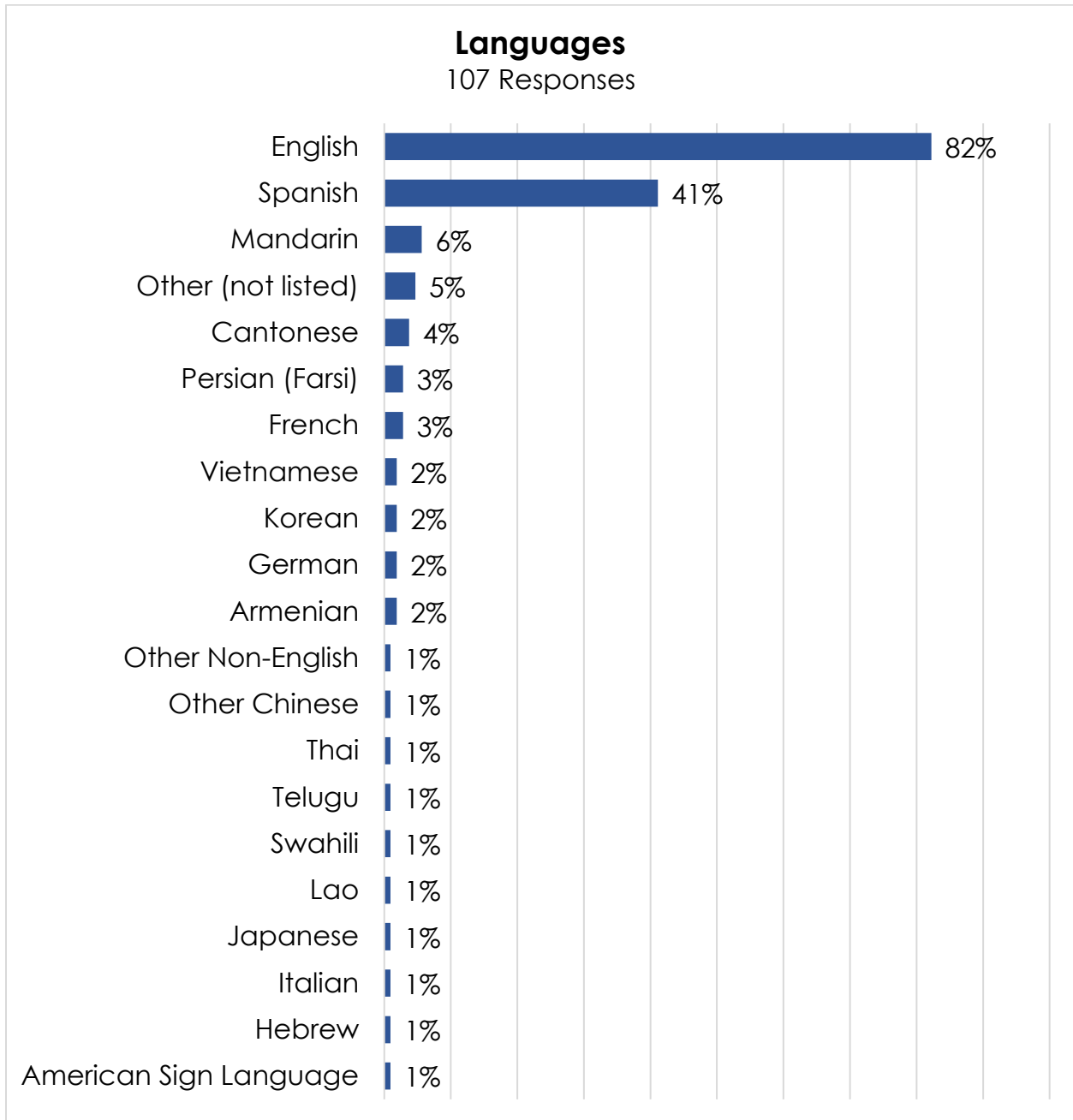
External Stakeholders' Highest Level of Education



Languages

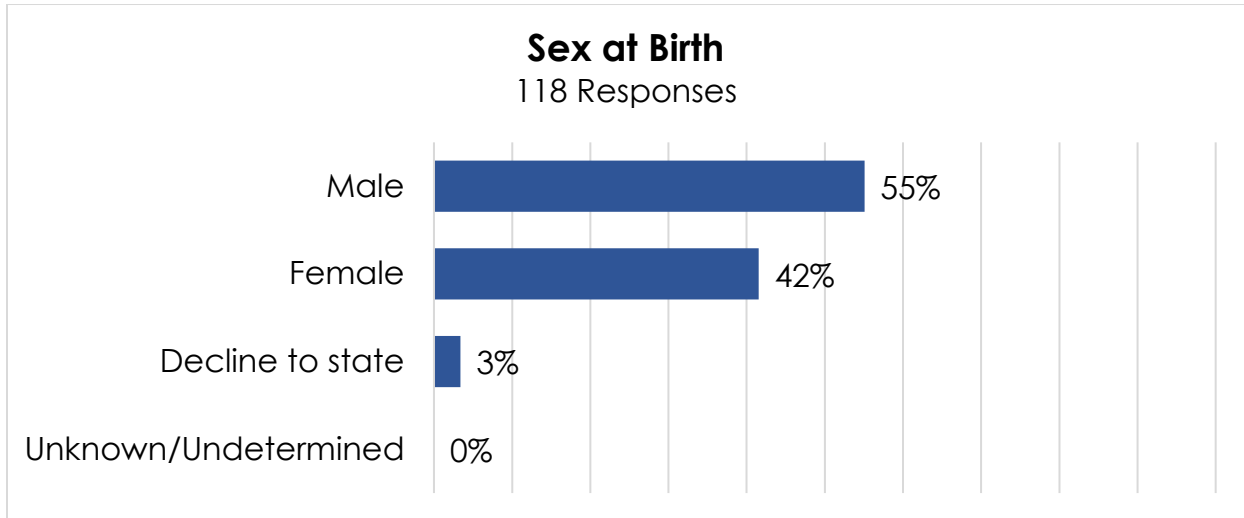
Languages External Stakeholders Speak Fluently

- * A total of 58 options were provided, including “Decline to State”. Multiple options could be selected, so results may not total 100%. Languages not selected are not shown.



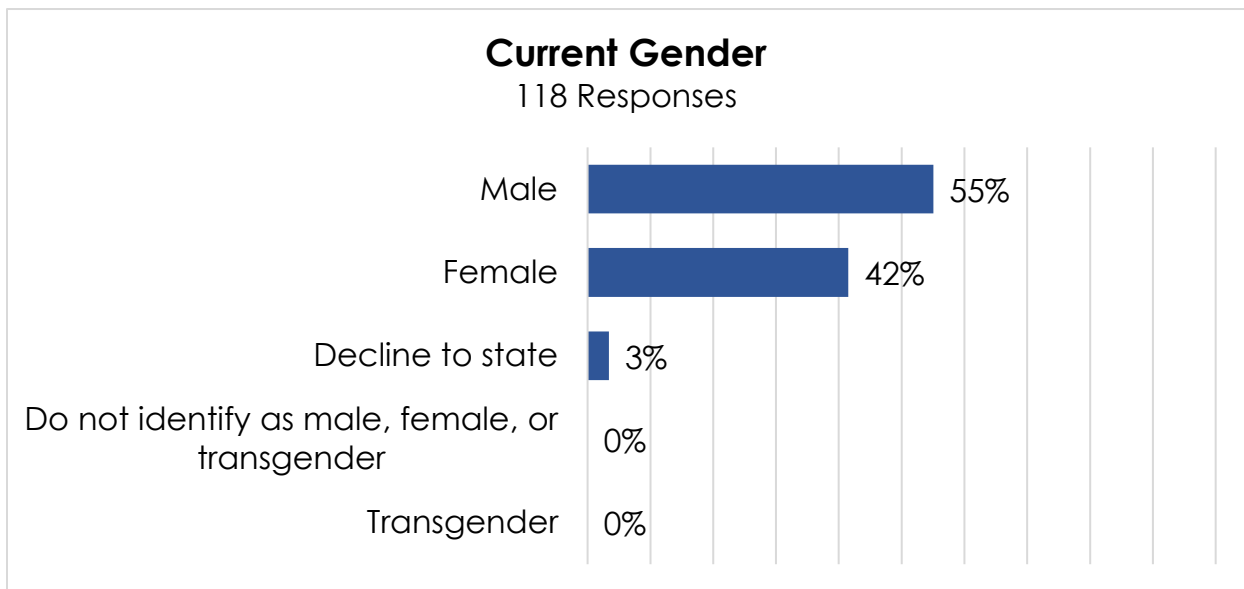
Birth sex

External Stakeholders' Assigned Sex at Birth



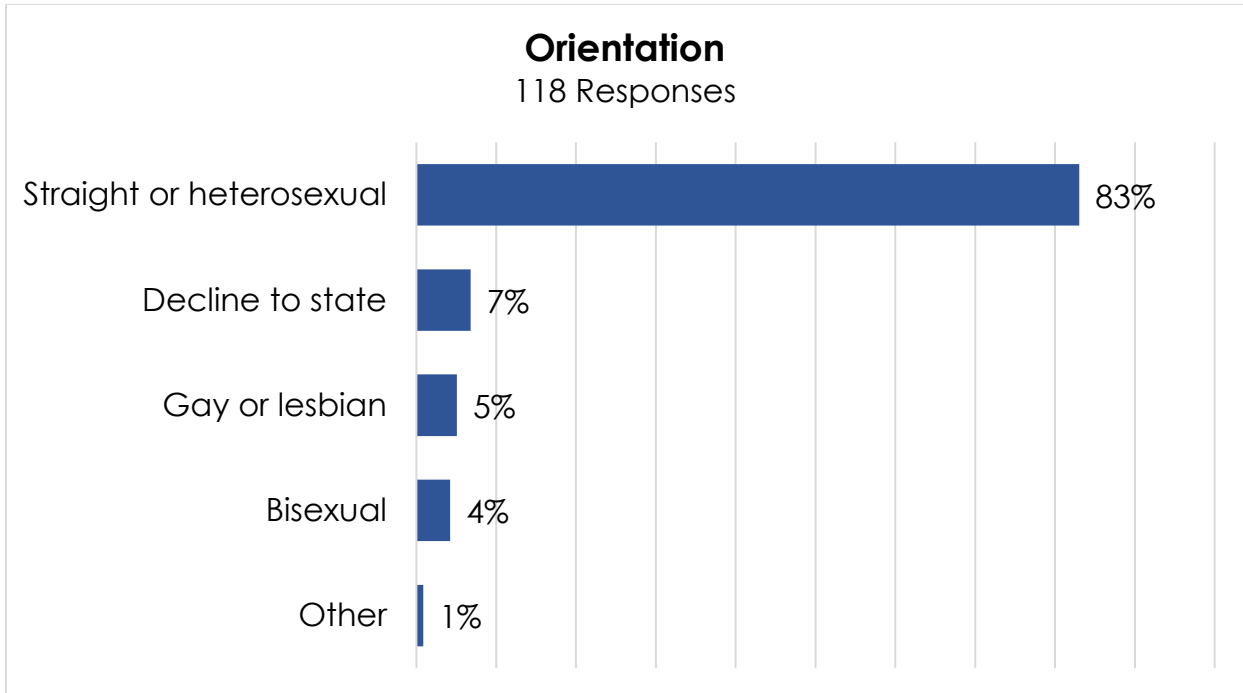
Current gender

How External Stakeholders Describe Themselves



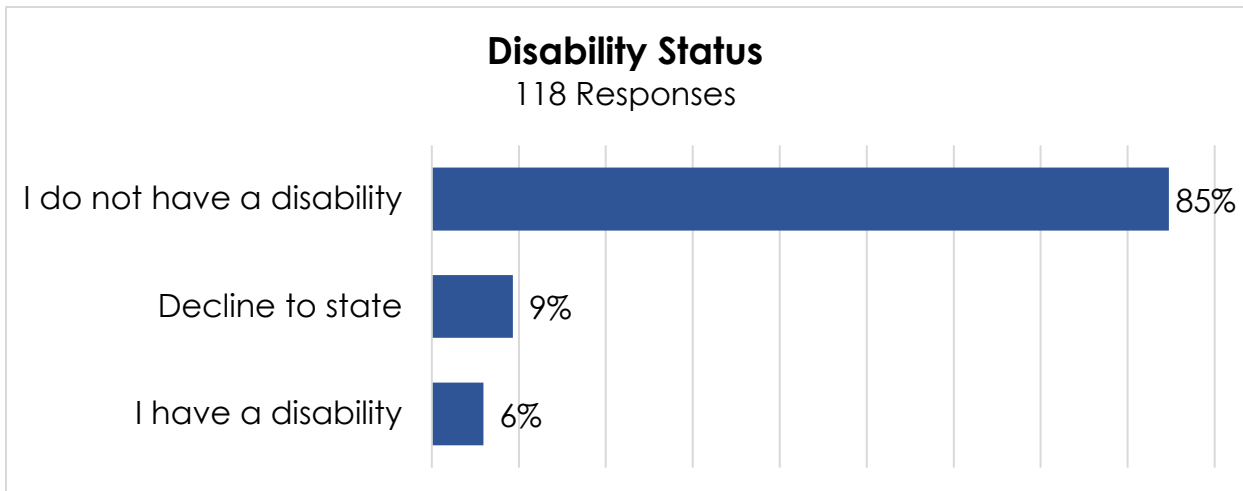
Orientation

External Stakeholders' Orientation



Disability status

External Stakeholders' Disability Status





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Attachment B



California State Board of Optometry DEI Supplemental Session

Objectives Worksheet

Planning Session:

Friday, December 8, 2023



Instructions

As we get ready for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Supplemental Session, take a moment to think about what you would like to see the Board work on over the next few years.

Consider the following:

- DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan Report
- Items outlined in Sunset Review








Determine Issues/Areas for Improvement and Brainstorm Solutions

What issues/areas for improvements come to mind for the following strategic goal areas? Record issues/areas for improvement and identify solutions on the attached worksheets.

1. Licensing and Registration
2. Examination
3. Law and Regulation
4. Enforcement
5. Outreach
6. Organizational Effectiveness

SMARTIE Methodology

For more effective objectives, consider the SMARTIE methodology when coming up with solutions to issues/areas for improvement:

Specific  Details what needs to be done	Measurable  Success that can be measured	Actionable  Uses action words	Realistic  Possible to attain	Time-Based  Deadline can be assigned	Inclusive  Considers all individuals	Equitable  Creates pathways to equal outcomes
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Goal 1: Licensing and Registration

The Board provides applicants and licensees a method for obtaining and maintaining licensing and registration, business licenses, and certifications for optometry and opticianry in California.

After reading the CSBO's DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the Board should address in relation to the goal area of Licensing and Registration?

List topics and any discussion points below in preparation for the DEI Supplemental Session.

Goal 2: Examination

The Board works to promote a fair, valid, and legally defensible exam process and licensing exam (California Law and Regulation Examination) to ensure that only qualified and competent individuals are licensed or registered to provide optometric or opticianry services in California.

After reading the CSBO's DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the Board should address in relation to the goal area of Examination?

List topics and any discussion points below in preparation for the DEI Supplemental Session.

Goal 3: Law and Regulation

The Board works to establish and maintain fair and just laws and regulations that provide for the protection of consumer health and safety and reflect current and emerging, efficient, and cost-effective practices.

After reading the CSBO's DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the Board should address in relation to the goal area of Law and Regulation?

List topics and any discussion points below in preparation for the DEI Supplemental Session.

Goal 4: Enforcement

The Board protects the health and safety of consumers through the active enforcement of laws and regulations governing the safe practice of optometry and opticianry in California.

After reading the CSBO's DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the Board should address in relation to the goal area of Enforcement?

List topics and any discussion points below in preparation for the DEI Supplemental Session.

Goal 5: Outreach

The Board proactively educates, informs, and engages consumers, licensees, students, and other stakeholders about the practices of optometry and opticianry and the laws and regulations which govern them.

After reading the CSBO's DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the Board should address in relation to the goal area of Outreach?

List topics and any discussion points below in preparation for the DEI Supplemental Session.

Goal 6: Organizational Effectiveness

The Board works to develop and maintain an efficient and effective team of professional and public leaders and staff with sufficient resources to improve the Board's provision of programs and services.

After reading the CSBO's DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the Board should address in relation to the goal area of Organizational Effectiveness?

List topics and any discussion points below in preparation for the DEI Supplemental Session.



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California State Board of Optometry

2021–2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Completed with the expertise of DCA SOLID Planning

Board adopted on November 20, 2020



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Members of the Board

Mark Morodomi, J.D.—President
Glenn Kawaguchi, O.D.—Vice President
Debra McIntyre, O.D.—Secretary
Cyd Brandvein
Jeffrey Garcia—O.D.
David Turetsky—O.D.
Lillian Wang—O.D.

Gavin Newsom, Governor
Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Secretary, Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
Kimberly Kirchmeyer, Director, Department of Consumer Affairs
Shara Murphy, Executive Officer, California State Board of Optometry

Message from the Board President

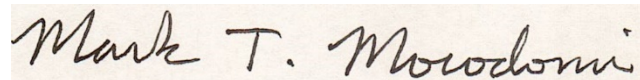
As I write this, it is 2020. Uncertainty and anxiety abound. The nation and the world are in the middle of the greatest pandemic of our lifetimes. Under stay-at-home orders, Californians have forgone primary medical care and procedures. Optometrist and optician offices have shut down for months and are slowly reopening. Some of these professionals lost their jobs in the process. Optometry students and optometrists who need continuing education credits are taking all of their classes online. And new graduates are traveling across the country to complete national board examinations, risking their lives to start their careers.

Amid all this, the California State Board of Optometry and its staff are crafting a strategic plan for the next four years when predicting what will happen next month is a challenge. But we can look to our past successes as a guide to the future. Because of the Board's inspiration and efforts, we started the year with a legislative win: the passage and signing into law of AB 458, authored by Assembly Member Adrin Nazarian, which permits optometrists to make house calls to homebound seniors who can only get to optometrists' offices with incredible difficulty.

When the pandemic hit and physical proximity became a concern, we pivoted quickly to recognize interactive, online classes to satisfy optometrists' in-person continuing education requirement. During a time of chaos and uncertainty, the Board has remained calm and stable. From their homes, the Board's staff continues to process licenses and conduct enforcement to protect California consumers.

We will continue to do the work we started before the surge of the COVID-19 virus, for which the pandemic has only accelerated the need: telehealth, children's comprehensive eye examinations (particularly with so many students in front of video monitors for online schooling), and the need to bring optometric services to patients who can't get to doctors' offices. The nationwide discussion about race also requires examining disparities in health care delivery and the diversity—or lack thereof—in the optometric profession.

In this year's ceaseless barrage of challenges, stress, and pessimism, we hope you share the California State Board of Optometry's optimism for a calmer, safer, and brighter future. And we encourage you to read this plan with, in a phrase, your "rose-colored glasses."



Mark T. Morodomi

About the Board

Since its inception more than 100 years ago, the California State Board of Optometry (Board) has supported and helped consumers by advocating consumer interests before lawmakers, regulating to protect consumers from unlicensed practitioners and guarding our licensees against unfair competition, enforcing laws to protect the consumer, and resolving disputes between business and a customer or a consumer and a licensee.

Our authority to protect the health and safety of California patients receiving optometric care through licensing, education, and regulation of the practice of optometry was expanded on January 1, 2016, when Governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill 684, transferring the regulation of opticianry from the Medical Board of California (MBC) to the Board. Overnight, the Board's regulatory population grew by 50%—expanding its regulatory oversight from 8,000 licensees to roughly 12,000 licensees and registrants.

Today, the Board regulates the largest population of optometrists and dispensers in the United States with over 17,400 licenses, registrations, and permits. The Board is also responsible for issuing opticianry certifications for nonresident contact lens sellers and businesses that employ dispensing opticians.

With this significant change in population comes new, emerging responsibilities. Our Board stands ready and has the capabilities and resources to maintain the same level of accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, integrity, and customer service it has delivered since the last Strategic Plan. Further, it is in the best interest of California consumers to continue protecting their eye care health and safety through the Board in its current constituted state: as an independent Board that relies on the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) for administrative support.

As we continue our evolution—from a Board with severe challenges in 2002 to a well-functioning Board today—we are poised to meet the regulatory changes, adjust through internal improvements to our organizational structure, and set a new path forward through a revised Strategic Plan that better aligns with our evolving consumer protection mandate.

Achieving Our Mission and Positioned to Move Forward

The Board's mission is to protect the health and safety of California consumers through licensing, education, and regulation of optometry and opticianry. The Board accomplishes its mission through the following responsibilities:

- Promulgating regulations governing Board procedures, examination for an optometric licensure, minimum standards of optometric and dispensing services offered and performed, statements of licensure and fictitious name permits, and the equipment in all registered locations.
- Investigating consumer complaints and criminal convictions including but not limited to substance abuse, unprofessional conduct, incompetence, fraudulent action, and unlawful activity.
- Taking disciplinary action for violations of laws and regulations governing optometry and opticianry when warranted.
- Accrediting schools and colleges of optometry¹.
- Establishing educational and examination requirements to ensure the competence of candidates for licensure/registration.
- Setting and enforcing standards for continued competency of existing licensees.
- Communicating with licensees, registrants, and Californians to aid in the understanding of laws and regulations related to delivery of high-quality vision care in the state.

California became the third state to regulate the optometry profession² in 1903, and a new Optometry Practice Act³, enacted in 1913, created the Board, defined its duties and powers, and prescribed a penalty for violations of the Act. The Act was later incorporated in the Business and Professions Code (BPC)⁴. Empowered with rulemaking authority (BPC Sections 3025 and 3025.5), the Board promulgated the first rule for the practice of optometry in 1923. In the same year, the Legislature passed a law⁵ requiring all applicants for licensure to meet specific educational requirements (i.e., graduate from an accredited school or college of optometry) and charged the Board with the responsibility of accrediting these schools. Prior to this time, individuals desiring to practice were not required to have any specific formal education.

On January 1, 2016, Assembly Bill 684 moved the Registered Dispensing Optician Program under the Board's jurisdiction, and created a Dispensing Optician Committee. Assembly Bill 684 also replaced one of the Board's professional members with a registered optician.

¹ The Board accepts schools and colleges of optometry that have received accreditation through the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE).

² Optometry Act of 1903 (California Statutes of 1903, Chapter CCXXXIV) later repealed by Statutes of 1913, Chapter 598.

³ Statutes of 1913, Chapter 598, derived from the 1903 Act as amended by enactments of 1907 and 1908 5 Chapter 7, Division 2, Healing Arts 6 Chapter 164, Statutes of 1923.

⁴ Chapter 7, Division 2, Healing Arts.

⁵ Chapter 164, Statutes of 1923.

During the creation of this Strategic Plan, seven members comprised the Board: five licensed optometrists and two public members. All are appointees of the Governor's Office.

Per statute, full Board membership constitutes a quorum of 11 members. Four seats remain vacant (one public member appointed by the Senate president pro tempore, one public member appointed by the speaker of the Assembly, one public member appointed by the governor, and one professional licensed within opticianry and appointed by the governor).

Committees

Dispensing Optician Committee (Statutorily mandated)

Tasked by the Legislature to recommend registration standards and criteria for the registration of opticians, the Dispensing Optician Committee is composed of two public members, two California-licensed opticians, and one Board member. For the first time, the Board actively involved this committee in the strategic planning process.

Policy Committees

Under the Board Member Handbook, the Board president appoints members to each policy committee, utilizing individual strengths and experiences to meet the overarching purpose of each committee. The Policy Committees assist the Board staff in development of strategic objectives and work products. In the 2021–2025 strategic planning process, each committee thoroughly reviewed the objectives fitting within their areas of responsibility. Currently, the Board has the following committees composed of Board members and public stakeholders:

Legislation and Regulation

Responsible for recommending legislative and regulatory priorities to the Board and assisting staff with drafting language for Board-sponsored legislation and recommending official positions on current legislation. The committee also recommends regulatory additions and amendments.

Practice and Education

Advises Board staff on matters relating to optometric practice, including standards of practice and scope of practice issues. Reviews staff responses to proposed regulatory changes that may affect optometric practice. Also reviews requests for approval of continuing education courses and offers guidance to Board staff regarding continuing education issues.

Consumer Protection

Oversees the development and administration of legally defensible licensing examinations and consulting on improvements/enhancements to licensing and enforcement policies and procedures.

Public Relations and Outreach

Assists with the development of outreach and the development of educational materials for the Board's stakeholders.

In addition to committees formed by statute and the sitting Board president, the Board periodically creates workgroups to focus on specific areas requiring targeted attention. Currently, the Board has the following workgroup:

Telemedicine Workgroup

To meet the emerging trends of telemedicine within the practice of optometry, the Board created a telemedicine workgroup that began work in 2019. The Board enjoyed several presentations from experts on telemedicine in the fall of 2019, and the staff completed thorough research on the topic. The Board discussed the issue at the May 2020 public meeting, and the staff was given additional areas of research to complete. The workgroup will continue its work in developing a comprehensive telemedicine policy that protects California consumers.

Significant Accomplishments

Licensing

Spectacle Lens Dispenser Occupational Analysis: An Occupational Analysis was completed in 2020 and the results presented to the DOC at the June 2020 meeting. The information will be used to help inform decisions made by the DOC and the Board.

Licensing renewal and application times were reduced in fiscal year 2019–2020.

The Board thoroughly discussed the roles of unlicensed individuals working as optometric assistants. Working with DCA and the Legislature, the Board obtained budgetary authority to conduct an occupational analysis of the optometric assistant profession.

Legislation and Regulations

AB 458 (Nazarian)—Carried by the chair of the Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee, this Board-sponsored bill requires an optometrist to obtain a home residence permit to engage in the practice of optometry at a residence of a homebound senior, as defined, except for a person engaging in the temporary practice of optometry. The bill was signed by Governor Gavin Newsom in October 2019.

AB 896 (Low)—Board staff worked closely with Assembly Member Evan Low and stakeholders on proposed legislation to combine the optician and optometry funds and to implement reporting and registration requirements for mobile optometric offices. The bill was signed by Governor Gavin Newsom in September 2020.

Implementation of Assembly Bill 2138 (Chiu, Chapter 995, Statutes of 2018)—The Board finalized regulations implementing AB 2138. The rulemaking package will be submitted to OAL for approval this fall.

AB 443 Implementation—The Board approved regulations implementing AB 443 (Salas), which allows optometrists to administer certain immunizations. The rulemaking package is currently being reviewed by DCA before a public comment period.

Adoption of Revised Continuing Education Regulations—Led by the Practice and Education Committee, the Board approved regulatory language to support the use of interactive, online learning tools for the completion of optometric continuing education. Revised language also clarifies the requirements for Board

approval of continuing education courses. The rulemaking package is currently being reviewed by DCA before a public comment period.

Optician Statutory Review—Board staff and committee members, throughout four public meetings, completed a comprehensive review of the Optician Program Statutes (Division 2, Chapters 5.4, 5.45, 5.5) for a potential legislative bill in 2021. These changes will improve consumer protection, improve enforcement processes, and clarify and strengthen existing processes. This proposal will be submitted to the Legislature for a potential bill in 2021 or 2022.

Optician Program Regulatory Updates—The Dispensing Optician Committee (DOC) reviewed and approved Board staff's updates to the Optician Program Regulations with Board approval to follow this fall. These changes will strengthen consumer protection, improve application requirements, and place current processes and procedures into law.

Enforcement

Optometry Disciplinary Guidelines—Board staff finalized improvements to the Optometry Disciplinary Guidelines, which were approved by the Board in December. The proposed changes improve disciplinary processes and update terms and conditions of probation. The regulatory rulemaking package is currently being finalized with staff before submittal to DCA.

Optician Disciplinary Guidelines—Board staff and committees finalized the Optician Disciplinary Guidelines, which will be approved by the Board this fall. The proposed changes strengthen disciplinary processes and set out terms and conditions of probation for optician registrants.

Telemedicine—As telemedicine is an emerging delivery model for optometry, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board has been proactive in the discussion of these issues throughout several public and workgroup meetings. Board staff and subject matter experts presented research on telemedicine scenarios, technologies, and best practices within the optometric profession. The Board provided direction for further research and development of a comprehensive telemedicine policy in 2021–2022.

Outreach and Communication

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board took decisive action to protect consumers and assist the profession. A series of notices and guidance, with updates from the governor and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was posted.

The Board increased use of social media outlets and completed a series of frequently asked questions for opticians, optometrists, and Californians on our website and updated various pages to provide more timely and pertinent information.

Board staff prepared presentations for students at optometry and opticianry schools in California and presented them both in person and virtually.

With the expertise of the DCA Communications Unit, the Board produced educational video segments regarding cosmetic contact lens and comprehensive eye exams for young elementary school students.

Organizational Effectiveness

Board staff continued updating procedure manuals and began implementing cross-training of staff.

Board staff moved twice to facilitate the remodel of the Board's office. The remodel reduced the total square footage of the office, allowing for a reduction in the Board's rent.

Board staff completed a wide variety of training sessions including implicit bias, supervisory, and HR liaison training.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Our Mission

To protect the health and safety of California consumers through licensing, registration, education, and regulation of Optometry and Opticianry.

Our Vision

The highest quality optometric and optical care for the people of California

Our Values

Consumer Protection

We make effective and informed decisions in the best interest and for the safety of Californians.

Integrity

We are committed to honesty, ethical conduct, and responsibility.

Transparency

We hold ourselves accountable to the people of California. We operate openly so that stakeholders can trust that we are fair and honest.

Professionalism

We ensure qualified, proficient, and skilled staff provides excellent service to the State of California.

Excellence

We have a passion for quality and strive for continuous improvement of our programs, services, and processes through employee empowerment and professional development.

Goal 1: Licensing and Registration

The Board provides applicants and licensees a method for obtaining and maintaining licensing and registration, business licenses, and certifications for optometry and opticianry in California.

- 1.1 Review licensing processes to improve staff efficiency as well as licensee and registration compliance.
- 1.2 Explore the possibility of requiring continuing education for both spectacle and contact lens dispenser registrations to protect consumers and high application standards throughout licensure.
- 1.3 Continue exploring opportunities to enhance BreEZe utilization to increase staff productivity and promote licensee compliance with continuing education requirements.
- 1.4 Deliver service excellence that exceeds applicant, licensee, and registrant expectations to improve application turnaround time and safely expedite market entry.
- 1.5 Secure adequate funding to allow for regular occupational analysis and linkage studies of pre-licensure examinations to provide a fair and consistent process for applicants and ensure consumers receive the highest quality of care.

This goal will be led and monitored by the Practice and Education and the Dispensing Optician Committees.

Goal 2: Examination

The Board works to promote a fair, valid, and legally defensible exam process and licensing exam (California Law and Regulation Examination) to ensure that only qualified and competent individuals are licensed or registered to provide optometric or opticianry services in California.

- 2.1** Consider the feasibility of developing a state law exam for opticians to verify their familiarity with California laws.
- 2.2** Reimagine the examination processes to reflect the state's high-quality eye care standards and the evolution of test-taking at eye care, health, and educational institutions.
- 2.3** Continue evaluating the examinations used in the licensure process to prevent barriers to licensure.
- 2.4** Research the possibility of alternative competency verification of applicants during states of emergency.

This goal will be led and monitored by the Practice and Education and the Dispensing Optician Committees.

Goal 3: Law and Regulation

The Board works to establish and maintain fair and just laws and regulations that provide for the protection of consumer health and safety and reflect current and emerging, efficient, and cost-effective practices.

- 3.1** Advocate for the adoption of new opticianry statutes and regulations (using data from occupational analyses) that seek to clarify the principles of the profession and provide better consumer protection for those who are seeking opticianry services.
- 3.2** Promulgate rulemakings to effectively regulate practice within mobile clinics and home settings to provide better consumer protection for those who are seeking optometric services.
- 3.3** Explore current and emerging methods, opportunities, and technology to increase access to care while maintaining a world-class standard of vision care (e.g., scope of practice, delegation of authority, and telemedicine).
- 3.4** Pursue Sunset Review legislation that modernizes language and concepts in light of current and future practice, that synchronizes the expiration dates of fictitious name permits to align with renewals of general licensure and statements of licensure, and that implements a license verification fee to support unfunded staff work.
- 3.5** Monitor changes in federal law to identify methods that will strengthen existing California legislation regarding the sale of contact lenses and eyeglasses to improve enforcement and enhance consumer protection.

This goal will be led and monitored by the Dispensing Optician and the Legislation and Regulation Committees.

Goal 4: Enforcement

The Board protects the health and safety of consumers through the active enforcement of laws and regulations governing the safe practice of optometry and opticianry in California.

- 4.1** Review the communication process and standard practices used in enforcement actions that could result in probation or revocation of a license. Ensure that procedures and processes focus on consumer protection and probationer rehabilitation, not punishment.
- 4.2** Develop a member-driven training resource that will enable new Board members to understand the enforcement process and the important role of the Board in determining discipline.

This goal will be led and monitored by the Consumer Protection and the Public Relations and Outreach Committees.

Goal 5: Outreach

The Board proactively educates, informs, and engages consumers, licensees, students, and other stakeholders about the practices of optometry and opticianry and the laws and regulations which govern them.

- 5.1** Evaluate outside resources available to expand outreach.
- 5.2** Improve the utilization and measurement of social media and the Board website to communicate to consumers, licensees, and registrants; provide accurate information on key initiatives (e.g., children's vision, supervision authority, options for delivery of care, and delegation of duties).
- 5.3** Collaborate with continuing education providers and associations to disseminate updates to legislation and regulations regarding the current state of practice (i.e., training modules specific to Law/Regs, Board quarterly updates to precede trainings).
- 5.4** Create and enact an outreach plan with opticianry programs regarding California registration requirements for the use of the title "ptician" to enhance compliance with California law and encourage registration.
- 5.5** Publish and disseminate enforcement actions to illustrate the consequences of infractions (DUI, malpractice, and unlicensed activity).
- 5.6** Develop the communication plan regarding the importance of children's vision health and wellness.
- 5.7** Evaluate and create better consumer outcomes such as access to care and addressing patient needs for marginalized populations by implementation of a multi-step action plan educating licensees about concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This goal will be lead and monitored by the Consumer Protection and the Public Relations and Outreach Committees.

Goal 6: Organizational Effectiveness

The Board works to develop and maintain an efficient and effective team of professional and public leaders and staff with sufficient resources to improve the Board's provision of programs and services.

- 6.1** Restructure the licensing unit to increase cross-training and minimize disruptions in service and processing.
- 6.2** Work with DCA Organizational Improvement Office to quantify the Board's staffing shortfall and request spending authority to ensure sufficient personnel resources for the Board to meet its goals and objectives.
- 6.3** Provide resources and training for staff development to support the growth and retention of staff.
- 6.4** Arrange regular, ongoing in-service training by optometrists and opticians on eye conditions, state of practice, education, etc. to increase staff understanding of optometry and opticianry.
- 6.5** Arrange visits to various optometric and optical professionals to increase staff understanding of practice and applications of law.

This goal will be led and monitored by the Executive Officers of the Board.

Strategic Planning Process

To understand the environment in which the Board operates and to identify factors that could impact the Board's success, the California Department of Consumer Affairs' SOLID Planning unit conducted an environmental scan of the internal and external environments by collecting information through the following methods:

- Interviews were conducted with all Board members, committee members, and Board management from June through July 2020 to assess the challenges and opportunities the Board is currently facing or will face in the upcoming years.
- An online survey was sent to staff in June, closing on June 30, 2020. In the survey, employees provided anonymous input regarding the challenges and opportunities the Board is currently facing or will face in the upcoming years. A total of seven staff participated in the survey.
- An online survey was sent to Board stakeholders the first week in June and closed on June 30, 2020. The survey's purpose was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Board from an external perspective. A total of 563 stakeholders completed the survey.

The most significant themes and trends identified from the environmental scan were discussed by the Board members and executive team during a strategic planning session facilitated by SOLID Planning on August 13, 2020. This information guided the Board in the review of its mission, vision, and values while directing the strategic goals and objectives outlined in its new Strategic Plan.