



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Memo

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To: Board Members **Date:** February 20, 2024

From: Steve Sodergren
Executive Officer

Subject: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Supplemental Strategic Planning

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.

In 2021, SOLID facilitated the development of Board’s 2022-2026 strategic plan. In support of the Governor’s mandate, SOLID conducted a new DEI focused scan and analysis during August and September of 2023. Attached is the summary of the feedback obtained during this survey-based scan, which will be used to assist BBS in adding a diversity, equity, and inclusion perspective to its current strategic plan. (Attachment A: BBS Environmental Scan-Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Supplemental 2023)

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 board leadership and staff.

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

In preparation for the planning session, Board members and stakeholders 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?

At the upcoming supplemental planning session, the board members and stakeholders 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. Included in the materials is the BBS DEI Supplemental Workbook that will assist board members and stakeholders in the planning process. (Attachment B: BBS DEI Supplemental Workbook)

Attachments

Attachment A: BBS Environmental Scan-Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Supplemental 2023

Attachment B: BBS DEI Supplemental Workbook



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Environmental Scan

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)
Supplement

2023

*Prepared by
SOLID Planning Solutions
for the Board of Behavioral Sciences*



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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 Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS or the Board) to consider DEI impacts of policy decisions when reviewing the feedback from this report and when revising or developing strategic objectives.

In 2021, SOLID facilitated the development of BBS's 2022-2026 strategic plan. In support of the Governor's mandate, SOLID conducted a new DEI focused scan and analysis during August and September of 2023. This report is a summary of the feedback obtained during this survey-based scan, which will be used to assist BBS 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 board 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 Trisha with SOLID Planning at Trisha.St.Clair@dca.ca.gov.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scan Summary

Trends in Gaining Different Perspectives

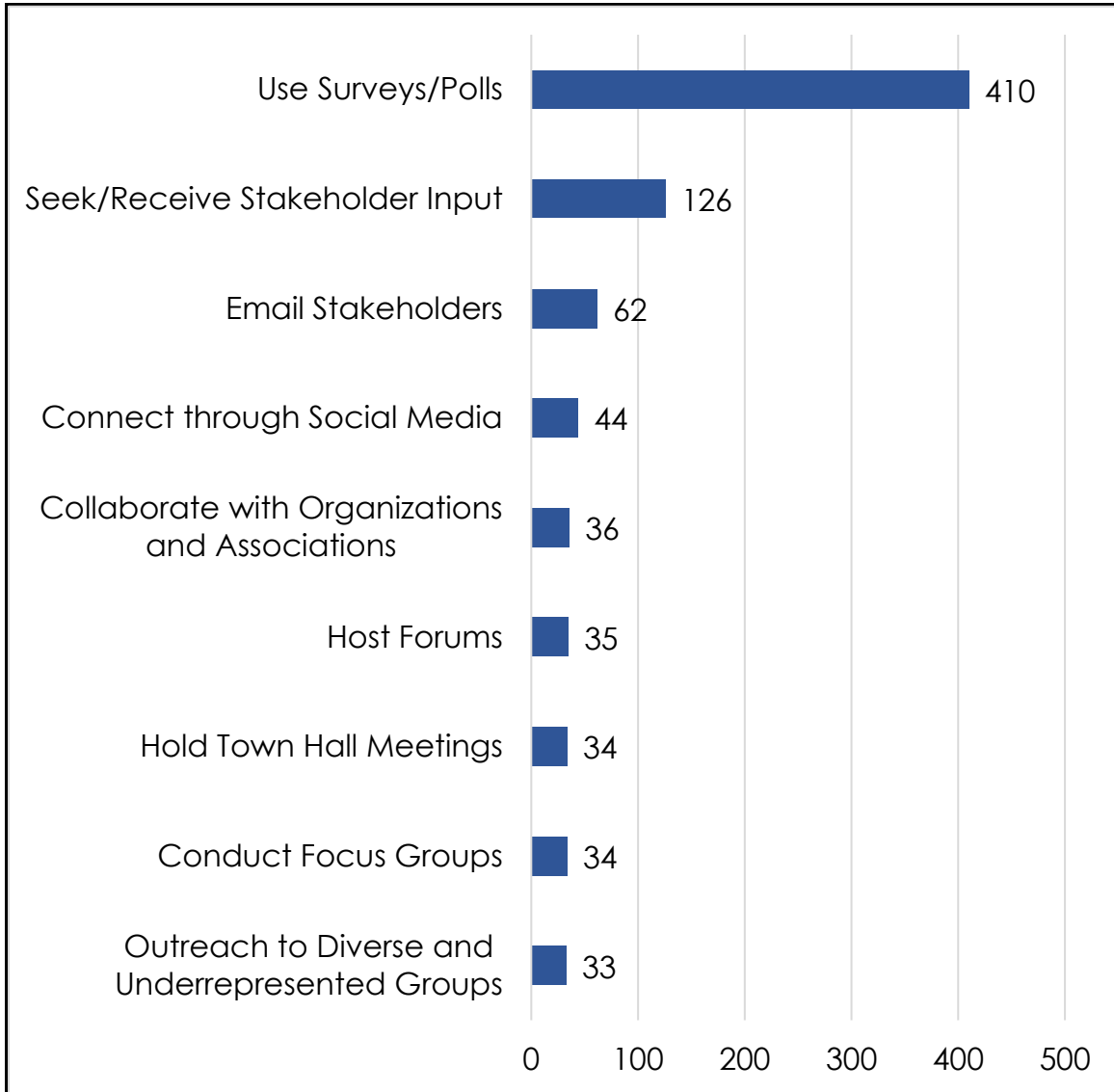
Survey question: What are ways BBS can gain different perspectives about ideas and priorities related to the Board's activities?

Summary of Stakeholder Comments

1. Stakeholders suggest the Board seek their input on a regular basis by using the following methods (in order of preference, with the first bullet being the most popular):
 - Surveys/polls
 - Emails
 - Social Media
2. Stakeholders recommend the Board collaborate with organizations, such as the National Association of Social Workers – California (NASW-CA), and associations, like the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT), to identify needs that are not being met and discuss relevant issues to licensees.
3. Stakeholders propose the Board could invite open discussions with consumers and licensees using forums, focus groups, and town hall meetings.
4. Stakeholders recommend the Board conduct outreach to diverse and underrepresented groups in order to provide their perspectives. Some of the diverse and underrepresented groups mentioned are as follows:
 - Black, Indigenous, and Other People of Color
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Groups
 - Associate Clinical Social Worker/Licensed Clinical Social Worker Groups
 - People with Disabilities
 - Rural Providers/Communities

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

Stakeholder Comment Trends – Ways to Gain Different Perspectives



Trends in Unnecessary Requirements or Barriers to Licensure

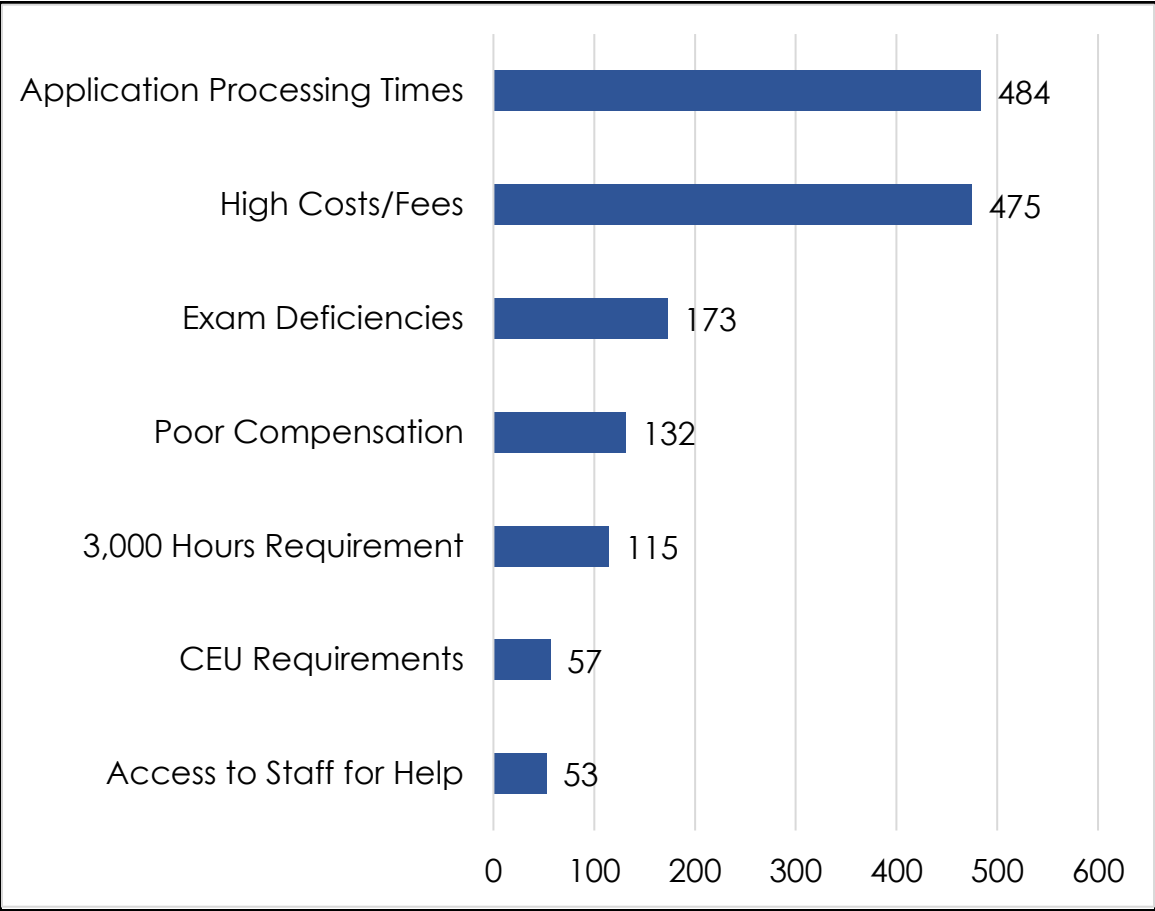
Survey question: Are there unnecessary requirements or barriers to licensure (e.g., education, experience, examination, continuing education, cost of licensure, processing time)?

Summary of Stakeholder Comments

1. Stakeholders cite long application processing times as a barrier to licensure, saying the delay keeps applicants in a holding pattern for months and causes a significant loss of potential income.
2. Stakeholders state the high costs of school tuition, study materials, exams, application fees, licensing fees, continuing education classes, and living in California are barriers to licensure, especially when they are coupled with unpaid practicums and internships.
3. Stakeholders identify the exams for licensure as barriers and list many exam deficiencies, such as:
 - Questions that are wordy and confusing
 - Focus on test taking ability rather than testing knowledge of theories and practices
 - Not being relevant to whether or not an individual would make a good therapist
 - Exam administrators lacking objectivity
 - Biased questions
 - Need to use costly exam preparation materials
4. Stakeholders state the requirement of 3,000 hours of supervised experience is excessive and difficult to obtain given the time limitations applied and the lack of pay involved.
5. Stakeholders cite continuing education unit (CEU) requirements are excessive, confusing, and outdated.
6. Stakeholders say lack of access to staff by phone or email is a barrier to licensure, as it prevents them from receiving answers to their questions.

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

Stakeholder Comment Trends – Barriers to Licensure



Ways to Increase Outreach and Connection to All California Communities Trends

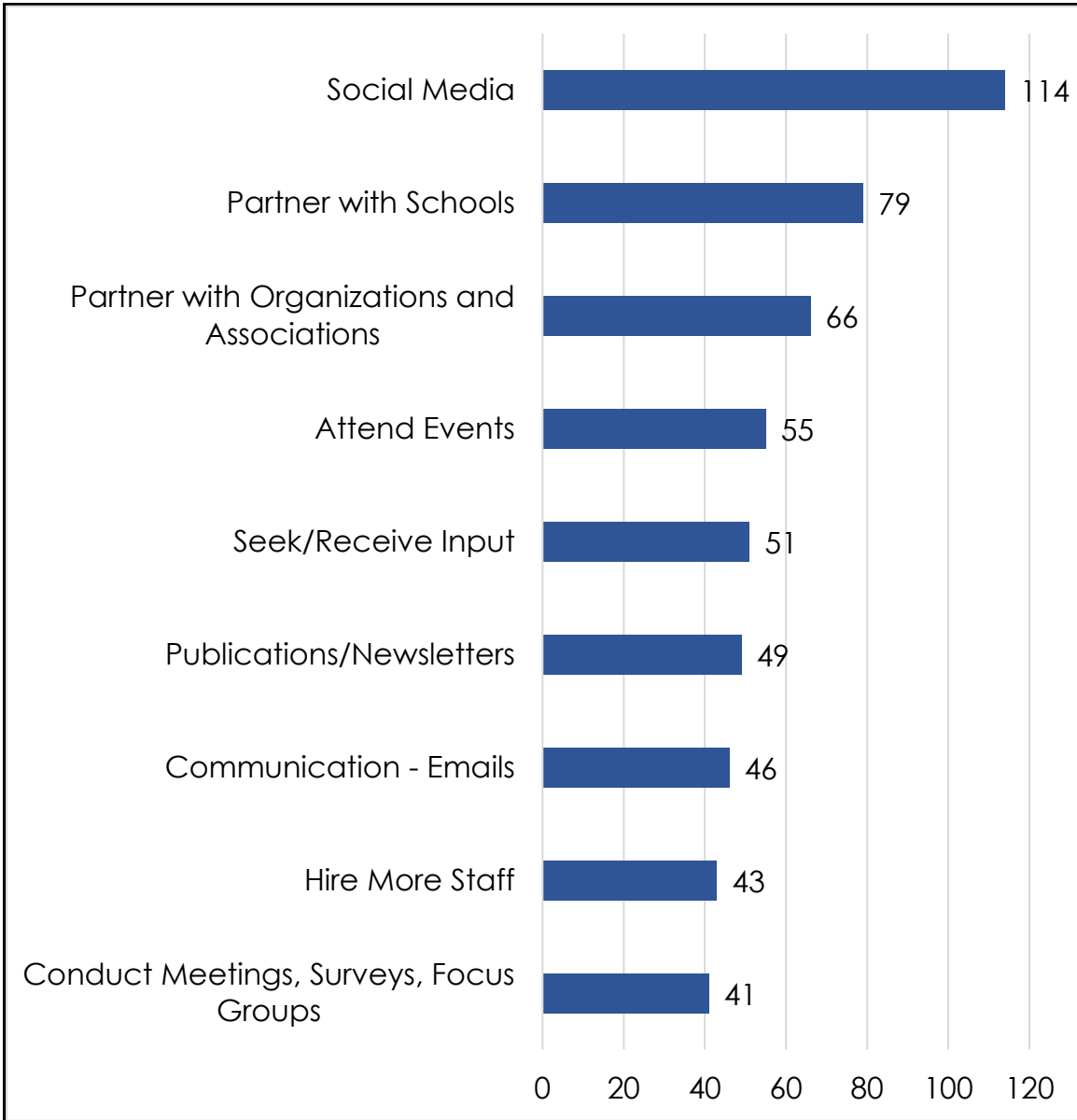
Survey question: What are ways that BBS can increase its outreach and connection to all California communities?

Summary of Stakeholder Comments

1. Stakeholders suggest BBS expand its use of social media to better connect with all California communities.
2. Stakeholders recommend BBS collaborate with schools ranging from high schools to universities, as well as organizations and associations, to form outreach partnerships.
3. Stakeholders say BBS can attend more in person events to increase its visibility in the community and build stronger relationships with licensees.
4. Stakeholders suggest BBS seek stakeholder input through frequent meetings, surveys, and focus groups to gain insight and solutions from many diverse communities.
5. Stakeholders recommend BBS send out a regular newsletter and publish brochures to report on the Board's activities and highlight licensee successes.
6. Stakeholders want BBS to send them more emails to keep them informed and improve communication in general.
7. Stakeholders say BBS should hire more staff so that it has the capacity to increase outreach to the community and respond to calls and emails from licensees and consumers.

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

Stakeholder Comment Trends – Ways to Increase Outreach and Connection



Other Actions to Take to Further Equal Access to Opportunities

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

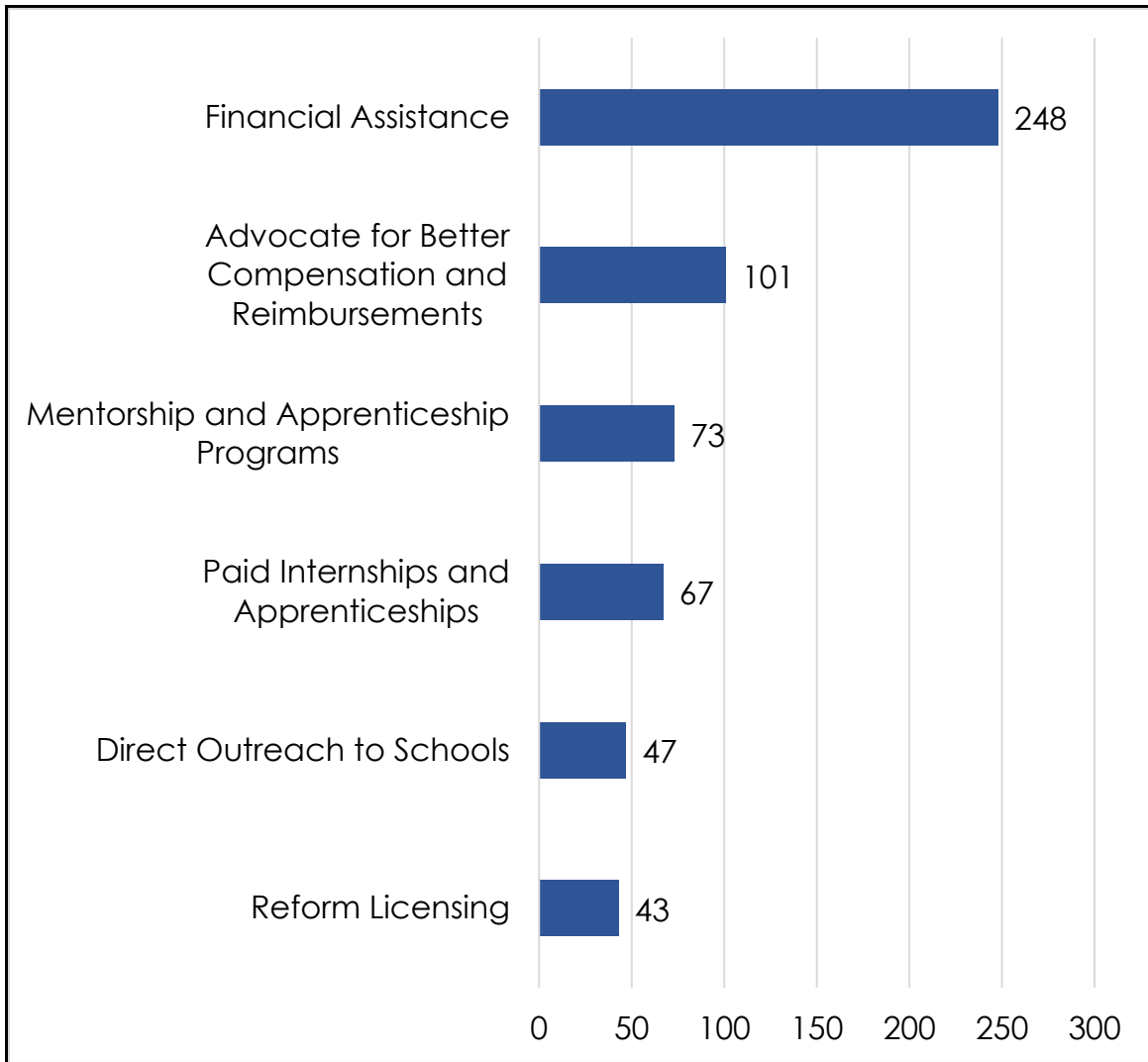
Summary of Stakeholder Comments

1. Stakeholders suggest BBS offer or support many forms of financial assistance to create equal access to opportunities, such as:
 - Scholarships
 - Student loan forgiveness
 - Fee waivers
 - Low cost applications or fees to those with lower incomes
 - Grants
 - Student loan reimbursement programs
 - Allow people to retake the exam a second time for free
 - Free/Low cost continuing education units
2. Stakeholders would like BBS to advocate for higher compensation for mental health providers and better reimbursements from insurance companies.
3. Stakeholders say paid internships and practicums are key to creating equal access to the profession, as currently those without financial support cannot complete the required 3,000 hours of experience while working for free.
4. Stakeholders recommend mentorship and apprenticeship programs as a way to support people new to the field, help licensees develop new colleagues, and provide needed guidance.
5. Stakeholders suggest BBS conduct direct outreach to schools, like giving presentations at high schools or community colleges and conveying opportunities and information to colleges and universities.
6. Stakeholders recommend BBS reform licensing in some of the following ways:
 - Consider offering multiple license levels, similar to what is done in Minnesota

- Create a new tier of certification/licensure that requires less education and can provide support under a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) or Licensed Clinical Social Worker (CSW)
- Once someone meets the requirements for one license, take this into consideration if they apply for a second license
- Provide alternative pathways to licensure for those who fail the clinical exam
- Simplify licensure instructions for applicants
- Streamline the application process
- Provide a route for school counselors to transition to into MFT/Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPC)/CSW with ease
- Create standardized requirements for all license types
- Replace the master's degree requirement with an apprenticeship program
- Allow new graduates to begin work at private practices

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

Stakeholder Comment Trends – Other Actions to Further Equal Access



Appendix A – Acronym List

Acronym	Definition
APCC	Associate Professional Clinical Counselor
BBS	Board of Behavioral Sciences
CAMFT	California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists
CSW	Licensed Clinical Social Worker
DCA	Department of Consumer Affairs
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
LPC or LPCC	Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor
MFT	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
NASW-CA	National Association of Social Workers - California

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 BBS

Relationship with BBS	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Leadership	4	100%
Management	7	100%
Staff	28	53%
Board Member	16	100%
Licensee	2,162	1
Preparing to Become Licensee	420	1
Consumer	71	1
Government Agency	34	1
Professional Association/Group	84	1
Educational/School Association/Group	77	1
Other ²	32	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:

- Behavioral Health Treatment Supervisor, County
- California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT) Board Member
- Chapter Hospitality Board Member
- Chief Operating Officer of Mental Health Practice
- Counselor Educator
- Creator of MFT California and Coach to Graduate Students
- Decline to State
- Department of Mental Health Employee and Clinical Supervisor
- Director of Graduate Program for Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT) and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (LPCC)
- Director of Training Program for MFTs
- Former CAMFT Chapter President
- Graduate Student (2)

- Out-of-State Licensee
- Practicing LPCC Not Licensed by BBS
- Professor
- Retired Licensee (7)
- Stakeholder (2)
- Student (2)
- Subject Matter Expert (3)
- Teacher of MSW Students
- Unlicensed Registered Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (APCC)

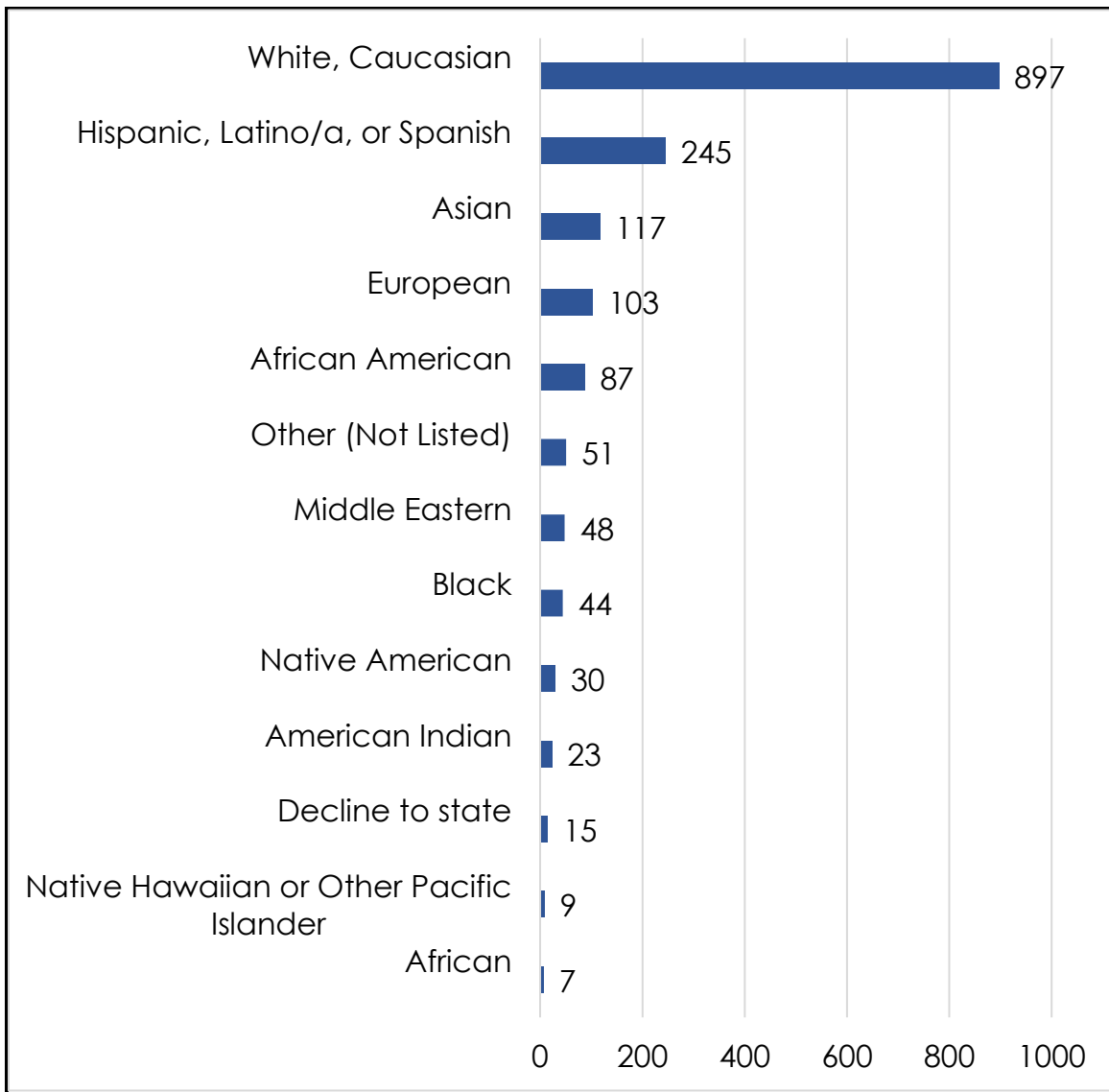
Appendix C – Demographic Data

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

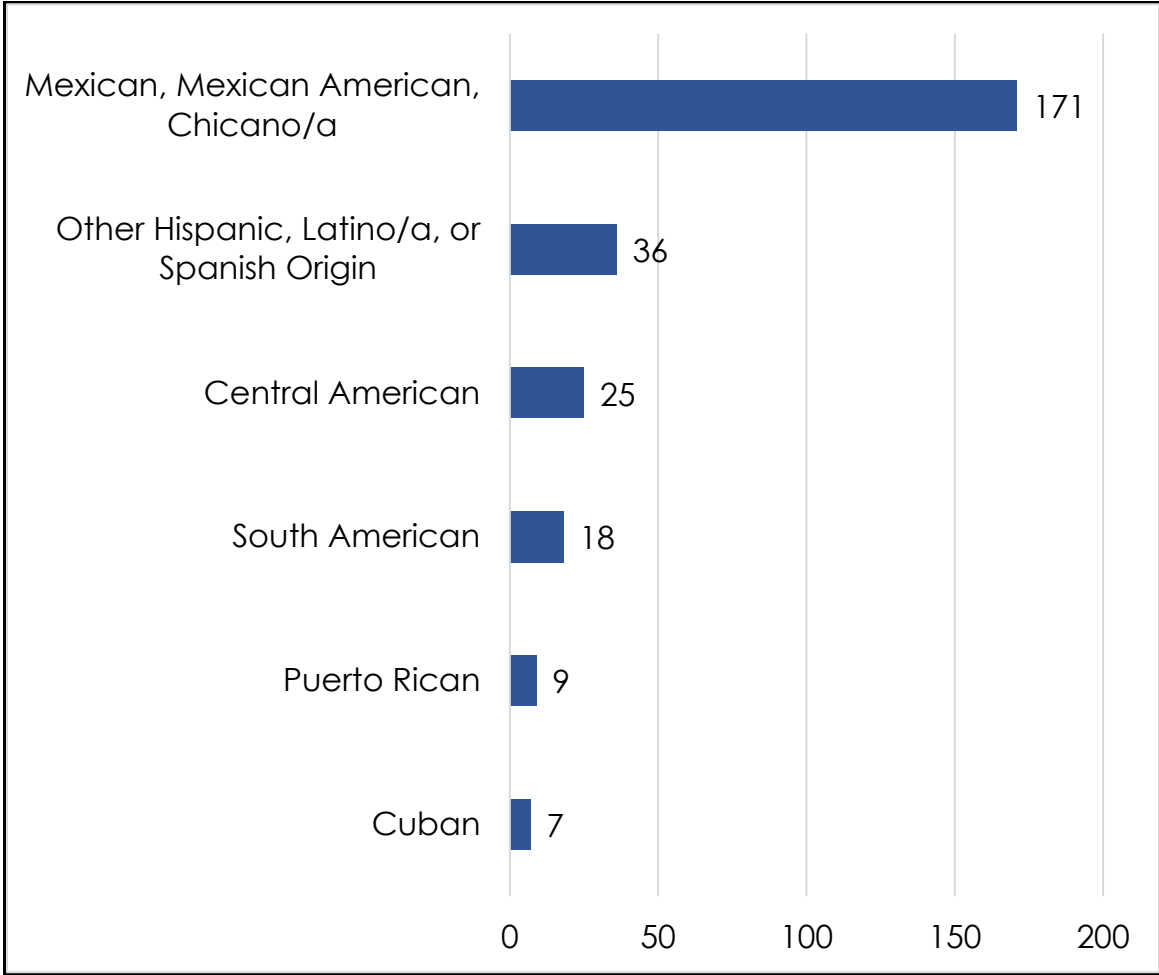
Race

Races Stakeholders Identified With.

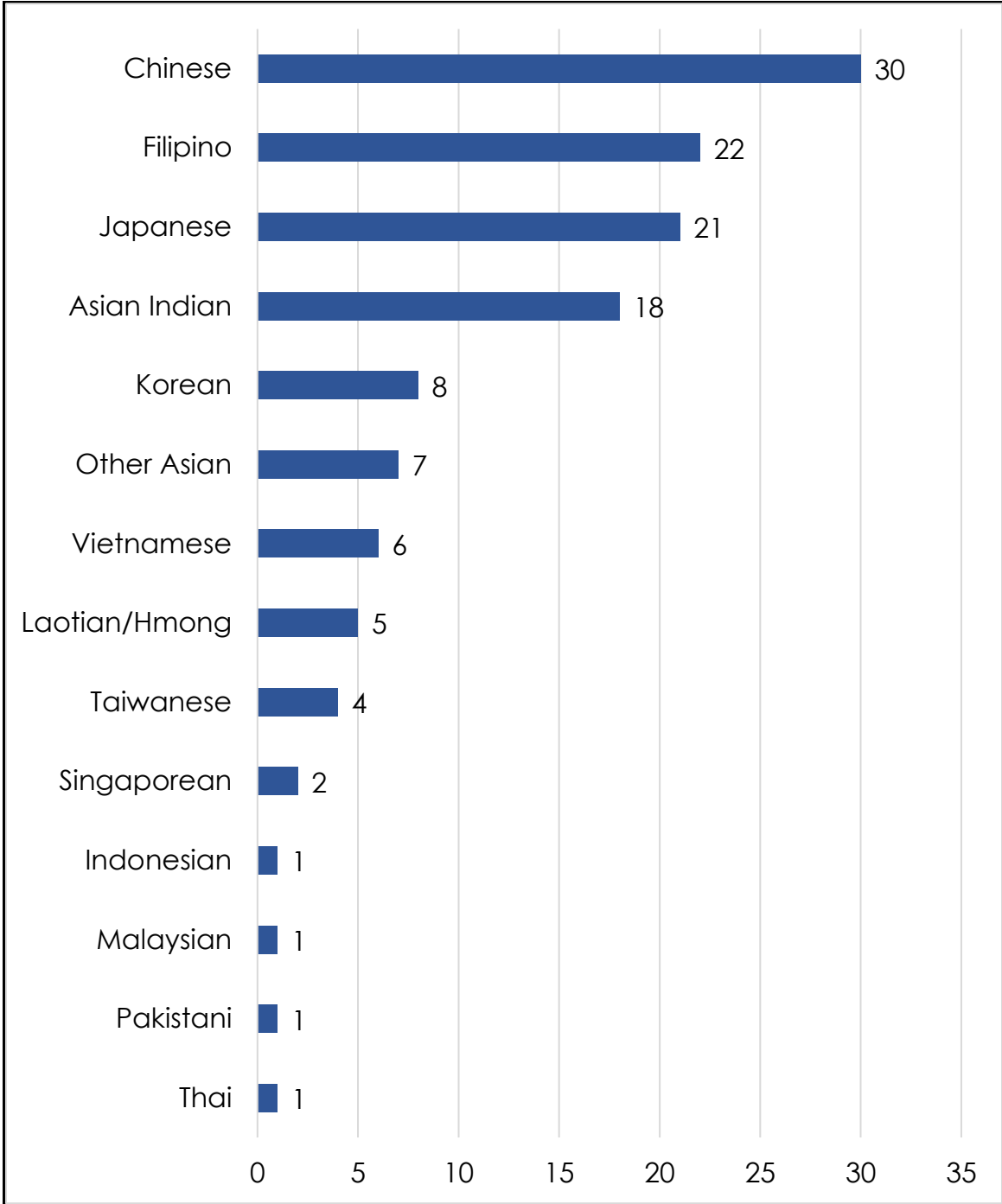
* Multiple options could be selected, so results may not total 100%.



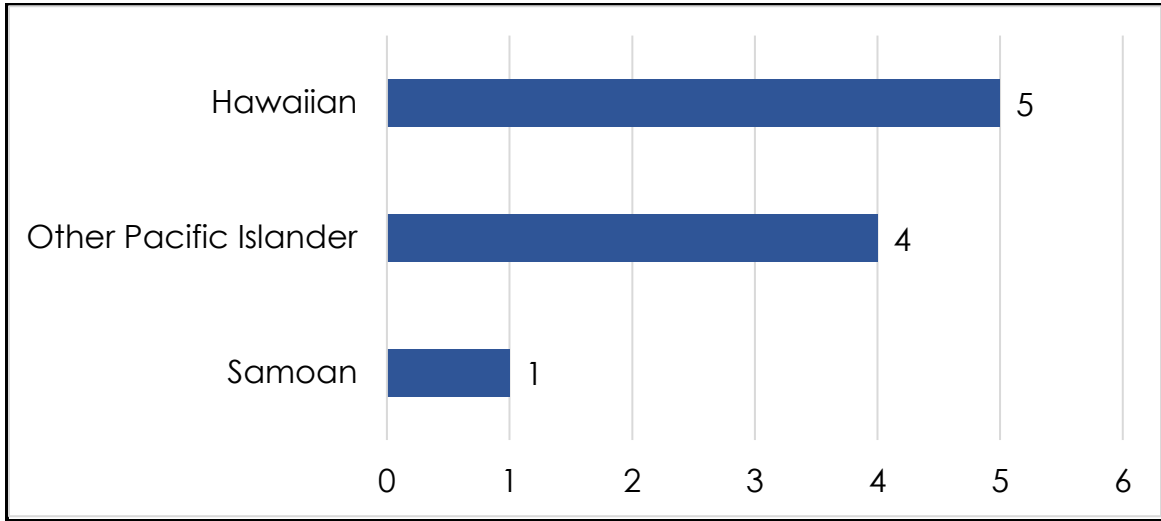
Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish Stakeholders Identified With



Asian Stakeholders Identified With

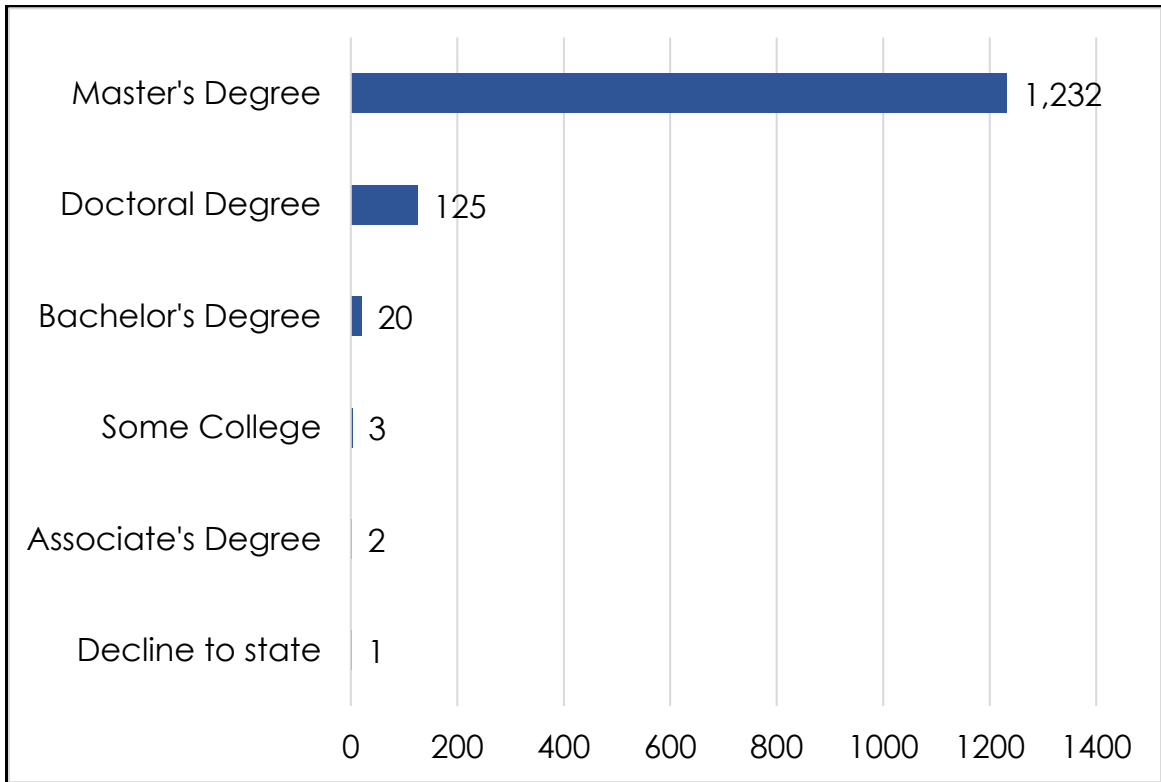


Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Stakeholders Identify With



Education

External Stakeholders' Highest Level of Education



Languages

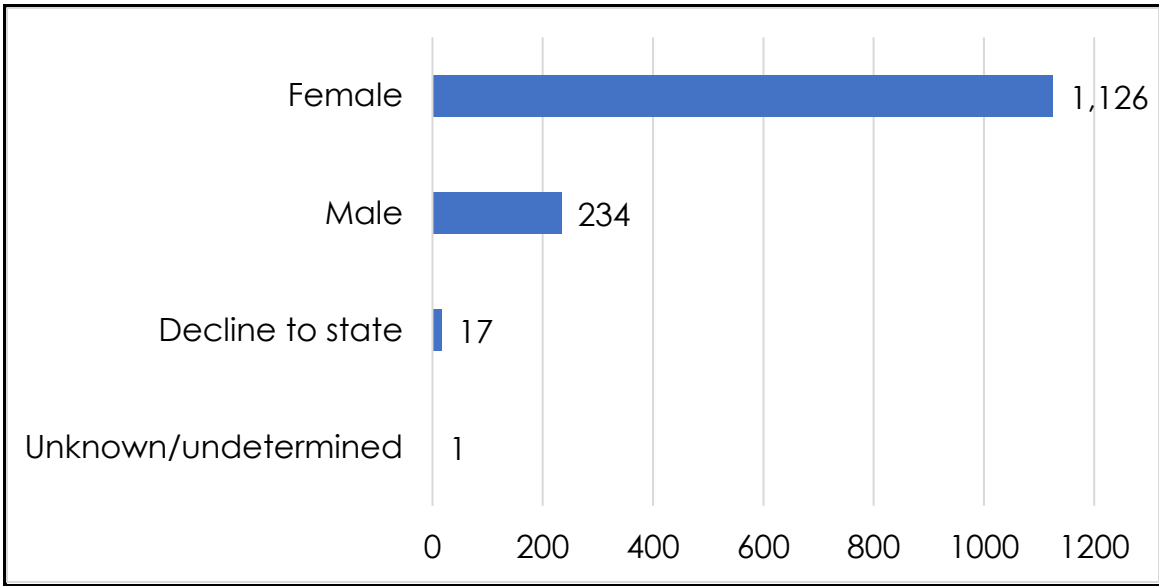
Languages External Stakeholders Speak Fluently (Chart on Following Page)

- * 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.



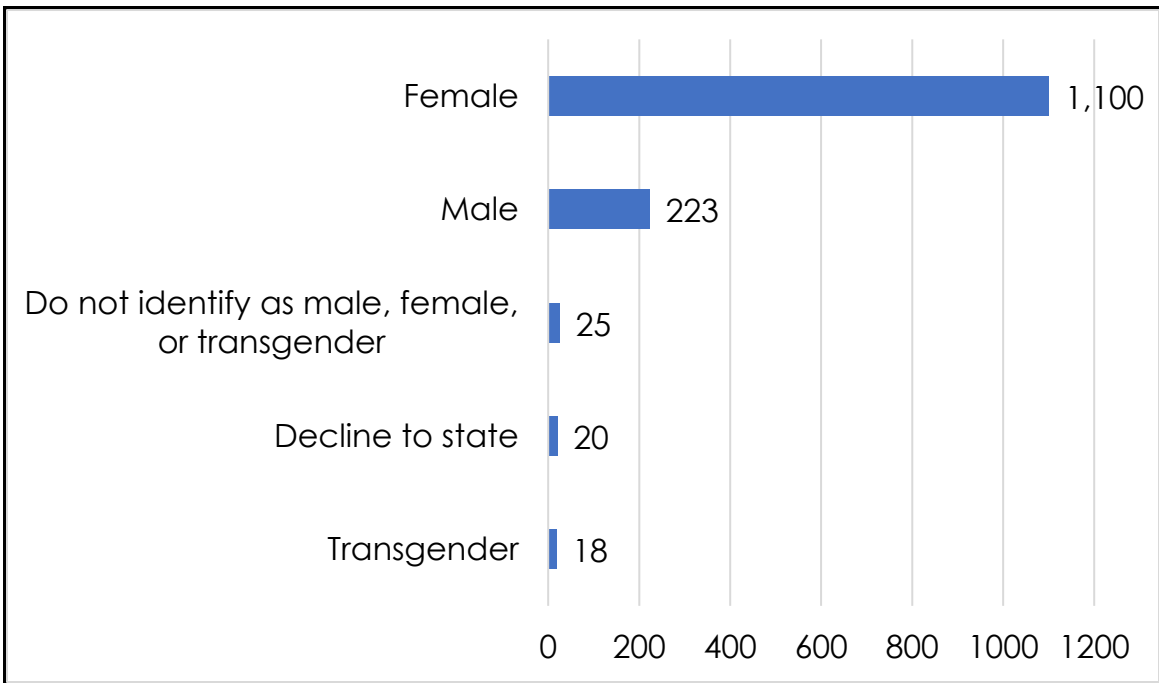
Birth Sex

Stakeholders' Assigned Sex at Birth



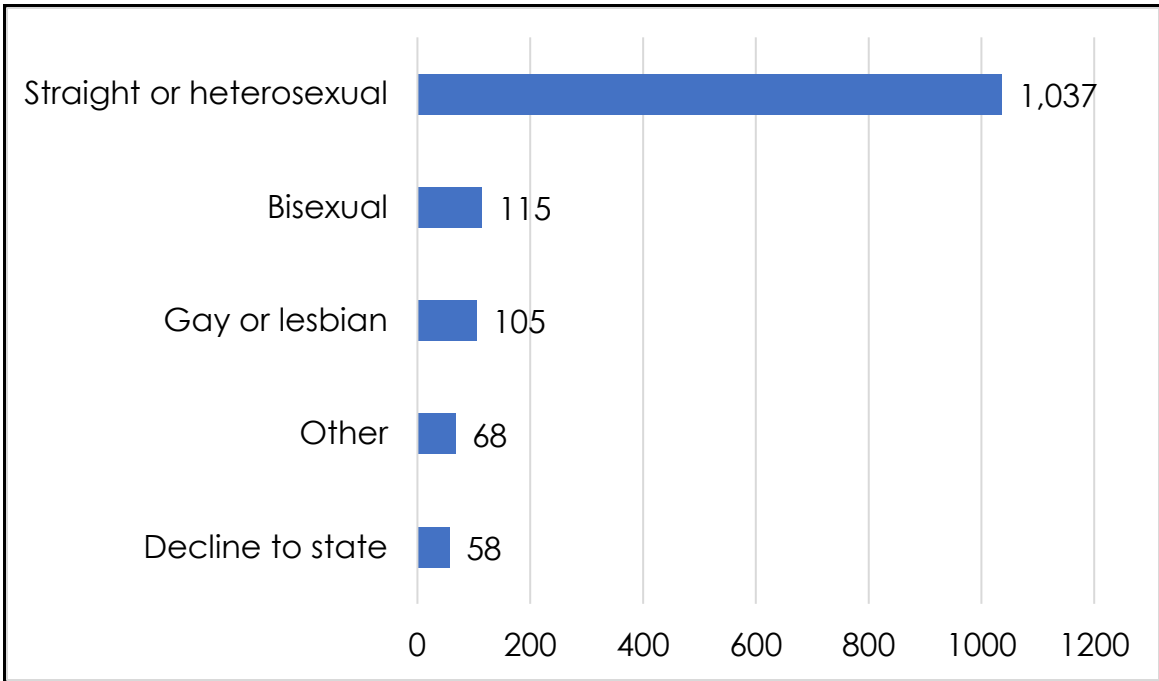
Current Gender

How External Stakeholders Describe Themselves



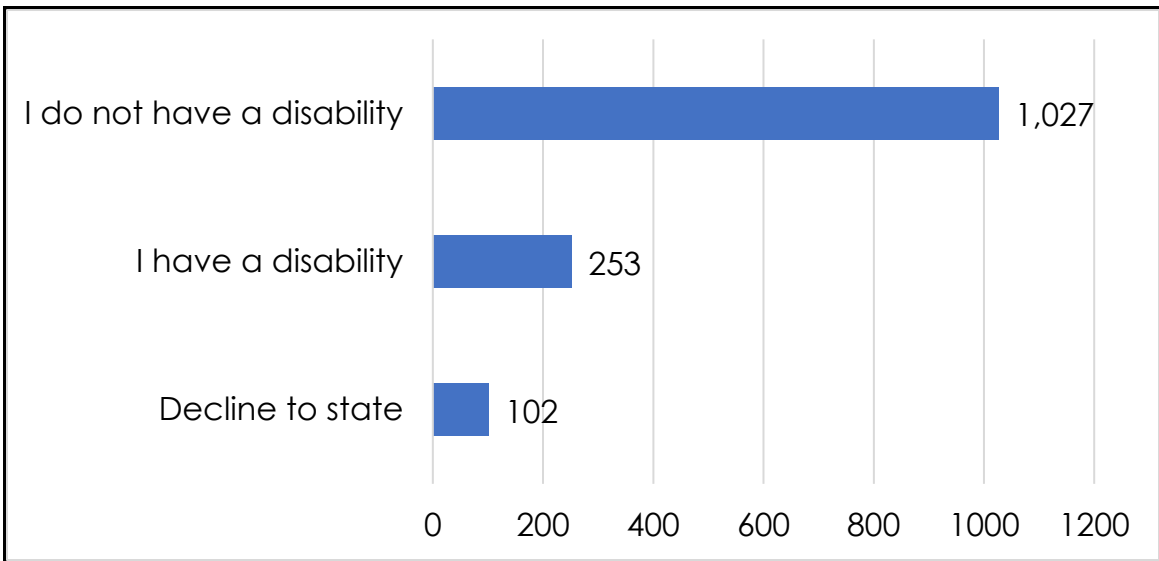
Orientation

External Stakeholders' Orientation



Disability Status

External Stakeholders' Disability Status





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Board of Behavioral Sciences

Board of Behavioral Sciences DEI Supplemental Session

Objectives Worksheet

Planning Session:

February 29, 2024



Instructions

As we get ready for the Diversion, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Supplemental Session, take a moment to think about what you would like to see the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) 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
2. Examination
3. Enforcement
4. Legislation and Regulation
5. Organizational Effectiveness
6. Outreach and Education

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

Establish licensing standards to protect consumers and allow reasonable and timely access to the profession.

After reading the DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the BBS should address in relation to the goal area of Licensing?

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

Goal 2: Examinations

Administer fair, valid, comprehensive, and relevant licensing examinations.

After reading the DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the BBS 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: Enforcement

Protect the health and safety of consumers through the enforcement of laws.

After reading the DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the BBS 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 4: Legislation and Regulation

Ensure the statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures strengthen the Board's mandates and mission.

After reading the DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the BBS should address in relation to the goal area of Legislation and Regulation?

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

Goal 5: Organizational Effectiveness

Build an excellent organization through proper Board governance, effective leadership, and responsible management.

After reading the DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the BBS 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.

Goal 6: Outreach and Education

Engage stakeholders through continuous communication about the practice and regulation of the professions and mental health care.

After reading the DEI Supplemental Environmental Scan report, is there anything you believe the BBS should address in relation to the goal area of Outreach and Education?

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



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