



DENTAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

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DENTAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA DENTAL ASSISTING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES August 14, 2025

Pursuant to Government Code section 11122.5, subdivision (a), the Dental Assisting Council (Council) of the Dental Board of California (Board) met in-person with additional public participation available by teleconference/WebEx Events on Thursday, August 14, 2025, with the following location available for Council and public member participation:

Department of Consumer Affairs
1625 N. Market Blvd., Hearing Room #102
Sacramento, CA 95834

Members Present:

De'Andra Epps-Robbins, RDA, Chair
Jeri Fowler, RDAEF, OA, Vice Chair
Jessica Gerlach, RDA, OA
Lilia Larin, DDS
Cara Miyasaki, RDA, RDHEF, MS
Rosalinda Olague, RDA, PhD(c)
Carie Smith, RDAEF, OA

Staff Present:

Christy Bell, Interim Executive Officer
Ryan Blonien, Enforcement Chief
Jodi Ortiz, Chief of Licensing and Examination Division
Paige Ragali, Chief of Administration and Compliance
Tina Vallery, Chief of License and Program Compliance and Dental Assisting
Jessica Olney, Anesthesia Unit Manager
Wilbert Rumbaoa, Administrative Services Unit Manager
Brant Nelson, Legislative and Regulatory Specialist
Paul Corbin, Investigator
Jerry Fuhrman, Investigator
Ashley Grey, Discipline Coordinator
Mirela Taran, Administrative Analyst
Joseph Tippins, Investigator
Judie Bucciarelli, Staff Services Manager I, Specialist (Retired Annuitant), Board and Bureau Relations, Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA)
Ann Fisher, Facilitator and Strategic Planner, Strategic Organizational Leadership and Individual Development (SOLID), DCA
Kristy Schieldge, Regulations Counsel, Attorney IV, Legal Affairs Division, DCA
Cesar Victoria, Television Specialist, Office of Public Affairs, DCA

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Tara Welch, Board Counsel, Attorney IV, Legal Affairs Division, DCA

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order/Roll Call/Establishment of a Quorum

Council Chair, Ms. De'Andra Epps-Robbins, called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.; seven members of the Council were present, and a quorum was established.

Agenda Item 2: Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 3: Discussion and Possible Action on May 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion/Second/Call the Question (M/S/C) (Larin/Fowler) to approve the May 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment before the Council acted on the motion. There were no public comments made on the motion.

Chair Epps-Robbins called for the vote on the motion. Ms. Mirela Taran took a roll call vote on the motion.

Ayes: Epps-Robbins, Fowler, Gerlach, Larin, Miyasaki, Olague, Smith.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.

Absent: None.

Recusals: None.

The motion passed and the Minutes were approved.

Agenda Item 4: Interim Executive Officer Report

Christy Bell reported that the return to office order that was set to go into effect July 1, 2025, has been delayed to July 1, 2026, and Board staff are continuing their current telework schedules. She stated the Board currently has five vacant positions for which Board staff are actively recruiting to fill. Additionally, as discussed at previous meetings, the Board is currently undergoing the process to prepare for a new strategic plan. The external stakeholder survey closed on June 23, 2025, totaling 996 responses. Board members and Board management were interviewed, and a survey went out to all staff; these responses totaled 56. Ms. Bell noted that SOLID is currently drafting the environmental scan, which consists of summaries of individual responses to the questions. The Board members should expect to receive this report mid-October before the November 5, 2025 strategic planning session. In September, SOLID will work with Board management in a pre-strategic planning session to review the environmental scan and do some of the pre-work before the November Board meeting. Ms. Bell added that two working groups will be created and the Council Chair will assign the members. One working group will review the statutes and regulations related to the duties of registered dental assistants (RDAs) and the other working group will review the RDAEF statutes and regulations.

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Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item. There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 5: Update on Dental Assisting Examination Statistics

Tina Vallery provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials. Ms. Vallery pointed out that Board staff have included new information in the memorandum in response to a request by Council Member Lilia Larin at the last Council meeting. She voiced that Council Member Larin requested to see the number of RDA applications the Board receives by available pathway. Therefore, Board staff have provided the responsive data on page 27 of the meeting materials that shows the number of applications received each year through the Education, Work Experience, and Mixed Education and Experience pathways in the years 2020-2024.

Council Member Larin thanked Ms. Vallery for that new information and noted that it would also be informative to find out the pass rate for the RDA exam on each of these pathways. Ms. Vallery responded that the Board does have the statistics by pathway on its website, on the *Educators* tab; the Board typically posts, at least for each quarter, each school that had students test and Work Experience and Mixed Education pathway statistics.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item. There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 6: Update on Dental Assisting Licensing Statistics

Ms. Vallery provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Council Member Cara Miyasaki asked for the normal turn turnaround rate for applications once they are received. Ms. Vallery responded that currently all of her staff process applications within 24 to 48 hours. She added that they do have cashiering time, which typically is about a week, and then once it goes to the analysts for processing, it is typically within 24 to 48 hours that they are processed.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item. There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 7: Update and Discussion on Registered Dental Assistant and Registered Dental Assistant in Extended Functions Educational Programs and Courses Application Approvals and Re-Evaluations

Ms. Vallery provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item. The Council received public comment.

Shari Becker, representing the California Association of Dental Assisting Teachers, noted the meeting memo indicated the number of [Board approval] withdrawals was really high due to a failure [by the course] to meet the timing for their re-evaluation and application. She asked that for those programs that withdrew because of a timing issue, should the timing be reassessed or looked at for the turnaround time to be a little more gracious to those programs. Regarding the statistic of the approvals withdrawn, especially for the pit and fissure sealant courses being so high with the total of 44, she wondered that if they withdrew their application, did they then want to turn around and need to reapply as a new provider for those courses.

Ms. Vallery responded that regarding the time frames, the Board gives a standard amount of time for response, but anybody who has requested an extension, the Board has granted extensions as long as it is for a legitimate reason. She added that for any that have been withdrawn, Board staff have heard nothing from them. Regarding the pit and fissure sealant courses, she indicated that if they were withdrawn and they were interested in reapplying, they can definitely do that; some courses had, and some had not.

Chair Epps-Robbins asked what the timeline is like on the extension. Ms. Vallery responded that the Board does not have a specific timeline; as long as it is a reasonable request, Board staff have granted them.

Chair Epps-Robbins asked whether this is a resubmission process and if so, if they were to resubmit, how many times could they go back and forth on this issue to get their programs up to par in order to pass this portion of not being withdrawn. Ms. Vallery responded that they have two opportunities to respond.

Agenda Item 8.: Update and Discussion on Legislative Proposal to Amend Business and Professions Code (BPC) Sections 1741, 1750, 1750.2, 1750.4, 1752.1, 1752.6, 1753, 1753.51, 1754.5, 1755, and 1777, and Add Sections 1752.1, 1754.5, 1755, and 1778 Relating to Board Approval of Dental Assistant Educational Programs and Courses

Council Vice Chair Jeri Fowler and Council Member Miyasaki provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item. The Council received public comment.

Melodi Randolph, representing the Dental Assisting Alliance, voiced that the Alliance is made out of three different organizations, which include the California Association of Dental Assisting Teachers, the Extended Functions Association, and the California Dental Assistants Association. She conveyed that the Alliance is deeply concerned by this proposal as they have identified numerous significant issues that it presents. She noted that they are particularly surprised that the only con acknowledged by the Board on page 53 of the meeting materials is that providers who are not accredited or

approved by one of the listed entities would need to apply for and receive approval. Ms. Randolph stated that this alone could pose a significant or substantial barrier to dental assisting education and training. However, there are many other critical concerns not addressed, including an elimination of any mandatory hands-on training and inconsistencies among the proposed accrediting and approval agencies. She noted that most of the agencies that are listed there as options have nothing to do with dentistry and have no dental specific curriculum and educational requirements. Therefore, that would lead to varied and potentially inadequate programs and courses. Ms. Randolph stated these issues are likely to result in continued and escalating staff shortages, closure of dental assisting programs, and reduced protections for patients. Ultimately, they strongly believe this proposal would have a detrimental effect on the vast majority of dental practices across California. Fragmentation in the education and training of dental assistants, the largest segment of the dental workforce, would increase, compromising both workforce readiness and public safety. She noted that they do believe that the answer to this is increasing fees so that the Board can do what they are already mandated to do.

Tooka Zokaie, representing the California Dental Association (CDA), communicated that CDA has some concerns primarily rooted in ensuring that the dental assisting education and certification process remains accessible and affordable, especially with severe workforce shortages. She noted that as they want to maintain patient safety and the process, they are concerned about some of the proposals and how they can create new barriers. They already know that many infection control courses hold accreditations recognized under the proposal and are embedded within full RDA educational programs. Therefore, this would make them inaccessible as standalone options for unlicensed dental assistants due to cost, time, commitment, and admission requirements. Ms. Zokaie conveyed that CDA encourages the Board to recognize Dental Board permitted continuing education providers alongside the American Dental Association's Continuing Education Recognition Program (CERP) and Academy of General Dentistry's Program Approval for Continuing Education (PACE) accredited entities to maintain affordable local training options as it looks at the proposal. She expressed that they also recommend that if the Board considers CERP and PACE oversight acceptable, to urge the Council to evaluate how Board permitted course providers could also be similarly recognized. Ms. Zokaie voiced that they recommend a couple acceptance of external accreditation with retention of existing statutory curriculum requirements for certified dental assisting courses. But in light of recent fee increases, they also urge the Board to assess the financial and operational impacts of shifting oversight, especially since CDA does not want to see closure of existing programs. They understand that the workload will significantly decrease since many programs are already externally accredited.

Ms. Becker voiced that she is a currently working chairside dental assistant and also currently serving as President of the California Association of Dental Assisting Teachers. She noted that as a stakeholder, they look forward to the working group meetings to give input and insight and affirmed that she agrees with the Alliance

comments from Ms. Randolph. Ms. Becker verbalized that it is hard to predict the short and the long-term results of this proposal and what the impact will be for the overall profession. She added that regarding the recommendation for possibly eliminating hours on some required courses, she would suggest that there be a minimum hour requirement as opposed to a strictly defined hour requirement.

Ms. Vallery expressed that this legislative proposal is merely a first draft and is intended to spark conversation with the dental assisting community. For the stakeholder meetings, she has tried to get the word out that the Board is encouraging participation from all aspects of dentistry, including dental hygienists, dentists, and dental assistants as they understand this is a new way of doing business. She reiterated that Board staff do not have the education to approve dental assisting courses. Therefore, the Board needs to shift this to people who have the expertise in this area. Ms. Vallery added that Board staff are open to ideas, and she is encouraged and hopeful that at these stakeholder meetings there will be participation and ideas that come forward. She is looking at this as the opportunity to bring dental assisting into this century and get it operating in a way to help address the workforce shortages and access to care issues.

Joan Greenfield, representing the California Extended Functions Association, voiced that they agree with everything that has been said by Ms. Randolph and Ms. Becker, and they look forward to these stakeholder meetings so that they can start looking at other options. She noted that she agrees that going to many of these other outside agencies is not a good option.

Ariane Terlet, previous Board member and also the Dental Director for a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) as well as her own private practice, voiced that she is wanting that at the stakeholder meetings, it is seriously being considered the unintended consequences of these decisions and how to make corrections so that does not happen. Regarding Ms. Vallery's comment about whether the Board ever had the skill set to do the exams, Ms. Terlet noted that they did and added that when California had its own exam and exam unit, dental assisting was in there and it was very robust. However, when the exam went to the Western Regional Examining Board (WREB), everyone forgot about dental assisting. Ms. Terlet conveyed that she believes that these are the end results of not supporting the internal dental exam process; although she supports changes, they have to work for everybody.

Council Member Miyasaki asked whether the Council Members would be comfortable with having a candidate take a dental assisting national board exam, no hands-on training for radiation safety, infection control, coronal polishing, and fluoride, and being able to be certified in that, which was contemplated in the proposal.

In response to Council Member Fowler's inquiry on subsequent Council review of the proposal following stakeholder meetings, Ms. Bell stated the work that will be done leading up to the Council November meeting is intended to bring information and the

proposal back to the Council for discussion and comment. As much time as needed will be taken to address the concerns so the Council can make an informed decision.

Council Member Rosalinda Olague expressed that she would like to thoroughly go through all the stakeholders and the discovery. She stated that before the Council has conversation today, they take that information, take the time to reflect on it, and come into November's Council meeting and have a robust conversation as a Council. She supported Ms. Vallery's comment on reimagining the dental assisting profession.

Chair Epps-Robbins voiced that this is something that the Council has to brainstorm, put their minds together collectively, and collaborate on their decisions of what they discuss and bring back to stakeholders. She agreed dental assisting needs to be revamped and noted the strong concerns from the public and Council Members that this is something that needs to be addressed.

Council Member Miyasaki commented that one of the things that was coming up in a discussion in the working group meeting was that the staff were re-evaluating and auditing, for example pit and fissure sealant courses, and a lot of the courses were not following the criteria and were being either shut down or they withdrew their applications. She stated that one of the things in the conversations with Board staff is that these people that have been taking these courses at programs that just got shut down, they have been able to get their RDA license. She wonders whether it is okay to give that responsibility to some other agency, or maybe the way that they are being evaluated is not the right way and they were actually doing everything that they needed to do for their applicants to pass the RDA. Council Member Miyasaki conveyed that is something to think about and consider as well.

Agenda Item 8.a.: Presentation on Dental Assistant Examinations – *Dental Assisting National Board*

Ms. Katherine Landsberg, Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) Government Relations Director, and Dr. Johnna Gueorguieva, Senior Psychometrician and Director of Assessments, provided a presentation on DANB.

Council Member Larin asked what the pass rate is for the Certified Dental Assistant exam. Ms. Landsberg responded the Certified Dental Assistant exam is made up of three components. Therefore, she is not able to provide the pass rate for the certification because if someone takes one of the components, DANB does not know if their intention is to earn the dental assistant certification or merely take that exam because it is required in their state.

Council Member Larin asked for clarification whether there are no hands-on exam. Ms. Landsberg responded that the exams are not hands-on exams and are written multiple choice tests. She added that the content is developed based on information about what dental assistants are actually performing in their clinical settings.

Council Member Larin asked for clarification whether there are no prerequisites for any of the exams and asked how that would fit into California's requirement for hands-on training versus educational programs. Ms. Vallery responded that DANB was asked to present because the certifications and exams are something to talk about in consideration of accepting DANB examinations as an option. The DANB examinations are included in the legislative proposal as a pathway to licensure. Currently, the Board does not [accept] DANB radiation health and safety or infection control examinations. However, based on the information that the Board has received, Board staff believe it is definitely something to start considering. Ms. Vallery indicated that it would be up to the Council and the Board to decide if a written exam is enough for California.

Council Member Larin asked whether the Board would still require the educational background training or the hands-on. Ms. Vallery responded that it is being proposed that candidates could do either – they could take a course, which is what the Board currently requires, or they could take the DANB exam. She added that it would be what DANB requires; at this time, DANB has no [educational] prerequisites.

Council Member Jessica Gerlach asked what the renewal process for renewing the license of the DANB is. Ms. Landsberg responded that the certificates earned are not a license and added that each of those four exams leads to a certificate of knowledge-based competence, which does not expire. The only expiration associated with it is if they want to use the results of those exams towards a certification, then they have to pass all the exams that are required for that certification within a 5-year period. With regard to what California would accept, Ms. Landsberg voiced that those certificates do not have any renewal associated with them.

Council Member Gerlach asked whether once they receive all five certifications they are a certified dental assistant after that. Ms. Landsberg responded that in order to be a certified dental assistant, they have to pass the Radiation Health and Safety (RHS) exam, the Infection Control Exam (ICE), and the General Chairside Assisting (GC) exam. She stated that the GC exam does have eligibility prerequisites associated with it.

Council Member Gerlach asked if the DANB gets adopted in California, whether assistants would be certified dental assistants instead of RDAs. Ms. Vallery responded that what is in current law is anyone who currently holds a dental assistant certification from DANB can apply for licensure as an RDA. The registered dental assistant applicant would use their DANB dental assistant certification as their pathway, but the applicant would then have to show proof of graduating from a course in California for coronal polishing, radiation safety, infection control, and pit and fissure sealants. Even though the applicant has already taken the RHS exam and ICE from DANB, the Board does not currently accept completion of those exams. Therefore, the applicant has to then pay to take another course in California, and the Board would accept those. Ms. Vallery expressed that Board staff is proposing to accept these component exams. She added

that if the applicant has already taken the DANB component exams, the Board would accept those as [completion of the course] requirements to get licensed as an RDA.

Tara Welch inquired whether DANB has any data on how the exam candidates prepare for the exams. She wondered if a large percentage of the DANB exam candidates utilize hands-on training to prepare for the exams or if the candidates are learning through reading. Ms. Landsberg responded that because none of those exams have prerequisites, DANB does not ask the exam candidates for that information on the exam application. She noted that in some states, the radiography requirements require a course and an exam. Therefore, it can be assumed the candidate took that course and then took the exam. In those states, that requirement helps DANB understand what was the preparation to take the DANB exam.

Dr. Gueorguieva added that it has not been required that the candidates provide what education they may have taken in advance of taking the RHS exam. If the candidate applied for the dental assistant certification, then DANB would know if the candidate attended a Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) program, and the candidate may have also provided if they attended a non-CODA dental assisting program. She has some data on that she can share.

Council Member Carie Smith voiced that it sounds to her like they would have to double do all of these courses to get the RDA license. If they went through what DANB needed to get the dental assistant certification, California is still saying that they have to take infection control, radiation safety, coronal polishing, and sealants prior to getting the RDA license.

Ms. Vallery responded that Board staff proposed and got in the Board's Sunset bill acceptance of the DANB certified dental assistant pathway and added that anyone who has the dental assistant certification has already taken DANB's RHS exam and ICE. She confirmed the RDA license applicant would have to take additional courses. Ms. Vallery conveyed that Board staff is proposing to resolve this issue so the RDA license candidate who completed DANB's exams could use those exams to satisfy the course requirements. She added that Board staff is also hoping that this proposal would open options and accessibility to people who are in rural areas who cannot get to these courses because they are far away from their locations.

Council Member Olague stated that as a PDS dental health assistant, she has the opportunity to work with dental assistants in California and in 24 other states. From that perspective, she has insight on how DANB exams can be leveraged in California. Right now, it is double dipping, and license candidates have to take two exams. But for the future of dental assisting in California, the proposal would recognize DANB as the exam to satisfy stand-alone course requirements, which would help with access to care. So an on-the-job trained dental assistant could use either the in-person stand-alone courses or DANB exams for RDA licensure.

Chair Epps-Robbins asked for an explanation of the pathways for the accredited courses. Ms. Landsberg responded that DANB does not offer courses and that there are exam preparation courses offered through the DALE Foundation. She noted that the DANB exams are standardized tests that would validate the candidate's knowledge and give candidates the option of taking whatever course is available to them or choosing their own preparation method.

Chair Epps-Robbins asked how those courses are being validated for them to take this exam. Ms. Landsberg responded that if they get a passing score on the exam, then their knowledge is validated, and they demonstrate that they have the minimum required knowledge to perform those functions that are tested on the exam.

Ms. Vallery added that the Board staff proposal is to accept DANB examinations, and there is no course requirement in relation to the DANB examinations. She noted that there are other states that have course requirements to take the tests, but DANB does not. If the DANB exams are accepted in California, there would not be a requirement to take a course prior to the exam. The Board would not have a standard for how they take the examination.

Ms. Welch clarified that the proposal would move Board approval to other accrediting agencies, and the Board would no longer be approving the courses. For example, if an individual took a specific course through a CODA-accredited program, the individual could use successful completion of that course to apply for the RDA license or whatever permit or additional duty the individual is seeking. The proposal is not intended to require the individual to take a course, then take the DANB exam; rather, the proposal would allow the individual to take a course or complete the DANB exam.

Council Vice Chair Fowler asked for clarification whether a dental assistant in California who took the coronal polishing and sealant course would be able to perform those duties before getting an RDA license. Ms. Vallery responded that coronal polishing is an allowable duty for unlicensed dental assistants; if this proposal went through and DANB examinations are recognized, the dental assistant could do coronal polishing upon passing that DANB examination. However, a dental assistant cannot perform pit and fissure sealants without having an RDA license.

Council Vice Chair Fowler asked whether the 33,000 DANB certifications is for the Certified Dental Assistant, the Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA), or whether that number also includes the stand-alone examinations, like the radiation safety and infection control. Ms. Landsberg responded that number reflects individuals who hold certifications, which have to be renewed every year. That number does not include people who previously earned, but have not maintained, the certification. That number also does not include people who have only completed the stand alone exams.

Council Member Miyasaki asked whether there are state statistics where a course is required before the exam. Ms. Landsberg responded that some states have an either/or

– either take a course or an exam. In some states, as long as the candidate passed the exam, the state does not look into how candidates prepared for the exam; only exam passage is required. In other states, the candidate has to take a course and pass an exam. She can put that information together and provide to the Council.

Council Member Miyasaki asked Members to consider whether a dental assistant could take the coronal polishing exam and start performing coronal polishing without having any infection control training. Council Member Gerlach agreed.

Ms. Welch noted that one of the arguments in favor of changing the infection control requirements last year is that the dental assistants are supervised by the dentist. If there is any concern as to the competency of the dental professional providing the services, the dentist is responsible for that. The Board keeps hearing that it is difficult to get access to courses and get licensure, so Board staff is trying to find appropriate ways to increase those numbers so that there is more dental staff and then that staff is working under the supervising dentist. Ultimately, the dentist needs to ensure that the individual is safe to practice on patients.

Council Member Gerlach asked if she were a new dental assistant, would she be able to take the DANB exam tomorrow and get her X-ray certification or whether there is experience required prior to taking that exam. Ms. Landsberg responded DANB does not have any eligibility prerequisites to take the radiography exam; and the candidate would be able to study and take the test whenever they felt ready.

Ms. Vallery added that currently unlicensed dental assistants can do radiation safety – there is no requirement for them to have a certain number of months in practice before they can take the course. She pointed out that although the intention of the law was for dental assistants to have clinical practice experience in the educational setting, the majority of the students taking those courses are sent back to their dental offices and being supervised by their dentist. She urged the Council and stakeholders to review this issue with open eyes. While Board staff is stating they would like the DANB examination to be an option for California, the dental assistant still would be supervised by a dentist, which is ultimately what the course does.

Council Member Larin asked whether the DANB certification exam is going to replace the RDA eventually. Ms. Vallery responded that the proposal is merely to recognize those four DANB examinations that were presented at this meeting, and license applicants would still be required to apply for the RDA license and pass the Board's examination.

Council Member Miyasaki asked whether they could do the online testing at home. Ms. Landsberg responded that testing can be done at home if the test taker has a space at home that meets the requirements and the internet connection is good enough. If they do not have an acceptable space, they might have to go do it at in their dental office in a room that is more conducive to that or in another place where they might be able to do

it. Dr. Gueorguieva added that if there is an unforeseen disruption in the test, the exam would be stopped and DANB provides another opportunity at a reduced fee to reapply and take that exam. She expressed that DANB keeps note of it, and if they have a second incident, then they may not be allowed to test for a period of time.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item. The Council received public comment.

Ms. Becker wondered how other states are compensating for the lack of hands-on training with the DANB exams and from the perspective of patient and public safety and protection, wondered how the public would feel about somebody taking, for example, the radiation safety exam with no hands-on training. She knows that dentists are responsible for their staff; however, to say that the dentists are directly supervising their staff is a little bit confusing and maybe not as true as some people would consider. Therefore, she wondered how the public would feel about knowing that somebody just took a written exam and is now ready to start taking X-rays, for example, on a patient without any formal hands-on training.

Karen Okicich, DCA, Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES) representative, expressed that if the Council was considering this potentially as an eventual pathway toward the RDA license, their office would need to be involved in assessing these examinations. Whether or not Business and Professions Code (BPC) section 139 is in play here, they do get a little bit nervous anytime there is talk about formal assessments and ensuring validity. Ms. Okicich reminded the Council that the requirement is there and that OPES is here to help the Council in this process as they are beginning these conversations and starting to talk about whether or not to accept these examinations.

Dr. Lori Gagliardi, registered dental hygienist (RDH) and RDA retired educator, expressed that back in the 1970s, individuals had to take a state exam that was issued by the state prior to being able to expose X-rays. Then, they could learn how to take X-rays. She encouraged stakeholders to look closely at the availability of all the DANB exams for minimal competency to employment as a dental assistant or RDA. Dr. Gagliardi noted that when looking at public protection, there is a wide opinion on the minimal requirements for education, experience, and combined pathways that would be needed to ensure minimal competency has been met. The onus then falls on the Board to ensure course providers meet certain requirements for compliance, which based on the data presented today, is not always the case. However, these exams are specific to dental assisting tasks. They are vetted through the numerous processes, updated, and widely accepted. So, the exam pathways put the individual responsible for preparing by education and experience to successfully pass the exam. Dr. Gagliardi voiced that it is difficult to try to pass that exam without some sort of clinical skill to be able to know how to correct faulty radiographs.

Ms. Terlet, Chief Dental Officer for a FQHC, noted that this is for exam purposes and not for course certification. Therefore, it is no different than what was done with WREB for dental licensing or now currently American Board of Dental Examiners (ADEX) is being accepted as the test that everyone has to take. She noted that the courses that get to that point are not part of this, and the testing agency tests these skill sets. Thus, from the perspective of applicants and chief complaints that they cannot get an exam or the exams are far away, this takes that away from the Board. Ms. Terlet stated that many individuals who move to California because they are transferred due to spouses that choose not to go into the dental assisting profession because they have been practicing 10 years and have to jump through so many hoops by retaking all of these courses that they are clinically proficient at. Therefore, she highly encourages using the DANB exams as pathways for people who already know how to do these things and have been practicing and not make them retake and spend thousands of dollars for what they already know.

Agenda Item 9.: Update on Registered Dental Assistant General Written Law and Ethics Examination

Ms. Bell provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item. The Council received public comment.

Ms. Okicich, OPES representative, clarified the number of scorable items has been reduced to 100, and there will still also be 25 pre-test items. She added that this will be in the candidate bulletin, and every candidate moving forward will have that information.

Agenda Item 10: Update, Discussion, and Possible Recommendation to the Board on Pending Legislation

Agenda Item 10.a.: Assembly Bill (AB) 873 (Alanis, 2025) Dentistry: Dental Assistants
Brant Nelson provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Council Member Miyasaki voiced that she noticed in the meeting memo it states the author pulled the bill from the hearing and asked if they give a reason as to why they pulled the bill or if Board staff knows the reasons why the bill was pulled. Mr. Nelson responded that he does not know the reasons why it was pulled and that, at times, that information can be garnered from conversations internally with the committee staff.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item. The Council received public comment.

Ms. Zokaie, CDA representative, noted that the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee (Committee) did indicate that course fees largely need to have their own bill. CDA urged the Council to support a Board position to write a letter to the Committee and make a case that the infection control course fees should be included in AB 873 for proper implementation. While the Committee does recommend

having course fees separate from this cleanup bill for the infection control course completion, CDA does think that there is a good case for at least that course fee to still be in this bill, but the Committee does recommend that other course fees be its own bill. Ms. Zokaie verbalized that CDA is still in communication with the Committee, are open to amendments, and are going to continue to look at infection control course completion. She added that the last language that was in the July 9 version was 60 days for course completion, and CDA is open to discussions on the course completion date, especially as they continue to urge the Board to continue to prioritize the development of an online course. In the meantime, they appreciate assurance that the enforcement of this requirement does not change until the course is available online.

Agenda Item 11: Update, Discussion, and Possible Recommendations to the Board on Proposed Regulations

Agenda Item 11.a.: Status Update on Pending Regulations

Mr. Nelson provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Chair Epps-Robbins requested public comment on this item.

Leslie Canham, participating through WebEx, requested to make public comment but was unable to do so due to technical difficulties.

Agenda Item 12: Adjournment

Chair Epps-Robbins adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.