

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
LAW CLERK BOARD

Public Minutes

June 5, 2026

Law Clerk Board (Board) Members in Attendance

☒ Christell Casey, Chair

☒ Tracy Finnegan

☒ Jack Range

☐ John Meyers

☒ Leone Reinbold

☒ Heather Derenski

☒ Ashely Kulberg

☒ Jaime Cumming

☒ Ling Zhuang

☐ Sarah Propst

☒ Annemarie Weiss

☒ Gary Epperley

☒ Andi Hammond

Staff and others in attendance for some or all the meeting

Zaida Rivera, Steering Committee Chair, Cate Schur, Assistant General Counsel, Bobby Henry, Associate Director of Regulatory Services, Cathy Biestek, Managing Regulatory Counsel and Katherine Skinner, Law Clerk Program Lead were also in attendance.

Public Session

Introductions

The meeting began with introductions, including two new Law Clerk Board (Board) members, Ashley Kulberg and Andi Hammond.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The April 3, 2026, public meeting minutes were approved.

Outreach and Updates

Katherine provided several updates and discussions on current initiatives. As of June 4th, the Supreme Court adopted the proposed amendments to APR 6, which will take effect on September 1, 2026.

Cate delivered an update on the alternative pathways. The intent of this pathway is to provide licensing alternatives for individuals who may face barriers with traditional examinations, including those from lower-income or minority communities. Cate offered an overview of portfolio expectations for law clerks. The portfolio evaluation component is now before the Court and feedback will be accepted through the end of August. Both current and former law clerks may participate in this feedback process. Katherine will distribute the PowerPoint presentation to the Law Clerk Board.



Board Responsibilities and Resources

Leone asked the Board to consider how the alternative pathways may shift the way the Board evaluates examinations, especially if law clerks are no longer required to demonstrate substantive knowledge on the bar exam. During the discussion, Christell asked Leone whether a core curriculum might be needed. Several ideas surfaced, including identifying key topics, key terminology, and expectations for explanations in answers. Another idea was the possibility of a monthly certificate in which tutors attest that they reviewed specific topics with their clerks.

The Board agreed to add this topic to the August meeting agenda, with members preparing ideas in advance.

Trial Practicum

Several law clerks have expressed interest in developing a mock trial as part of their trial practicum course. A group is currently planning this activity but is concerned that a mock trial may not satisfy the regulatory requirements for the practicum. They asked that this question be brought to the Board before moving forward.

Blake Blair, the law clerk representative, attended the meeting to provide additional information. After discussion, the Board agreed that the mock trial is a strong and beneficial idea, provided that each participating clerk has the opportunity to engage fully in the mock trial experience. The Board determined that the monthly examination submission may consist of the materials prepared for and used during the mock trial. The Board also recommended considering the use of a tutor completed rubric to accompany the submission, as tutor comments are required under the practicum guidelines.

Open-Source Material

The Board discussed concerns raised regarding law clerks' use of open-source casebooks and other online materials. She explained that a traditionally published casebook is generally more reliable, and clerks must be able to confirm that the materials are authentic and appropriate for the subject matter.

The Board agreed it would be beneficial for tutors to clearly identify where each material came from. The Board also discussed updating the instruction requiring tutors to list the textbooks, casebooks, and other legal materials used for a course, including their source, consistent with the language noted for revision in the law clerk portal. Katherine will work with WSBA staff on this update.

Rules and Regulations Committee

Katherine discussed the need to review several rules and regulations for potential revisions or additions, including the recently reviewed AI policy. To support this work, five volunteers are needed to meet between Board meetings and develop recommended changes. The expected time commitment is one meeting per month, or as needed, through May 2027. Gary volunteered, and four additional volunteers are still needed.



Fiscal Year 2027 Vice Chair Nomination

The Board discussed the nomination of the Fiscal Year 2027 Vice Chair. Christell Casey explained that the role is intended to provide support to the Chair, stepping in when the Chair is unavailable and, on occasion, representing the Board at a Board of Governors meeting if the Chair cannot attend. The position also allows the Vice Chair to become more involved in decision-making functions and serves as a means of ensuring a smoother leadership transition.

The Board approved the nomination of Vice Chair for the Law Clerk Board.

A motion to define the scope of the Vice Chair role, including whether the Vice Chair is intended to become Chair in the subsequent year, was also approved, with the specific determination to be made at a later date.

The Board then nominated Ashley Kulberg to serve as Vice Chair.

Jurisprudence Book Review

The Board voted to remove the following titles:

“Are Prisons Obsolete?”

“Allow Me to Retort: A Black Guy's Guide to the Constitution”

“The Enduring Constitution: A Bicentennial Perspective”

“Law 101: Everything You Need to Know About American Law”

Executive Session

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The April 3, 2026, confidential meeting minutes were approved.

Requests

The Board approved one request for a leave of absence

The Board approved one jurisprudence book

The Board approved one fourth year proposal

The Board deferred one leave of absence for further review at the August Board meeting



Applications

The Board approved seven applications for enrollment in the Law Clerk Program beginning when the final confirmation letter is sent

The Board deferred two applications to the next Board meeting in August

Evaluations

- The Board conducted three first-year evaluations and approved continuation in the program upon successful completion of all remaining first year coursework and book reports.
- The Board conducted two fourth-year evaluations and approved completion of the program upon successful completion of all remaining fourth-year coursework and book reports

Respectfully Submitted,
Katherine Skinner, Law Clerk Program Lead

