



The licensing exams



The Association of Social Work Boards

Mission

Provide support and services to the social work regulatory community to advance safe, competent, and ethical practices to strengthen public protection.

Accountability

“The Public”

**64 Regulatory State and
Province Boards**

Board of Directors

ASWB

EVERYONE!



Today's Goal

Share an overview of:

1. **accurate** information about the exam development process including anti-bias measures, and
2. ASWB's upstream, solution-focused approach to **collaborating** across the profession on addressing disparate outcomes.

Licensure requirements



Social Work is a Profession

A Profession is a type of job that requires special training or skill, especially one that needs a high level of applied competence of **practice standards**.

A Professional is one engaged in and qualified for a particular profession with **compensation commensurate** with their specialized training, education and practice competence.

Professional Regulation protects the public by **verifying minimum competency**, investigating complaints, and upholding professional compliance with state laws and regulations.

Why measure competency using an exam?

Essential to the
regulatory duty to
“verify minimum
competency”

Objective
component of
licensing decisions

Continuously vetted
threshold of
entry-to-practice
level competence

The ASWB exam is

DEFENSIBLE

The exams meet testing industry standards and can be defended if challenged.

RELIABLE

Under similar circumstances, scores are consistent over time.

VALID

The exam measures what was intended, as defined by the **practice analysis**.

ASWB meets and exceeds
testing industry standards
for creating high-stakes
licensing exams

Psychometric measurement

+

**Social work subject
matter expertise**

How are the exams developed?

Personnel

 Staff: 20 (4 exam development, 16 exam administration)

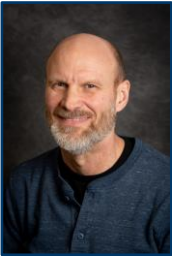
 Vendors: 4

 Item development consultants: 7

 Volunteers: 65

 Item writers: 90

Total people involved in the program:
almost 200



ASWB Examination Committee 2023

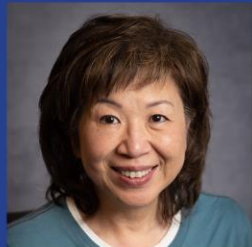
Bachelors exam



Jessica Chatman (IL)



Nikki Barfield (FL)



Nelly Chow (AB)



Christine
Escobar-Sawicki (IL)



Cole Hooley (UT)



Julia López (MO)



Benjamin Rosenberg
(NY)

Masters exam



Stephanie
Washington (TX)



Adolpha Bassett (NC)



Rikki Davlin (ID)



Chaundra Randle (MI)



Jodi Schollardt (AB)



Susanna Sung (MD)



Alejandro Zamora
(ID)

Clinical exam



Marcy Shaarda (CA)



Dianna Cooper-
Bolinsky (IN)



Lauren Henríquez-
Bentiné (NY)



Jean Leong (AB)



Paul Perales (WI)

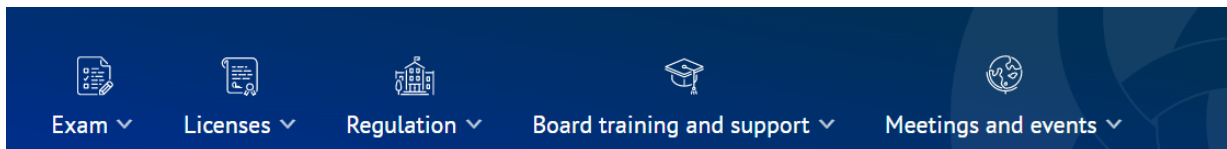


Kirk Royster (NJ)



Senetra Wallace (NC)

Who writes test questions? Your social work colleagues!



Homepage > Exam > Measuring social work competence > Examination Program Yearbook



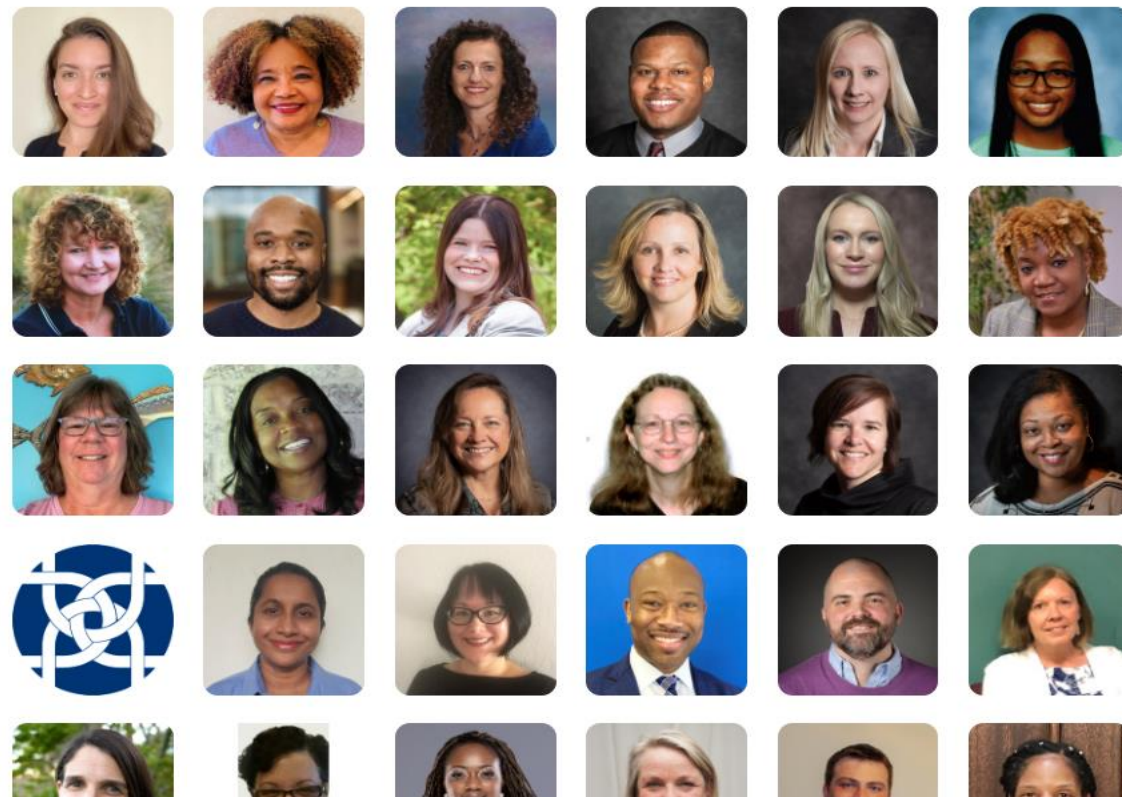
Examination Program Yearbook

The success of the Association of Social Work Boards social work licensing examination program depends on the hard work of a diverse group of volunteers, consultants, and contracted item writers committed to public protection. Together, these social workers ensure that the ASWB examinations remain fair, valid, and reliable.



2022 item writers

The gallery below includes information for all item writers contracted to write for the social work licensing exams in 2022.



About the exam

170 items (questions) • 150 scored, 20 pretest

Four-option multiple choice (three-option questions launched January 2023) • Four-hour time limit

Universal passing score

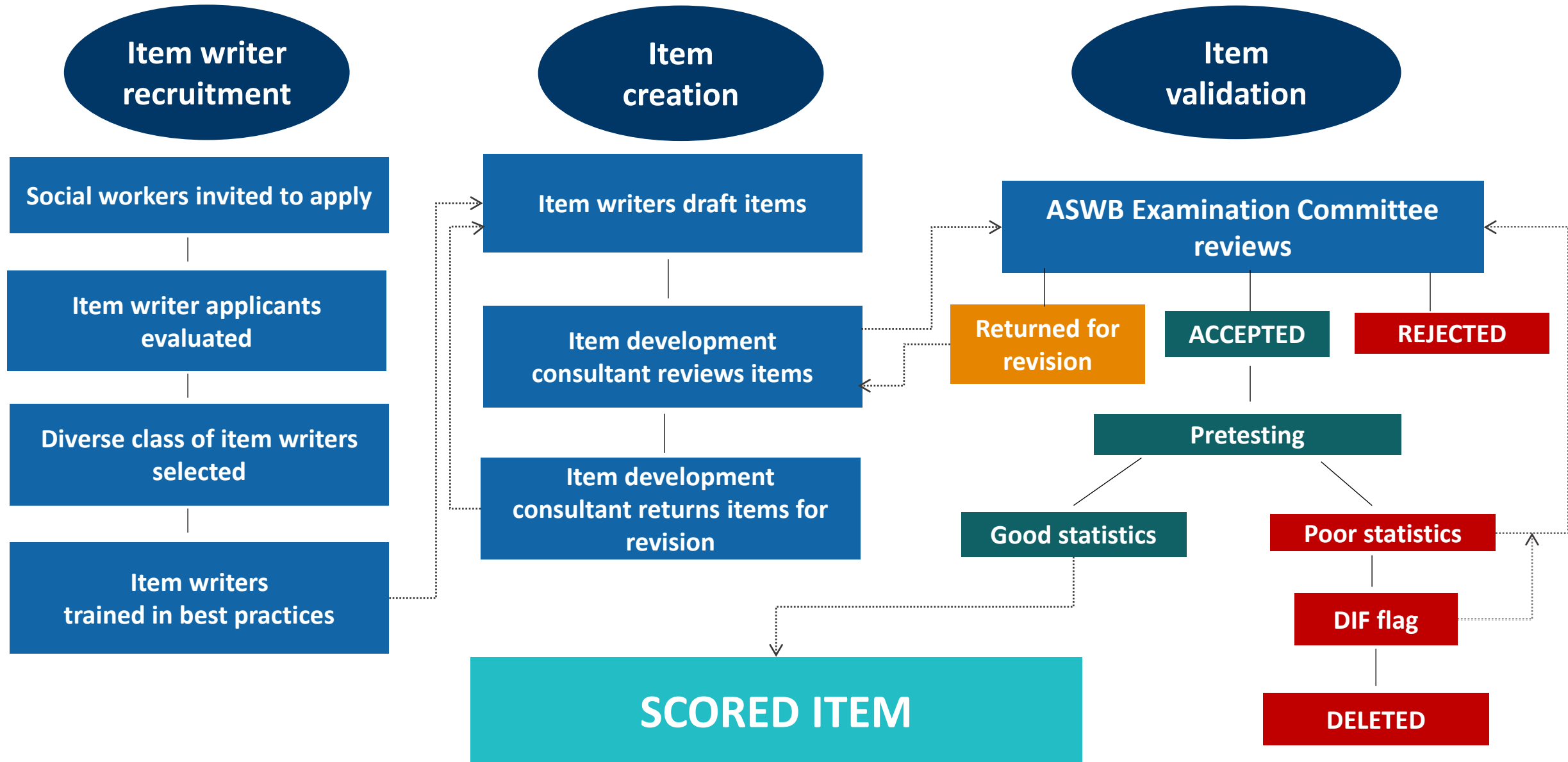
Items randomly administered

Multiple forms online • Rotated quarterly

Computer-delivered at 300+ Pearson VUE centers in the United States and Canada

Standardized administration under equal conditions

ASWB's examination item development process





“What’s the matter?
It’s the same distance!”

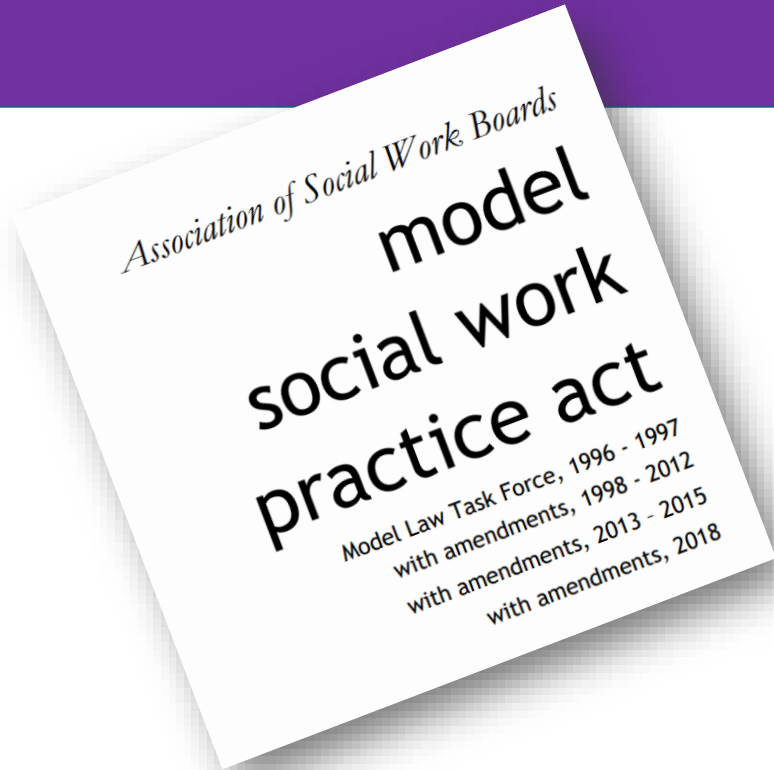
Pipelines

Why aren't there more ballerinas of Color?

Don't ask at the audition... get them in schools



Licensure/Registration Requirements



Education

+

Exam

(entry-level)

+

Experience

(if required)

+

Moral Character

=

Public protection and accountability through licensure

Collaborating across the profession



Established 2022

- Baccalaureate Program Directors
- Canadian Association of Social Workers
- Canadian Association of Social Work Education
- Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators
- Clinical Social Work Association
- Council on Social Work Education
- Latino Social Workers Organization
- National Association of Black Social Workers
- National Association of Deans and Directors
- National Association of Social Workers
- Thunderbird Circle-ISWEN
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Association of Social Work Boards

SOCIAL WORK **Census**

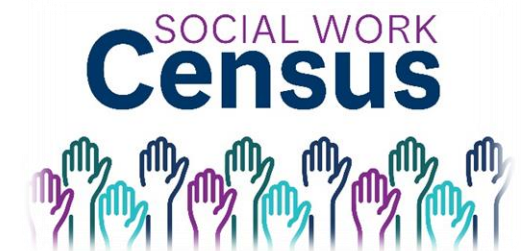




2017 Analysis of the Practice of Social Work

FINAL REPORT

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**Data release
to schools**



**ASWB Exam
Guidebook**



**Educator Guide to the
Social Work Exams**

with group review
practice questions

**Educator
training**



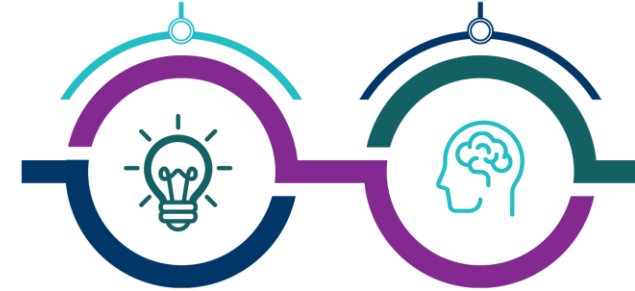
**Free exam
resources for
educators**

Expanded - August 2022



reenvisioning

COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT



research



Association of Social Work Boards

WEBINAR SERIES

exam education

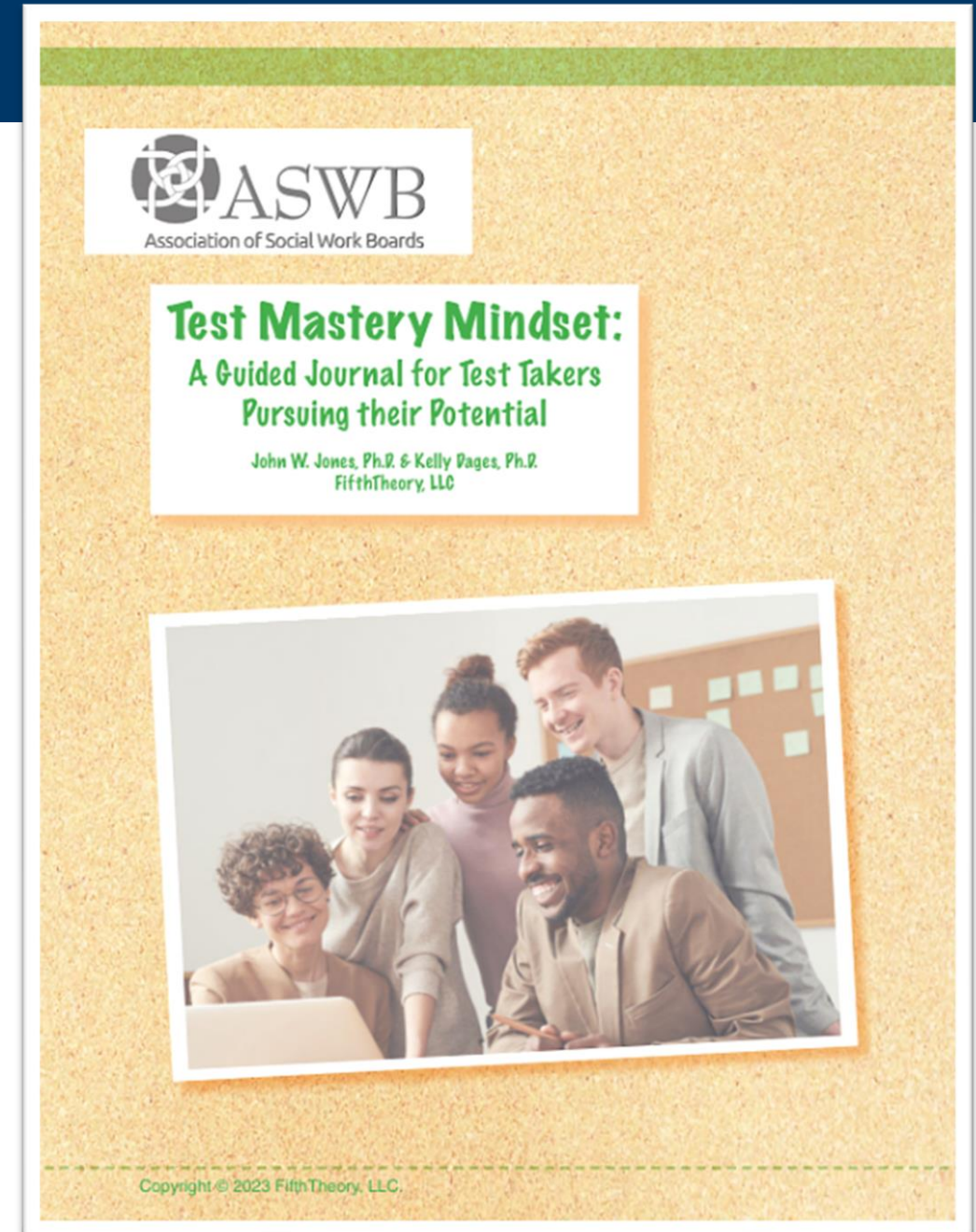


Test mastery mindset support



The **Test Mastery Inclusion** program is:

- **Free** to unsuccessful test-takers
- Delivered by an **independent, minority-owned** firm
- Designed to improve **equity and opportunity**
- Composed of a self-assessment tool followed by an **individualized report and resources**
- Being **piloted** by ASWB



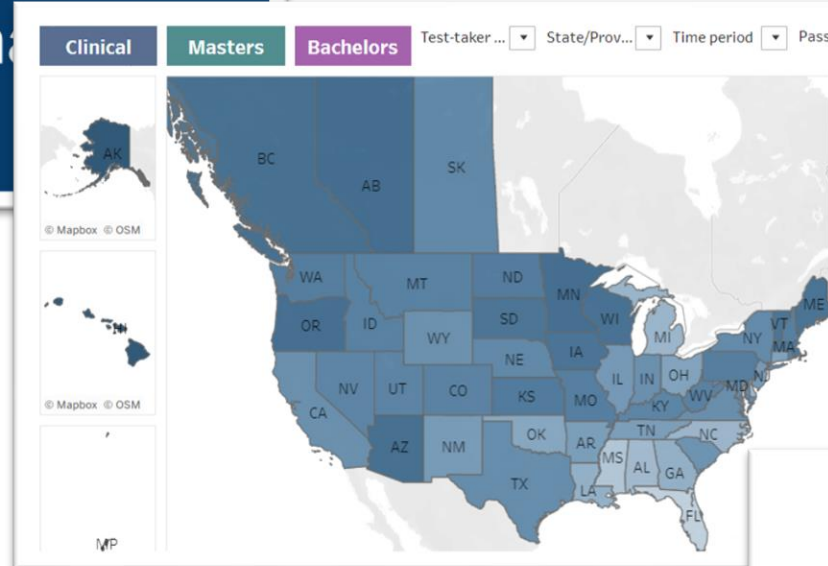
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2022 ASWB Exam Pass Rate Analysis

FINAL REPORT

2



3



ASWB social work licensing exam report for social work schools and programs

School: University of California at Los Angeles
Date: August 2022

The following tables show the performance of test-takers who reported graduation from this school on the ASWB social work licensing exams taken in 2021. Some data for the current exam blueprint, which went online at the beginning of 2018, are also included. For comparison, ASWB has supplied data on test-takers approved to take the exam in the state or province where this school is located and all test-takers in the United States and Canada.

District of Columbia's data

National 1st time pass rates

Clinical: 76.1%

Masters: 78.5%

Bachelors: 74.4%

Clinical exam

First-time test-takers, 2011-2021
N=1,706 (Black test-takers, N=672)

D.C. first-time pass rate: **74.3%**

Overall test-takers, 2011-2021
N=1,797 (Black test-takers, N=747)

D.C. eventual pass rate: **86.5%**

Masters exam

First-time test-takers, 2011-2021
N=2,011 (Black test-takers, N=844)

D.C. first-time pass rate: **76.9%**

Overall test-takers, 2011-2021
N= 2,057 (Black test-takers, N=878)

D.C. eventual pass rate: **84.7%**

Bachelors exam

First-time test-takers, 2011-2021
N=67 (Black test-takers, N=35)

D.C. first-time pass rate: **53.7%**

Overall test-takers, 2011-2021
N=68 (Black test-takers, N=36)

D.C. eventual pass rate: **57.4%**

Catholic University of America

Table 2. 2018-2021 pass rates for test-takers reporting graduation from this school compared to state/province and United States/Canada pass rates

Exam and test-taker group	N of test-takers who listed this school	Percent passing: This school	Percent passing: State/province	Percent passing: United States/Canada
Bachelors				
First-time	1	-	57.0	68.4
Eventual	1	-	56.0	72.5
Masters				
First-time	409	77.3	50.0	74.3
Eventual	419	85.7	51.0	78.9
Clinical				
First-time	327	88.7	60.0	74.6
Eventual	340	92.9	65.0	82.4

Note. *First-time* includes only those test-takers who took an exam for the first time during the 2018-2021 period. *Eventual* includes all test-takers, both repeat and first-time, who tested during the 2018-2021 period and reflects test-takers' most recent attempt during that period.

Gallaudet University

Table 2. 2018-2021 pass rates for test-takers reporting graduation from this school compared to state/province and United States/Canada pass rates

Exam and test-taker group	N of test-takers who listed this school	Percent passing: This school	Percent passing: State/province	Percent passing: United States/Canada
Bachelors				
First-time	1	-	57.0	68.4
Eventual	2	-	56.0	72.5
Masters				
First-time	31	38.7	50.0	74.3
Eventual	40	50.0	51.0	78.9
Clinical				
First-time	23	69.6	60.0	74.6
Eventual	25	72	65.0	82.4

Note. *First-time* includes only those test-takers who took an exam for the first time during the 2018-2021 period. *Eventual* includes all test-takers, both repeat and first-time, who tested during the 2018-2021 period and reflects test-takers' most recent attempt during that period.

Howard University

Table 2. 2018-2021 pass rates for test-takers reporting graduation from this school compared to state/province and United States/Canada pass rates

Exam and test-taker group	N of test-takers who listed this school	Percent passing: This school	Percent passing: State/province	Percent passing: United States/ Canada
Bachelors				
First-time	1	-	57.0	68.4
Eventual	1	-	56.0	72.5
Masters				
First-time	272	49.3	50.0	74.3
Eventual	382	52.9	51.0	78.9
Clinical				
First-time	224	49.6	60.0	74.6
Eventual	305	57.7	65.0	82.4

Note. *First-time* includes only those test-takers who took an exam for the first time during the 2018-2021 period. *Eventual* includes all test-takers, both repeat and first-time, who tested during the 2018-2021 period and reflects test-takers' most recent attempt during that period.

University of the District of Columbia

Table 2. 2018-2021 pass rates for test-takers reporting graduation from this school compared to state/province and United States/Canada pass rates

Exam and test-taker group	N of test-takers who listed this school	Percent passing: This school	Percent passing: State/province	Percent passing: United States/ Canada
Bachelors				
First-time	7	-	57.0	68.4
Eventual	8	-	56.0	72.5
Masters				
First-time	2	-	50.0	74.3
Eventual	3	-	51.0	78.9
Clinical				
First-time	2	-	60.0	74.6
Eventual	3	-	65.0	82.4

Note. *First-time* includes only those test-takers who took an exam for the first time during the 2018-2021 period. *Eventual* includes all test-takers, both repeat and first-time, who tested during the 2018-2021 period and reflects test-takers' most recent attempt during that period.

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Yes! It's *VERY* personal...



ASWB Chief Executive Officer



Dr. Roxroy Reid, ASWB President,
Board of Directors





Balancing Act: The Tradeoffs and Challenges Facing Black Students in Higher Education



GALLUP |  Lumina
FOUNDATION

More Mythbusting



The 'Workforce' Argument:

What other professions are considering:

- **Retention** (what good is it to have new SW come in the workforce if they cannot be retained where they are needed?)
 - Mitigating burnout
 - Workplace culture & infrastructure investments
 - Pay “masters level” wage
- **Recruitment**
 - Signing bonuses
 - Tuition relief
- **Allied professional investments**
 - Example: Peer Partners (former recipients of services who are hired for their lived experience as provider team members)

Common Questions

- Why is disaggregated data being published now?
- What are the exam ramifications on the social work profession?
- Will the test be developed in other languages?
- What impact does all of this have on the multi-state compact efforts?
- What can the broader social work community do?

*These and many other questions answered in the Board/College **TOOL KIT**

What YOU can do!

- Encourage social workers to participate in ASWB initiatives
- Question the sound bites and so-called “facts” presented in the absence of evidence or depth
- Support future research aimed at answering the questions raised by the 2022 descriptive data (baseline)
- We invite your engagement in designing the future of social work licensure!

Thank you!