



Enhancing Pre-Law Guidance: Current Trends and Practical Tips

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Why are we having this discussion?

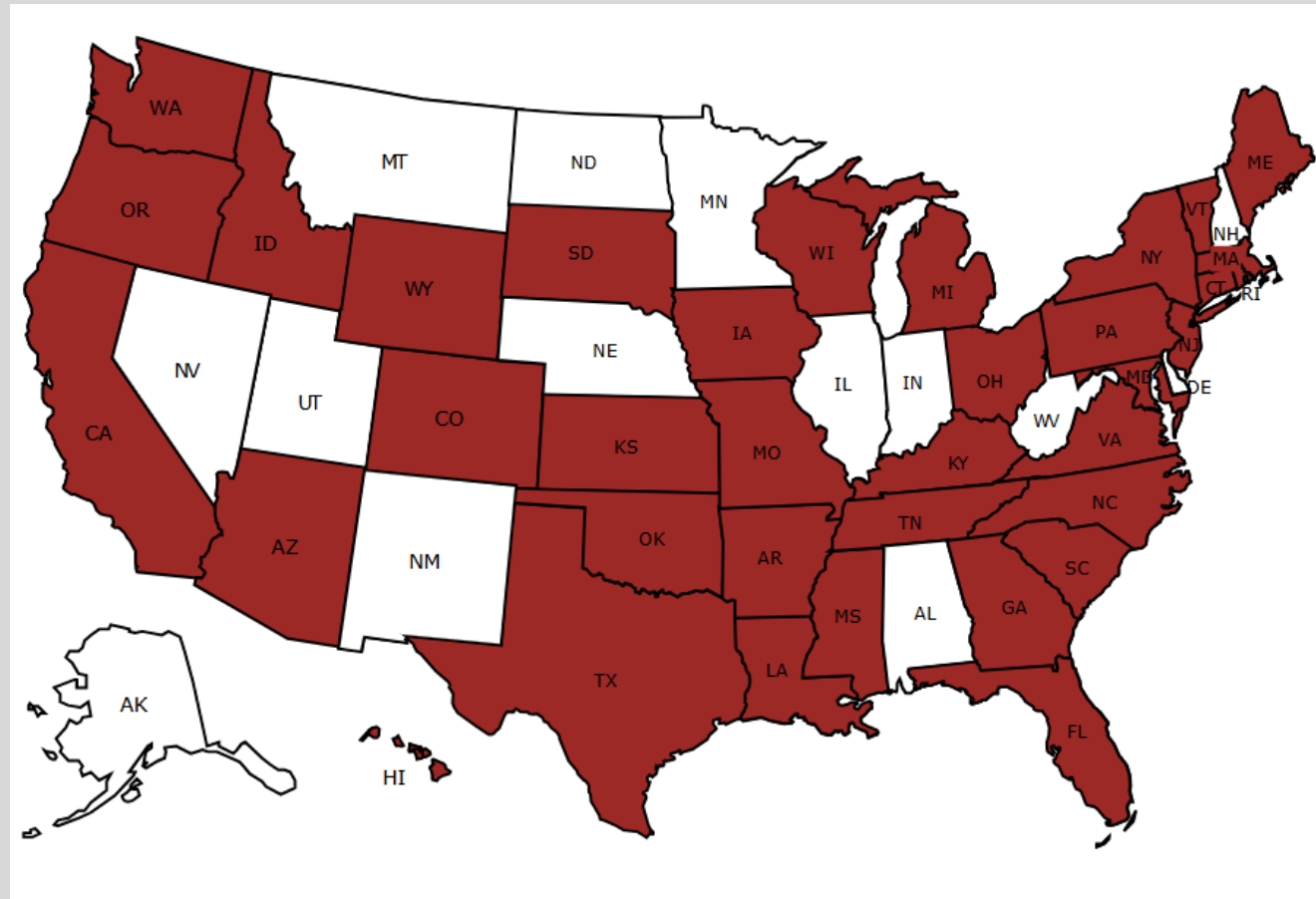
- To be a resource for new prelaw advisors and provide refreshers for experienced.
- Critical Change in ABAQ: July 2024 instructions allowed law schools to select which test score they would report. What does this mean?
- Providing guidance on merit aid and admissions trends with alternative tests.
- How impactful are these alternative tests? (how many students are being admitted with these?)
- There is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to law school admissions so advising can be complicated. We hope to provide you with a snapshot of what is happening.
- However, students **MUST** continue to research specifics for their programs of interest.



In January 2025, we surveyed law school admission offices on important issues in Pre-Law Advising

We received responses from 103 schools representing 37 different states.

Responses from 37 states in all Pre-Law regions



Law School Admission Test(s)

- **Guided by ABA standard 503:**
 - *A law school shall require each applicant for admission as a first-year J.D. degree student to take a valid and reliable admission test to assist the school and the applicant in assessing the applicant's capability of satisfactorily completing the school's program of legal education. In making admissions decisions, a law school shall use the test results in a manner that is consistent with the current guidelines regarding proper use of the test results provided by the agency that developed the test.*
- Using a **test other than LSAT** requires demonstration the test is valid and reliable.
- GRE has been given the green light as a valid and reliable test. JD Next requires variance from the ABA to use.

The LSAT has also seen changes

- Score Preview – Purchase to have the option to view LSAT score and cancel.
- No more logic games!
- New writing section (unscored but important)
- Changes in LSAT limits
- Can take the LSAT 5 times within the current reportable score period (5 years) and a total of 7 times over a lifetime.



A Competitive Cycle.

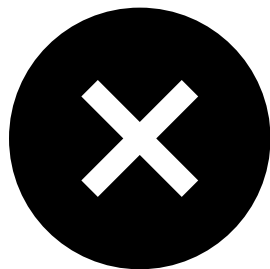
(As of 2-14-25)

Applicants' LSAT Scores

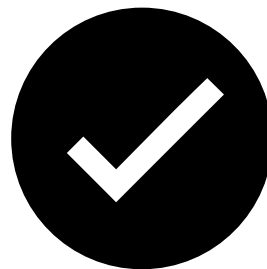
Highest LSAT ▲	Last Year	Current Year	Percent Change
< 140	1,152	1,381	19.9%
140-144	2,056	2,408	17.1%
145-149	4,418	4,906	11.0%
150-154	7,386	8,210	11.2%
155-159	8,254	9,462	14.6%
160-164	7,676	9,096	18.5%
165-169	5,612	7,217	28.6%
170-174	3,683	4,810	30.6%
175-180	1,349	1,869	38.5%
Total	41,586	49,359	18.7%

GRE: The Graduate Record Examinations

Do you admit candidates on the GRE Test?



39 schools - NO



57 schools - YES



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Do you award merit scholarship to GRE only candidates?

NO	7
YES	52
N/A	37

Additional Notes on GRE



PLAs should review 509 reports for numbers and trends related to admission on GRE.



One school noted “Candidates are more competitive with an LSAT. We have only admitted a few students with a GRE”



In a cycle with an increase in higher LSAT scores, GRE candidates may not be priority with many schools trying to increase their medians.

What is JD Next?

Developed by the University of Arizona Rogers College of Law but now owned by Aspen Publishing.

Participants complete an 8-week course on contracts.

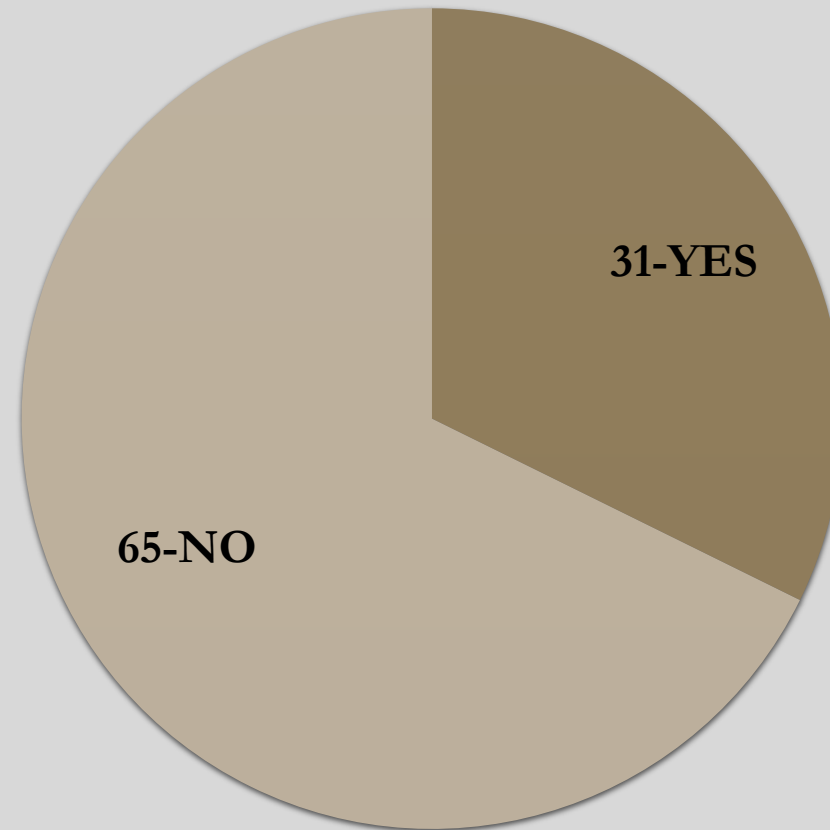
Take a four-hour exam composed of 80 multiple choice questions, 60 of which are scored, along with a single unscored essay.

Test is offered 4 times annually

Cost is \$349 for course, test and score reports

THE BIG QUESTION for applicants: Does your law school allow JD Next only review, or do you only review as supplemental information to a required LSAT or GRE?

Do you have a JD Next Variance?





2025

Do you allow JD Next only review?

No	35
Yes	23
N/A	38

What we all want to know...

- Do you award merit scholarship for JD Next only candidates?

NO	9
Yes	18
N/A	68

- How many candidates have you admitted with JD Next only?

0-5	30
6-10	1
20+	1
N/A	64



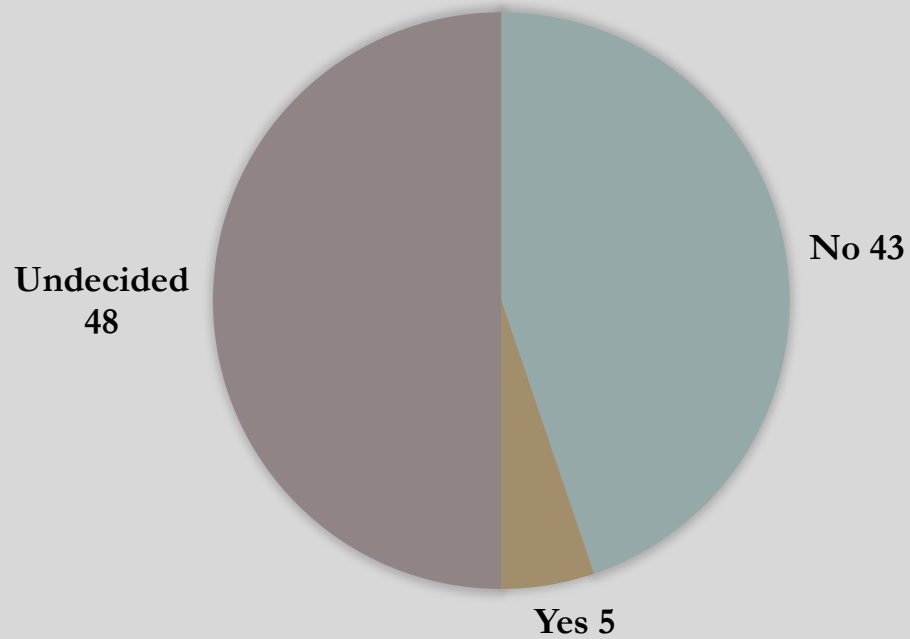


Test optional variance!

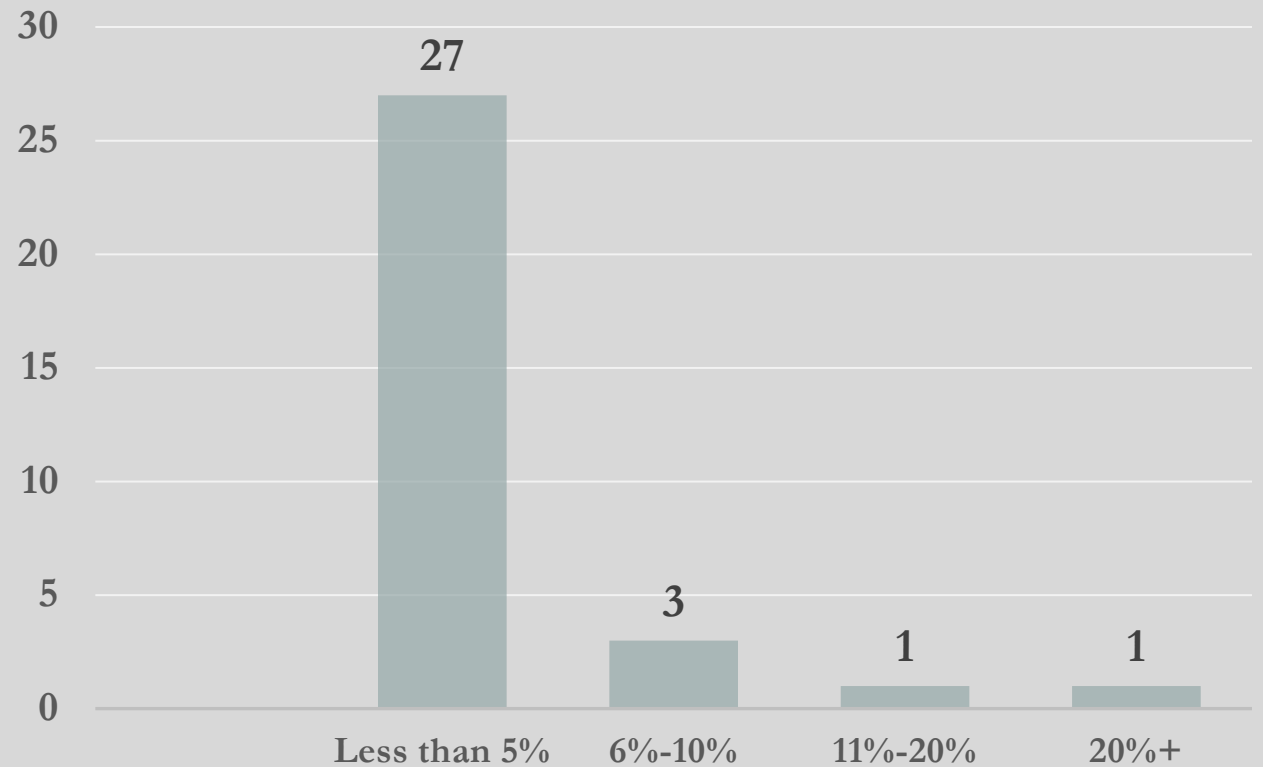
- In November 2024, the ABA Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admission to the Bar voted to create a “variance” allowing individual law schools to apply for permission to bypass the current LSAT or GRE admissions requirement.
- Prospects no longer have to worry about an entrance test, right?! **Not so fast!**
- Our data shows that this will likely only impact a small number of students.

Law schools approach variance with caution

WILL YOUR SCHOOL APPLY FOR A VARIANCE TO ADMIT WITH NO STANDARDIZED TEST?

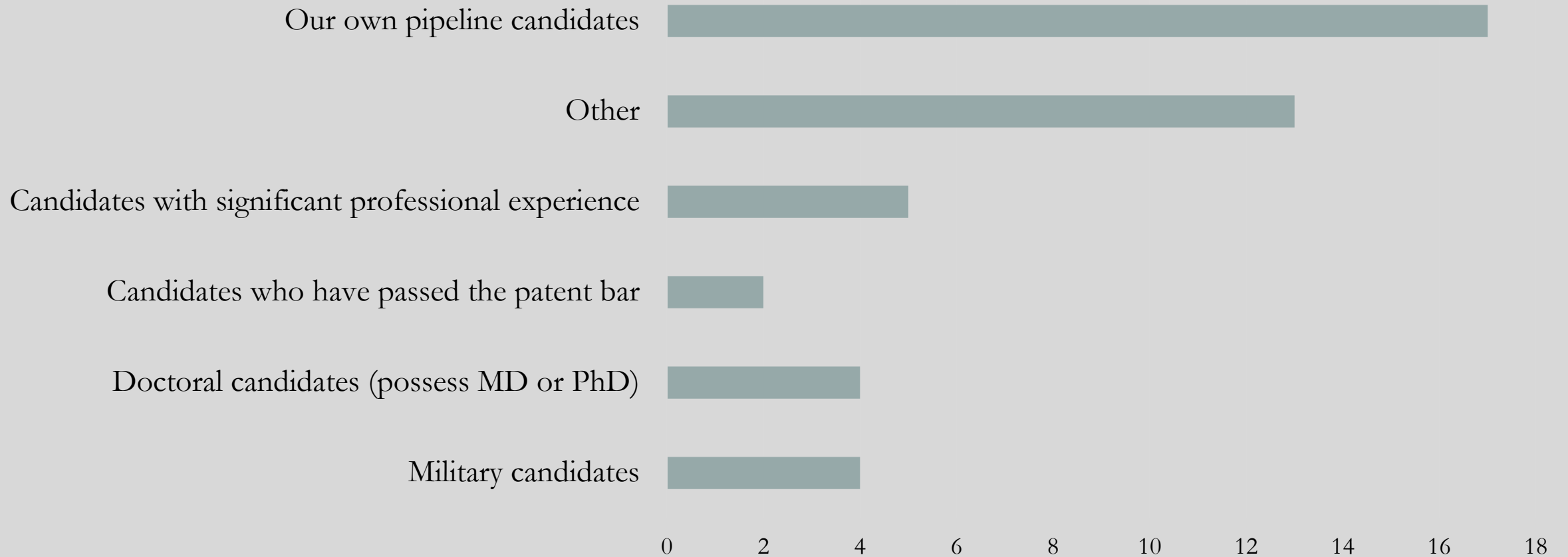


If yes, what percentage do you anticipate you would admit with no test score?

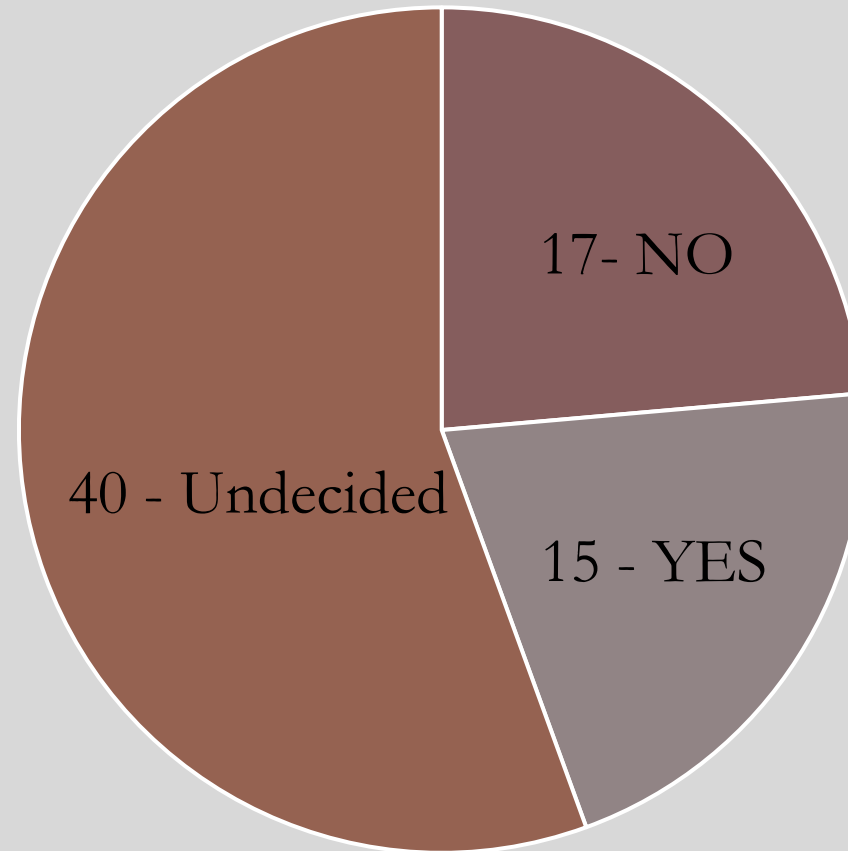


Who could benefit from the variance?

29 respondents gave insight into who would be offered test optional admission



Would you award merit aid to candidates with no standardized test?





THOUGHTS ON EVENTS, TRAVEL, & RECRUITMENT

Travel Season: Organized Chaos

- Recruitment budgets are stagnant, but costs have increased.
- Coordinating around multiple law fairs, swings, and on-campus events can be a big challenge.
- Schools are locking in their travel calendar early.
 - 79 of 94 respondents have set their recruitment calendar by **AUGUST 15!**
 - Don't wait until fall semester to start planning!
- Most law schools (84%) attended more than 10 fairs.
- 53% of respondents say they gauge value of a Pre-Law event by the **number of individual student contacts.**
 - More important than number of fair attendees, number of applicants, and number of matriculants.
 - Encourage your students to meet with a lot of different schools to encourage law schools to attend!

Best way to communicate about events?



Emails!
(No surprise here.)



49% of our respondents prefer an email to the general law admissions email.



29% prefer a direct email



Only 17% (16 respondents) relied on the LSAC events calendar.

How to improve effectiveness of Pre-Law fairs

Invite students from a variety of colleges and institutions to increase attendance.

Better planning among schools in the same geographic area so traveling is less cost prohibitive.

Central location and high-traffic area on campus.

Don't invite high school students!

Create a flow so students walk by all tables.

Invite local college pre-law groups.

When possible, merge city to city events into larger regional events (similar to forums/MINK).

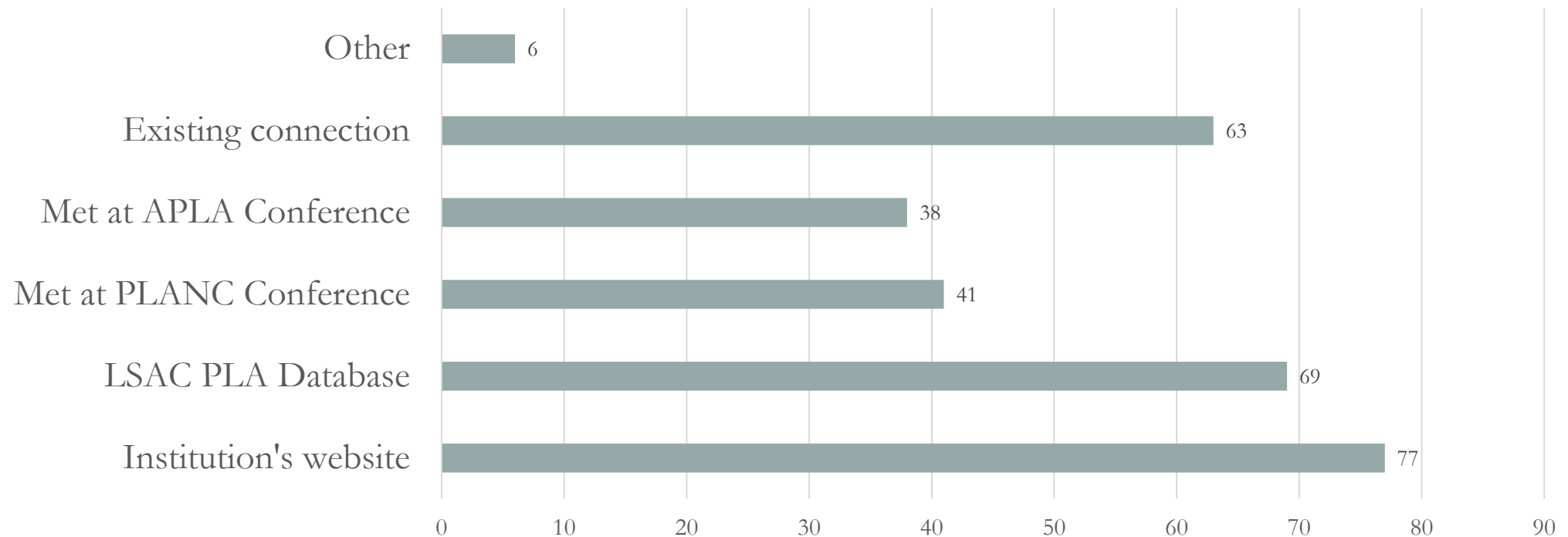
ADVERTISE!

Keep event to a reasonable time frame. A school specific event doesn't need to be 4 hours.

Coordinate with other colleges so we can cover more in one trip.

Half of our respondents indicated they have difficulty locating Pre-Law advisor contacts?

How do you locate PLA contact information?





TOP SURVEY TIPS &
TAKE AWAYS FOR
PLAS TO SHARE
WITH STUDENTS

- **Be Professional**

Be professional, thoughtful, and kind, in all outreach. Capitalize appropriately, check spelling and grammar, and be prompt when responding to requests for more information.

Also, after finalizing a decision and paying a seat deposit, please contact the schools where you do not plan to attend and let them know you will not be attending.

- **Know your Why**

Encourage students to find ways to be exposed to law. Participate in informational interviews or engagement opportunities to explore the profession and its realities before heading to law school.

- **Research your Where**

Be open minded. Finding a best fit school where a student can thrive should not be selected based on rankings alone. Review bar passage and employment outcomes. Because two out of three students will work in the state where they attend law school, think about where you want to live and work, and which school can help you reach those goals. Visit (virtually or in person) schools.

- **Apply Broadly**

Apply broadly and include target, reach and safety schools. Include public and private schools on your list because private schools may have scholarships that may make the COA competitive. Rolling admissions often provides a competitive advantage to students who apply earlier in cycle.

- **Read Instructions Carefully and Proofread**

Read websites and application instructions carefully. Answer all application questions. Please make sure your application is complete and accurate before hitting submit.

The application is a writing assignment. Challenge students to keep taking upper-level writing courses to strengthen their writing skills.

- **Personalize Applications**

Personalize your application to the specific law school to which you are applying. Make sure you answer questions on why you want to attend that specific school. Generic statements are increasingly receiving denials! Caveat – Don't mention wrong school!

Ask Questions. Communicate with Schools Directly.



Do not take your application (or life) advice from Reddit! *(Say it louder for folks in the back!)*



Every school is different. Each school has its own preferences, policies, and procedures. For example, whether AI can be used to develop materials, which tests will be accepted, enrollment goals, in-state versus out of state percentages at state schools...



Refer students to admissions teams if they have specific questions (but make sure they first read the information available to them on the website).



2025

PLA Next Steps

Attend an APLA Conference to collect updated information on revised LSAT, statements post-SFFA, law school resumes, financing law school, engagement with law schools, new programs, and more!



THANKS FOR JOINING
THE NON-REDDIT EDIT
ON PRE-LAW ADVISING!

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

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