



### Recognize Outstanding Law School Administrators

The AALS Section on Law School Administration and Finance is launching the inaugural *AALS Administrative Excellence Award* at the 2027 AALS Annual Meeting. The award will recognize an outstanding non-faculty administrator who has made a significant positive impact on their law school's financial health, strategic initiatives, or operational effectiveness.

**Know someone who deserves recognition? Nominate them!**

Eligible nominees must:

- Be a full-time employee of an AALS-member law school;
- Serve in a role primarily focused on administrative responsibilities; and
- Hold a senior-level staff or administrative position with significant responsibility for administrative or financial functions.

Examples include assistant or associate dean, executive director, finance officer, director of administration, and chief of staff.

Self-nominations are welcome, and nominators must be members of an AALS Section. Nominations should include a brief statement describing the nominee's contributions and impact.

 **Nomination deadline: October 1, 2026**

The award recipient will receive a plaque and certificate of recognition at the AALS Annual Meeting in January.

**Submit a Nomination**

Help us celebrate the exceptional administrators whose leadership and expertise help law schools thrive.



## AALS Annual Meeting 2027

2027 AALS ANNUAL MEETING | JAN. 5-8, NYC

**Emancipate. Academic. Freedom.****Registration Is Now Open for the 2027 AALS Annual Meeting!**

AALS invites you to register now for the 2027 Annual Meeting, taking place January 5–8 in New York City.

Join more than 2,000 law faculty, administrators, deans, professional staff, and friends of the legal academy for four days of sessions, events, and special guests.

**Register Now**

*Please note: AALS debuted a new member portal this spring. If you haven't signed into the website yet this year, you'll need to reset your password before registering. See our Member Portal guide for help.*

**This Year's Theme: Emancipate. Academic. Freedom.**

AALS President Danielle Conway chose this year's theme to focus attention on higher education and law schools as sites of connection—between the values of inquiry and the public good, the creation and advancement of knowledge, and education's foundational role in the democratic project.

**Learn More  
About the Theme****Propose a  
Program**

There's still time to get involved in shaping this year's Annual Meeting:

- AALS Discussion Groups are looking for participants. Submit an abstract by **October 2**.
- AALS Sections have **open calls** for panel presentations, works-in-progress, and pedagogy sessions—deadlines vary by section.
- Hot Topic proposals are being accepted until November 13.

We look forward to seeing you in the Big Apple!

**BECOME A MEMBER!**Join at [www.aals.org/sections/join](http://www.aals.org/sections/join)



## IN THE NEWS

## LSAT &amp; TESTING CHANGES

Big change on the horizon for applicants: starting with the August 2026 LSAT, LSAC will require in-center testing for almost all U.S. and international test-takers, ending the remote-testing model that's been standard since the pandemic. Exceptions will be limited to certain medical accommodations and cases of extreme distance from a testing center.

LSAC has also rolled out a fully updated LawHub testing interface for the 2026-27 cycle, and updated its official PrepTests library to match the new look and feel. Advisors should flag this shift early to students planning test dates—logistics like center availability and travel may now factor into scheduling decisions in a way they haven't for several years.

## POLICY WATCH

The ABA Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar has voted to let law schools apply for a variance allowing up to 100% of an incoming class to be admitted without LSAT or GRE scores—a major expansion of the prior rule, which capped test-optional admits at 10% of a class. Schools that receive the variance can use it for three to five years. This builds on a longer-running debate: the Council has weighed eliminating the standardized-test requirement outright since it was first proposed (and withdrawn) in 2018, with proponents arguing it could widen access for underrepresented applicants and opponents warning it could open the door to unconscious bias in admissions decisions. Worth watching how many schools actually apply for the variance, and whether it shifts advising conversations around when a strong test score is—or isn't—worth prioritizing.

## RESEARCH &amp; INITIATIVES

Two initiatives worth tracking this year. First, AALS and LSAC jointly launched **Before the JD II** in May 2026, a research initiative examining how undergraduates are making decisions about law school, other graduate paths, and workforce entry amid a shifting higher-ed landscape—findings could directly inform how pre-law advisors talk to students earlier in their undergraduate careers.

Second, LSAC is partnering with AALS and the University of Nebraska College of Law on efforts to **advance rural access to justice**—a relevant thread for any section members working with pipeline programs in underserved or rural regions.



## PRE-LAW EDUCATION AND ADMISSION TO LAW SCHOOL SECTION

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2026

# IN THE NEWS

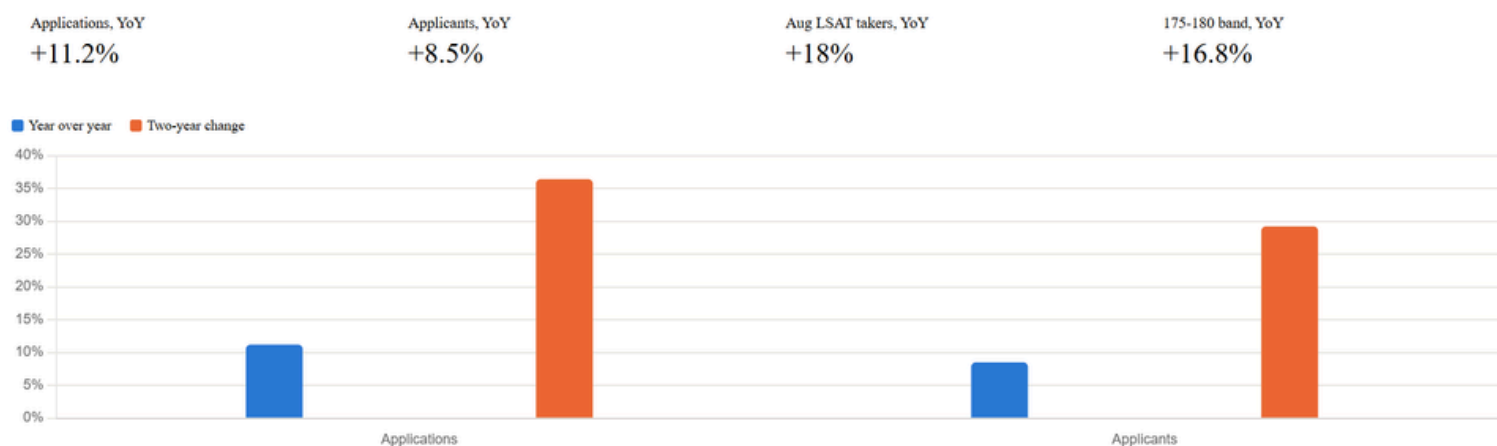
## BY THE NUMBERS

The 2026 cycle is shaping up to be another record-setter. LSAC's June 2026 volume summary showed ABA law school applications up 11.2% year-over-year and 36.4% over two years, with applicants up 8.5% year-over-year and 29.2% over two years.

Testing volume tells a similar story—the August 2025 LSAT administration drew roughly 26,000 test takers, up 18% from the prior year and nearly 60% compared to August 2023.

**Perhaps most notable for advisors:** the top LSAT score bands are more crowded than ever, with the 175-180 range up 16.8% year-over-year as of June 2026. That means a high score alone is doing less to differentiate applicants—advisors may want to lean harder into helping students build out the rest of their file (work experience, personal statement, letters of recommendation) rather than treating the LSAT as the whole game.

On the "why" side, LSAC's applicant surveys continue to find that the top motivations for pursuing law school are wanting to help others, advocate for social justice, and build valuable skills—useful language for outreach and info sessions.



Source: LSAC 2026 volume summary data, as of June 2026.

## WANT SOMETHING INCLUDED?

*Have news, an event, an award, or a resource you'd like featured in the next issue? We'd love to include it—email Michelle Yingling at [moffen@pitt.edu](mailto:moffen@pitt.edu).*

**BECOME A MEMBER!**

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