

NEW YORK STATE BOARD FOR OPTOMETRY

New York State Board for Optometry

Monday January 26, 2026 9:30am

Virtual-Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Dana Salgado, Alison Risko, Daniella Rutner, Richard Soden, Jeffrey Calhoun, Obinna Akano

Extended Members: Wayne Gabel, Frank Pirozzolo

Members Absent: James Coney

SED Staff: Steven Calderon, Azriel Paris

Guests:

Welcome: Dr. Salgado welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Minutes: Minutes of the September 29, 2025 meeting were approved as corrected. (Calhoun).

Executive Secretary's Report

Dr. Calderon started his report by giving Board members an update to the proposed changes to the CE sponsor approval process. The proposed changes are currently with OP's legal office for review and approval.

Dr. Calderon has finalized the language for the proposed amendments to Commissioner's Regulation §66.2 with the assistance of OP leadership and OP's legal office. The final language was discussed with Board. The proposed amendment will be presented to the Board of Regents at their February meeting.

Dr. Calderon stated that he spoke with the NYSOA regarding the expiration of the memorandum of understanding between NYSED and the SUNY College of Optometry to offer the oral therapeutic certification course and examination. The memorandum of understanding is set to expire on January 1, 2028.

Chair Report.

Dr. Salgado discussed a recent meeting she attended with ARBO. ARBO's website is currently in the process of being updated. The updated website will include additional guidance on telehealth. ARBO is also in the process of updating its OE Tracker system. The update would allow state boards to obtain data on which continuing education courses optometrists licensed in their state are taking.

Old Business

Discussion about updating regulations -The Board further discussed the proposed updates to Commissioner's Regulations §66.2.

Discussion on which COPE course categories can be counted toward an optometrist's oral therapeutic continuing education requirement for registration renewal-

Discussed which courses would be acceptable for an optometrist's oral therapeutic continuing education requirement. Courses in the categories of Neuro-optometry (NO), and Systemic Disease (SD) will be considered automatically acceptable. The Board will revisit this decision at a future meeting should the need arise.

Board office staff will consult with Board members for clarification on courses that need additional review to make a determination as to their acceptability.

Board members will create a list of topics that Board office staff may use when determining a continuing education course's acceptability.

New Business

Discussion on the use of aesthetic devices and devices with aesthetic effects- The Board discussed the advertisement and use aesthetic procedures by optometrists. Optometrists cannot perform or advertise purely aesthetic procedures. Optometrists may perform treatments within their of scope of practice that produce aesthetic effects as a side effect of that treatment. Optometrists cannot advertise such aesthetic side effects to patients as a reason to have a particular treatment performed.

Discussion on the proposed creation of a vision rehabilitation therapy program- The Board discussed CUNY Hunter's proposal to create a vision rehabilitation therapy program. As a result of the initial concerns raised by the Board, CUNY Hunter has made the decision to withdraw their proposal.

Discussion on drugs fitting within statute

The Board discussed whether certain drugs fit within the statutory definition of pharmaceuticals certified for optometrists to prescribe.

Next Meeting: The next Board Meeting will be tentatively held on Monday, May 18, 2026 at 9:30am.

Executive Session: There were no disciplinary cases to be reviewed.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion was approved for Adjournment at 10:54 a.m. (Calhoun/Rutner).