NCARB Live: Online Proctoring and ARE 5.0 | Transcript

Samantha Miller [00:00:00]: So welcome to everyone who's joining us. We'll just wait a few more seconds before we get started.

All right. We've got pretty good attendance so far and it is five o'clock. So, hi, everyone, and welcome to NCARB Live. I'm your host, Samantha Miller. And today, we'll be covering the upcoming changes to the Architect Registration Examination®, also known as the ARE®. So today's topics will include the November launch of online proctoring, what's changing, what's not changing, updated resources, and what you can all expect in the months ahead. We'll also have plenty of time to answer your questions, so feel free to submit them using the Q&A tool on your screen.

And so that we can get to as many questions as possible, please try to post your questions just once, so that they don't get lost in the mix. Before we get started, I'd love to introduce today's panelists. Let's get started with Jared. Welcome, Jared.

Jared Zurn [00:01:13]: Thank you, Sam. Hello, everybody. My name is Jared Zurn. I'm the vice president of Examination here at NCARB, a licensed architect, and I've been working with NCARB now for about 12 years on the examination.

Michelle Cohn [00:01:29]: All right. I will jump in next. I'm Michelle Cohn. I'm assistant vice president of Examination at NCARB, and I have been with NCARB for six years now.

Samantha Miller [00:01:38]: Thanks, Michelle. And next, Neitha.

Neitha Wilkey [00:01:42]: Hi, I'm Neitha Wilkey and I am an architect in the state of Washington. I am in my 12th year on a state board, and in my ninth year on some form of the ARE. And so I have lots of perspective as far as how your state board is looking at things and just knowing the ARE.

Samantha Miller [00:02:07]: Great. Thanks, Neitha. And last but not least, we have Wayne as well.

Wayne Hilbert [00:02:12]: Hi, I'm Wayne Hilbert. I'm an architect and I have a small architectural, 12% architectural, firm. I'm on my state board in Minnesota for architectural licensing. I've been participating in the ARE now for about six years on the Exam Committee that helps to mold the test.

Samantha Miller [00:02:36]: Well, thank you to all of our panelists for joining us, and thank you to all of our viewers for taking the time to spend some time with us this afternoon and learn about the exam. Before we jump into the Q&A portion, our exam experts will give you an overview of what you can expect. Jared, take it away.

Jared Zurn [00:02:58]: Thank you, Sam. We know you have a lot of questions today, but we do want to do a quick little run through of some key information which may address a lot of your questions, and then we'll open it up at the end to really take anything else that we haven't addressed. So let's start off by talking about the anticipated launch date. We are on track to launch the online proctoring option on Monday, November 16, and we want you to understand two key things.

What that means is that a candidate testing in a Prometric test center on Monday, November 16, would experience the new exam the way we're going to talk about it today, with the less items, the more time per item, things like that.

The 16th is also the day that candidates are going to be able to go in. And if you have an existing appointment scheduled for the 20th or later, you'll be able to come in and reschedule that appointment at no cost and move it to an online appointment, or if you haven't scheduled your appointment yet, as of Monday, November 16, you would be able to log in to NCARB Record and schedule that appointment either online or onsite.

Wayne Hilbert [00:04:04]: I think the biggest takeaway here is that the majority of the exam is staying the same as it was. The content is the same, the division structure is the same, the fees, the rolling clocks, all those things are staying the same, exam is getting slightly smaller, but the objectives of the exam are still the same as they are now, and they will be as we move forward here.

Neitha Wilkey [00:04:28]: Oh, there are some things that will be different, and we want you to know that it's been reviewed over and over by our Examination Committee and whatnot. Some of the items will be decreasing per division. You're going to have more breaks, and you'll be able to use them as you wish. You will see some changes in multiple-choice. There'll be some three-option multiple-choice, not everything will be four-option multiple-choice. The new exam will be using the 2018 IBC. But remember, in your exam, all the code references you need to answer a question are included. And Jared and the team have looked at what the major changes are, and there simply are no major changes between the 2015 IBC and the 2018. And then Jared, I think I'll let ... Michelle, I think I'll let you talk about the cut score.

Michelle Cohn [00:05:37]: Sure, absolutely. As Neitha was mentioning, there is going to be a slight reduction in the number of items per division. And I go back to that because it's really that that is driving our need to do a cut score process. When we launch an exam with those types of changes, we want to make sure that the exam is still being scored fairly so that the average difficulty remains the same for all candidates who are taking that exam and who are taking it today, for instance, with the current number of items. So that cut score process will be our way of ensuring fairness as we launch these changes on November 16 and afterwards.

Jumping a little bit more closely into the changes on the numbers of items per division, probably not everyone has memorized this chart here. So I will just tell you in Practice Management, for instance, we reduced the item count by 15 items, and the other divisions are actually 20 fewer items per division. The duration—amount of time that you're given in each of those exams—has either stayed the same or reduced very slightly. And so what that means is you're actually going to have a bit more time per item when you take a division after that November 16 launch. So hopefully that gives you as candidates a little bit more flexibility there, you know that you have a little bit more time there to navigate through the various items on your exam. We also have a note here on the slide about break time, and I think Jared is going to talk more about break time specifically in each division.

Jared Zurn [00:07:29]: Great. Thanks, Michelle. This is actually one of the big changes that we really want to focus on today to make sure that you as a candidate are best positioned to be successful on the

ARE if you test after the launch of the online proctored option. From a navigation perspective and from a test taking strategy perspective, this is what is going to really be changing. Wayne had mentioned already the content and the division structure isn't changing.

So the things you're studying for, just keep studying for those things. It's all the same. The learning objectives are the same. What is going to change is when you're in the test center, if you go on break, when you go on break, you're going to be given an exam summary screen that shows you any item that you have previously viewed. And it will be noted as either completed or incomplete.

And we just want to point this out very critically because if an item is incomplete, it's guaranteed to be scored incorrectly. And that's not good for you as a candidate. So we're going to show you an exam summary screen when you click the break button. Any question that is incomplete, we are highly suggesting you go back and you look at that item and you answer that item to the best of your ability at that time. Because if you go on break, what's going to happen is it's going to lock that item—it's going to lock any previously viewed item. So just know that if you want to take advantage of that scoring opportunity, you need to complete that item before you go on break.

So this is a strategy difference. That is not the ARE today. Today, you can look at all the questions, you can go back after break and you can read all the questions again. That's not the way it's going to function in the future. So this is something we really think candidates need to practice and come up with a new strategy on how they're going to approach the exam.

Michelle Cohn [00:09:13]: The whiteboard, we know, has been another hot topic for a lot of our candidates, and again, represents a big change from how you're used to approaching the exams today. So let me walk through some of the specs that you can expect to see in the future digital whiteboard. So it will be one file, it will be available throughout your tests. So from start to finish, it'll be that same virtual whiteboard that you'll be able to enter data into, and you'll be able to refer back to that throughout your test. It'll be in a separate window that'll just be floating. You can open it, you can minimize it, you can move it off to the side, locate it where you need it as you're moving through your exam. It'll have unlimited whiteboard space and you'll be able to both draw and type on it.

I know we've answered some questions previously on the community, on our blog, about the ability to both draw with your mouse, as well as type information into that. This will be a great place for you to work out some basic solutions, think about some calculations, really that combination of both drawing and typing. And again, that unlimited area so you don't feel like, oh my gosh, you need to go back and erase something because you're running out of room to be able to solve the next item. You can make that decision of when you want to erase information, you can leave all the information there for the duration of your exam. Know that NCARB will never see that whiteboard; your proctor will never see that whiteboard. That information there is truly for you to use as you see fit, as you make your way through the exam.

The data that you enter is protected in case of a power outage, for instance, a sudden Wi-Fi outage, if you're testing at home and something happens with the internet. If you take a break as Jared just mentioned, during your break, your whiteboard will be unavailable to you, but when you come back from break, that whiteboard will still be there just as you had left it prior to your break. So that

information is still there, and really still gives you the option to take notes, to outline potential solutions, to do all the things that you would have done previously on scratch paper, but in this new online tool.

And let me talk about some references. As Wayne was mentioning, the exam content is remaining the same, we will still continue to reference the 2017 family of AIA Contract Documents. The IBC update, as Neitha mentioned, is moving from 2015 to 2018; those changes are really minimal and not impactful to the information that's on the exam. It's important to remember that when you see code-related questions on the exam, you're not expected to have memorized the code. It's really about knowing how to apply the code to a particular scenario. So whether it's the 2015 code, 2018 code, or your local jurisdiction's code, it's really about knowing how to use that code when you answer a question.

And then finally, the *ARE 5.0 Handbook* with the online proctoring option. So hopefully everyone has had the chance to look at this. It was just released yesterday on our website. You can navigate to that and find it. It has all of the same information that you're used to seeing previously, but with some more details about objectives, again, the updated information about the codes, and really a good read as you prepare for your exam.

Wayne Hilbert [00:12:55]: As Michelle just mentioned, the *ARE 5.0 Handbook* is a good starting point when you're studying for exams. This is what the item writers use. So the item writers are divided up into the different divisions, and they will use these same references as they're creating items. So it's a good place to get started. It has the objectives in there; it has the percentage of items in each division. So it gives you a good perspective of what you're going to be getting into on the exam.

Michelle Cohn [00:13:31]: And some other resources that we have for you, I'm sure many of you are aware of the community, which you can access through your NCARB Record—that is moderated by Jared, myself, and others within NCARB. We also have our video prep series which we've had for a number of years now. And you will be starting to see some updated videos rolling out very soon to help you prepare for the online proctoring. We also have recently released our new guidelines. And so again, similar to the handbook, this was posted on our website yesterday. And this really covers all those operational questions. How do I schedule my exam? What do I do at the test center? And now with a lot of added information about how do I take an online proctored exam as well?

Jared Zurn [00:14:17]: I know we've talked a lot about the different changes that are coming, and now let's talk about how you really can prepare for the changes that are coming. And we know, as NCARB, one of the key parts of this is the demonstration exam. Without a good demonstration exam, a way for you to practice the new tools, including the whiteboard, understanding the navigation and the breaks, you're not going to be successful. So NCARB is building a new demonstration exam right now that is going to be launched in mid-October. Along with the launch of the demonstration exam, we are rolling out some videos, again, on test taking strategies, as well as just tools on how to navigate all the different tools in the best way we think to use them. And you can certainly use them however you would like.

It's important to understand that one of the other big changes coming with the demonstration exam is today it's 20 items and the purpose of the demonstration exam is really just to get familiar with the tools, how to use a hotspot, how to use a drag-and-place. We know what the structural changes that are coming. You're going to need to have more of a real test experience to prepare. So when we do launch

the new demonstration exam, we're expanding the size to 75 items, which is the size of three of our six divisions. The demonstration exam is going to have a testing time of three hours. So you really can put yourself into the immersive testing experience, and you can try to go through all 75 questions in the three-hour time block, practice what it's like to take a break. Do those things, condition yourself to be ready to go into a test center. So we are hoping the new demonstration exam really gives you a better experience to be more realistic to what you would experience while taking the exam.

The other thing we have to talk to you about is the fact that there is going to be a cut score done when we launch the online proctoring option. This was mentioned earlier with the reduction in the number of items, with the changes to the tool set, including the whiteboard, to some other changes we're making about rolling out three option multiple-choice and things like that. When we launch the online proctoring option, we are going to be holding all results for a period of time. We figure it's going to take about four weeks. The way this is going to work is we're going to be comparing exam performance after the launch of online proctoring with exam performance before. And this allows NCARB to adjust the cut score accordingly to make sure that it doesn't get any more difficult.

We're going to be tracking performance on items like calculation items to see if it takes longer to perform a calculation item in the future than it does today. All of those factors come into consideration. And to some degree, that's one of the reasons we have Wayne and Neitha on this webinar today is because as members of our Examination Committee, they're one of the first groups that goes through this evaluation process of setting up the cut score and then making a recommendation to our Board of Directors on what that should be. The score report itself isn't going to change once we do establish the cut score. You can expect to see that your score report in the future looks very much like the score report today. It's still ARE 5.0, we're still going to tell you if you pass. If you don't pass, if you fail, we are going to still do the descriptive feedback on page two.

Michelle Cohn [00:17:21]: Online proctoring testing set up—I'm sure this is what many people want to know, how actually do I need to configure my home so I can take this test? So we have a lot of information in the guidelines that was just released yesterday. And the key thing for all candidates to know is that you will need to meet both NCARB requirements and Prometric requirements. So those guidelines, or those requirements rather, are listed in the guidelines. We have a lot of references there that take you into the Prometric sites so that you can see their full list of requirements. They also have a system readiness check where you can actually try your computer out right now to see if it would meet the basic requirements for online testing. There are going to be additional requirements on top of that and some items that you should be aware of.

And the first one I want to highlight here is having a monitor with high resolution. So those of you who have been testing in the test center, I'm sure are aware of the large 23-inch monitors currently in every Prometric test center. The ARE was designed to be viewed on a 23-inch monitor. We understand not all candidates have 23-inch monitors at home, though. So it's okay to test with a smaller monitor. If you get too much smaller onto a small laptop screen, for instance, you may have trouble navigating the exam. It just might take longer, you might have more scrolling, that sort of thing, might be harder to view some of those case study references. So it is not impossible, but we do recommend that you consider a larger monitor with high resolution. You will certainly need high speed internet, you will need a webcam and an audio connection, a private testing area, and a clean work area.

One thing I do want to mention, we've seen some questions come in about, "Well, what if I have a larger monitor? Can I just attach that to my laptop?" So a couple things: dual monitors will not be allowed for security reasons. That is a Prometric requirement. No dual monitors. If you have a laptop and a separate monitor, and you'd like to hook those up together, that is allowed.

However, you will need to actually close your laptop screen. So, again, going back to the no dual monitor thing, you would need to close your laptop screen in order to use that separate larger monitor. And of course, that would require you to have a separate webcam and a separate keyboard because the laptop would be closed. So know that you have some options there to consider.

You'll want to prepare for that check-in process. Many of our candidates are used to the check-in at the test center. Know that there will be a check-in process in the online proctored delivery as well. You'll have a security check-in person who you'll speak to over your webcam. You'll want to be prepared to show your ID with your picture on it. You'll also need to provide through your webcam a view of your secure testing area so that the proctor can confirm that you don't have any materials out that would provide you an unfair advantage. And then once the proctor clears you, they will launch your exam, and then you're good to go in your secure testing area. So there's a lot more information about that in the guidelines, especially about some policies around keeping your testing areas secure and what will happen during the course of your exam.

Samantha Miller [00:20:54]: All right. So to wrap this portion up, just a few reminders that we'd like you to keep in mind. As all of our panelists have already mentioned, we have been rolling out several new resources for candidates to look through and take advantage of. Yesterday, you all should have received an email with links to the new *ARE 5.0 Handbook*, as well as the *Guidelines*. We also launched a fun new brochure that provides highlights and we'll have videos and the demonstration exam coming soon. We would also like to mention the anticipated launch date. We are aiming for November 16th. So keep that mid-November date in mind. And within the next few weeks and months, we will continue to roll out new information, details, step-by-step instructions, and we are here to help you every step of the way.

You also may have seen an announcement about our change to a new testing vendor next summer. So we will be migrating from Prometric to PSI. And just like we've been updating you on all of our other resources and changes, we will continue to provide information on that summer 2021 switch to PSI as well. So with that, we'd like to jump into the Q&A portion. I see that a few participants have raised their hands, but we'll just be taking questions through the Q&A tool at the bottom of your screen. So if you have any questions, please feel free to submit them using that tool at the bottom of your screen. And try to just ask the question once. Since we have so many viewers here, we want to make sure that we have the opportunity to answer as many questions as possible. So our very first question is "Why do all the exam changes have to be applied to in-person exams as well as online exams?" So who would like to take the honor of answering our first question?

Jared Zurn [00:23:10]: I can certainly start with that question. And again, it comes down to really, from an exam delivery perspective, a fairness issue. This is what was discussed, I know, at the Exam Committee with our psychometricians. You're probably going to hear that term psychometrician today more than once. And so you understand the psychometricians are our consultants that are Ph.D.s in the testing and measurement world. And so they work with our Examination Committee in establishing what are the policies and procedures, and then those all get recommended up to the Board of Directors. So this was a big conversation between NCARB, the Examination Committee and the psychometricians

about how do we roll this out and maintain fairness across the delivery mode, whether you're at a test center or whether you're onsite? And the recommendation has always been that it's a consistent mode, consistent tool set, and so that's the path we're going down.

Samantha Miller [00:24:03]: Thank you, Jared. So our next question, "Are online proctored exams accepted by all jurisdictions?" I thought maybe Neitha might want to answer this one.

Neitha Wilkey [00:24:18]: Yes, every jurisdiction has approved NCARB's delivery method. So it is a matter of they've accepted it, no matter how it's delivered. And on my board, we had small discussion about it, and we liked the idea that the online proctoring gives access to people more readily. Thanks, Sam.

Samantha Miller [00:24:49]: Thank you. Moving along, our next question is "Why weren't we given the option to transition to the new format or keep the old format, similar to what we did for the transition to ARE 4.0 to 5.0?"

Michelle Cohn [00:25:07]: Well, I can jump in here. And I think some of this goes back to Jared's previous answer about fairness, about wanting to make sure that candidates have that consistent experience between the two different types of testing. I see some questions in the Q&A referring to this as a 5.1. It really isn't 5.1. It really is ARE 5.0. It is still ARE 5.0 just with that online proctored delivery option. So that does necessitate some changes in that delivery, but the content is the same and it was really important to us and to our boards to make sure that we maintain that consistent experience in both testing modalities.

Samantha Miller [00:25:53]: Thanks, Michelle. I'll direct our next question to Wayne. "Can we use a pen pad when we're using the whiteboard?" So I think—

Wayne Hilbert [00:26:05]: Yes, I'm actually going to refer that over to Jared there.

Jared Zurn [00:26:10]: I think, Sam, we should clarify that question. And I've seen some questions coming in to about like can somebody use a Wacom board with a stylist when they're taking the exam? We've discussed this with Prometric. This was actually a very hot topic this morning on our call with them, about seeing if we can get this allowed. And right now, the challenge that you have with those is that the software that runs those conflicts with the secure browser that's used to deliver the exam. So right now, as far as Prometric is telling us that they're not able to support that from a delivery perspective. So the whiteboard tool as designed is being built so that it can be totally used using just keyboard and mouse. You're not going to have to have a stylist to do it. And actually, what we're hearing is that the stylist just isn't going to work if you try to use it.

Samantha Miller [00:26:59]: And then in terms of regular pencils, the answer is no because you need to have a clean desk policy. So our next question, "With home environments being so varied, how can NCARB really ensure that all candidates are having the same exam experience?" That's a great question. Who would like to take that one?

Michelle Cohn [00:27:28]: Well, I can start off. Agreed. You can see all of our homes on the screen all very different here. And so certainly, that's a great question about that doesn't that mean that there

wouldn't be a consistent experience? Well, I can say that there will be a consistent set of security requirements applied to those testing environments. So in terms of having that clean desk policy that Sam was just mentioning, or decluttering your workspace, putting away those materials that might provide that advantage, no paper and pencil, ensuring that your workspace is ... I don't want to say sterile, but just that there's no stuff around, that will really make sure that your workspace is just as clear as the next person's workspace because you all need to comply with those same set of requirements.

Wayne Hilbert [00:28:25]: If I could jump into a little bit, for me and the people that work for me, we would probably make our conference room available to anybody who's testing. It's easy. We have high speed internet accessible. The conference room is easy to clean out. I think for a lot of people at home, it might be a little bit more difficult. I know my home would be a little hard to find a good room for it. But I know my company would provide a space for people to do it in. I'm sure a lot of people who work for architectural firms would have the same available space.

Samantha Miller [00:29:01]: I'm really glad you brought that up. Wayne or Neitha, do you have suggestions for how a candidate might be able to breach that topic with their supervisors or their firms?

Wayne Hilbert [00:29:12]: Just ask.

Neitha Wilkey [00:29:15]: Yeah, ask. Most firms, at least all the firms I've been involved with, and then as owner of a firm, I have always supported candidates and I think it is to every firm's advantage to do that. They just need to know that you need it. So ask. They are just as invested in your success as you are.

Samantha Miller [00:29:43]: Great advice. Thank you. Our next question, "When will the digital whiteboard be available to try out on the demo exam?" Perhaps Jared.

Jared Zurn [00:29:56]: As I mentioned earlier, the plan to launch the demonstration exam to candidates is that mid-October, which we're thinking is the week of October 19th. That's really the next time candidates should expect to hear a lot of information from NCARB about the changes that are coming. So it would be the new demonstration exam as well as a couple of videos to compliment that.

Samantha Miller [00:30:16]: Great. We have another question about the whiteboard. "Will the whiteboard be erased after the break?" I can answer that one. No, right?

Michelle Cohn [00:30:28]: That's correct.

Samantha Miller [00:30:30]: So our next question is the number of items per division... Oh, I'm sorry. "If the number of items per division drops, do you need to get more questions correct as a percentage of the total?" I think this is about the past rates. So maybe Jared or Michelle you might want to take this one.

Jared Zurn [00:30:50]: Well, what I would say is, I think the answer is going to be no. But what I can tell you, I can't tell you what that answer is going to be because the way a cut score analysis works is NCARB doesn't ... like Wayne and Neitha are not sitting there trying to guess the number and then establish

that for you as a candidate. So this whole process is done from that perspective of results are created by candidates and then the entire exam is reassessed. So what ends up happening is all of the data from these first, what we need is we need 400 candidates per division to test. Once we have those 400 candidates, the data gets analyzed and we go through the process. And if let's say Programming and Analysis gets 400 administrations before PPD, we're going to roll out the information on Programming and Analysis first, like we're going to take them as they come.

But I really can't answer that question because we don't know how candidates are going to perform with the new exam. I would expect realistically that the percent of questions you need to get right is going to stay about the same because the questions are the questions.
We haven't created new questions for the online exam. All we have simply done is we have reduced the number of questions that you're going to be exposed to. I can't anticipate it changing dramatically. I do think what will happen is once we do the full assessment, NCARB will very likely be updating our blog series about how the cut score is set to provide you that new information.

Wayne Hilbert [00:32:14]: One thing we haven't talked about was that part of the reduction in the items is the number of pretest questions. Jared, maybe you want to discuss that a little bit.

Jared Zurn [00:32:27]: Well, this was a debate at the Exam Committee, Wayne. I don't know why you're pushing this one to me because you have to own this. This was a big deal. This was a really big discussion as the Exam Committee debated this, and I was able to be in the room and hear the conversation. It was about how many items can they take away from an exam, but still feel comfortable as a licensing board in accepting those scored results? And so today, we let candidates know that on PPD today, it's 120 items. Twenty of those items are pretest. The other 100 are operational. And those 20 pretest items are randomly delivered. So you as a candidate, you don't know which is a pretest item. To you, every question matters, and that's the way you need to approach it.

But what's changing in the way we're diminishing the number of items is we're going from 20 pretest items in PPD down to just nine. And so you're still going to have 91 operational items instead of 100 operational items. There's a decrease in operational items, but it's a much smaller percentage than the decrease in pretest items. But again, as a candidate, I get it. It doesn't matter to you. A question is a question and you've got to take the time to answer it. So that's why we've adjusted the time as well.

Samantha Miller [00:33:38]: Thanks everyone. So our next question is about technical glitches and I think it might be good to address technical glitches that happen within Prometric test centers, as well as at home or wherever you might be using online proctoring. So, "How is NCARB addressing the existing exam glitches, crashes, and lag time?"

Michelle Cohn [00:34:02]: Well, we work with our vendors on a regular basis. Jared mentioned we had a call with Prometric this morning. We have a call with Prometric every Wednesday morning. And that's where we're staying on top of known issues in the test centers, we talk about the issues as they're occurring, our teams are really in tune with each other and being aware of challenges that our candidates might be experiencing and discussing what is the resolution to those particular issues? Once candidates are able to take an online proctor exam, they will be able to reach their proctor at any time during their exam if they are having a technical issue. So that's a tool that will be available to them. There'll be a chat tool. They can also just speak out loud and be able to speak with their proctor, let

them know if something isn't quite working right. And same as in the test center, the Prometric technical support will be there to support the candidates if they run into any unexpected glitch.

Jared Zurn [00:35:12]: So I believe Sam is muted. Here we go.

Samantha Miller [00:35:14]: I am muted. Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Welcome to a Zoom webinar. Sorry about that, everyone. So our next question is about breaks. "Why won't you be able to revise previously answered questions after you take a break?"

Neitha Wilkey [00:35:29]: Well, I can answer that. When you take your break, you can leave your room. And the idea is that we want to make sure that you're not accessing information during your break, that you can come back and answer a question with that you've already seen. And this way it creates a level playing field.

Samantha Miller [00:35:55]: Thanks, Neitha. Another question about breaks, "Is NCARB concerned or aware that the new break policy will force candidates to not take breaks, especially with regards to case studies?" Maybe a question for Jared or Michelle?

Jared Zurn [00:36:15]: So let's clarify something though about case study specifically in breaks. This question has come up in other forums. Let's say you're in the middle of a case study. You're four questions in, and you've still got five questions to go, and you need to take a break. For whatever reason, you're like, "I just need to take a break." So you can go on break. And what will happen is we're not locking the case study. The four items that you had previously viewed will be locked when you return, but you can come back and finish the case study and do questions five, six, seven, eight, nine as you do those.

And actually, that's something we probably should point out. I don't think we mentioned it earlier is that actually the number of items in case studies is going to go down. That's part of the change that did take place. And again, I think candidates are going to find that advantageous because some of the timing studies that our psychometricians have done shows that candidates spend a lot more time per item on a case study item. And so as a way to again ease the burden of the testing time is we've reduced the number of case study items per division.

I guess the other part of that question was, "has NCARB thought about is this going to cause candidates to not take a break?" And I would say, I don't think NCARB necessarily has delved into that deeply to see if candidates are not going to take breaks over this. I think candidates, if they want to take a break, will still take a break. I think it will change testing strategy as I said earlier. If I was testing and we do do testing as NCARB staff, if you're feeling like you're coming up on a break, it's one of those times to then pause early, check out that exam summary screen, make sure you've answered anything that is incomplete. And that way, you can move on from that. We totally understand that this is a change in the delivery method, we totally understand you're going to have to change your testing strategy.

At the same time, I think there are some opportunities to consider, which is, "Okay, I've answered 30 questions. I've gone on break." Literally, you don't have to worry about those 30 questions. I think we've

all heard the stories and the data shows in the testing world, if you answer a question and then you go back and think about it and you change your answer, you've likely changed it to the wrong answer. There are all kinds of studies that have been done in testing that show that. So it may actually help some candidates to just say, "Yeah, that's my best answer and I'm moving on from it."

Michelle Cohn [00:38:44]: I'll add to that. Some candidates might, as they're changing their strategy, they might start thinking about this as an exam in sections. Even though you do have that opportunity, you could take the whole exam from start to finish without leaving your chair. Now, they still allow if you choose to do that, or perhaps you want to approach it as Jared was mentioning, maybe you take 30 questions and maybe you just approach it as, "I'm going to take this as a three-section exam."

Take those 30 questions, you review your marked items, take your break, and now you move into your next section that you've created with a number of items that work for you. Take a break and then move into that next section.

So I think that you can craft this so a little bit more to what works for you. And again, with that idea, especially in those longer divisions with 45-minute breaks, if you wanted to split that out into four breaks even, where you feel like, "I don't need to get up and use the bathroom and run around, I literally just need to take a drink of water, stretch and sit back down again," that's available to you as an option now.

Neitha Wilkey [00:39:50]: There was a lot of discussion in the Examination Committee about breaks, and the idea really is that you get to tailor it to you. Because with as many people that was in that meeting, everybody had a different style that they would employ. So I hope that you find that the breaks are able to be tailored to your needs and your strategies.

Samantha Miller [00:40:22]: Thanks, everyone. "If I schedule an online proctor test and then decide I want to take it in person, can I change the mode and vice versa?"

Michelle Cohn [00:40:34]: Yes, absolutely. And that is something that the Prometric scheduler will offer to you. So, again, you'll be scheduling your exams, you log into your NCARB Record. If you have a seat credit there, you've just paid for a seat credit, you'll click that schedule button just as you're always used to, and now you will have that option to schedule for one mode or the other, or to be able to reschedule and either stick with that same delivery mode or switch to a new delivery mode. So there's a lot of flexibility built into the system there. And really, it's all what date and time you're available to test is just dependent on proctor availability in the online delivered model or seat availability at your test center.

Samantha Miller [00:41:21]: Thanks Michelle. We have a question about one of the references in the *ARE 5.0 Handbook*. "Can you please remind us what the change was for IBC from 2015 to 2018?"

Jared Zurn [00:41:40]: As far as what the change is, or really the fact that what the volunteers that work for NCARB, what they've been doing over the last couple of months is they go through and they review the items that are in the item bank. And then if the item is a code-related item, what they do is they look at the 2015 code reference that would be provided, they update it to the 2018 code. So what I will tell you is for the vast, vast majority of items that are being updated to the 2018 code, there's literally

no change to the question, and there's literally no change to what is the correct answer. In cases where charts may have been updated because they're using a new factor inside of IBC 2018, the new chart would be provided in the question.

So, again, the ARE's about application of the code, it's not about the memorization of the code. If you're given a code question, I saw one of the questions referred to egress with, you're given a code about egress with, or a question about egress with, we're going to give you the code and you're going to have to then say, "Oh, yeah, here's the table. I got to do my calculation. Here's my answer."

Samantha Miller [00:42:41]: Next question is about volunteering for NCARB. I'll let Wayne and Neitha take this one. "How are volunteers chosen to help develop the exam?"

Neitha Wilkey [00:42:51]: Well, you express an interest. And it was very interesting for me. Because I'm on my board, I felt it was important for me to be involved in the test process because we rely heavily as a board on NCARB's work here. I have to tell you, my work on the ARE has just been some of the most satisfying that I've ever done. I encourage everybody to do it. You do not need to be a member of your board. There is a call for volunteers that goes out generally in February. Check and see and volunteer. People who have just passed their exam have a really valuable perspective as opposed to people like Wayne and I who have been doing it for a while. And so we really cherish the involvement of newly licensed people. Wayne, did you want to—

Wayne Hilbert [00:43:55]: Yeah. If you get involved with committee work or any kind of volunteering with NCARB, it doesn't matter how old you are or ... The committees are very diverse. Everybody has an equal say. And whether you're listening to like... If I'm listening to somebody who's younger or somebody younger listening to me, I think we all learn from each other. We all appreciate each other or respect each other. And so it's really a good experience. I would encourage it for anybody. I guess the other part of it too is that state boards are always looking for people. And that's another area that you can look at. Sometimes they have requirements. I know in my own state you have to have 10 years of experience. Other states are lower than that. There's a trend to get fewer years of experience to get on your boards, but that's also a very good way to serve the community and get a little different insight into what's going on.

I also appreciate the committee work because in my own home state, my own home area, I compete with a lot of architects and so when I socialize with them, there's a little competition there. But in the committees, because of these people you're really not competing with it, you're dealing with people in a much different level, and I really appreciate the comradery and the advice or the comments that other people make. So definitely consider volunteering.

Samantha Miller [00:45:28]: Yes. We could not do what we do without all of our volunteers. So thank you. Our next question is about pass rates. "So ARE pass rates are as low as 42%. Previous iterations of the exam had passed rates around 70%. Can you address why this is and what you're doing to address it in the future?" I think Jared and Michelle might want to take that one.

Jared Zurn [00:45:54]: Certainly, I can say so. NCARB is constantly monitoring pass rates on the ARE. And one key thing to understand is that NCARB doesn't set the pass rate. That's actually not something that is ever done. What is established is the cut score, and that's why you heard me talk about that earlier. So the cut score is really that line in ... Let's say there's going to be 91 operational items on PPD. There's going to be a line set somewhere, which is ... And let's just say it's 50 and it's a nice round number. If a candidate scores 50 or above, they're going to get a passing score. If a candidate scores 49 or below, they're going to get a failing score. And what NCARB establishes through the psychometric process is they establish the cut score.

The pass rate, the result of that cut score, or how many people pass or fail really becomes ... It's a different measurement. And so NCARB is tracking pass rates. And what we're looking at is we're looking at how close are candidates to passing, and what we're finding is that the data shows us that we do have a large bubble of candidates that are close to passing, but they're not quite there. It doesn't mean that NCARB just can go in and adjust the cut score, actually that's a rather invalid thing to do from a test delivery perspective.

And so what NCARB is looking to do is to start to produce more information about where are those areas of weakness that we're seeing across an exam division to hopefully focus candidates in that area to possibly shift that bubble. So we can do those kinds of things. But it's not about trying to chase a pass rate, or we don't set pass rates, we set cut scores following testing procedures.

Samantha Miller [00:47:35]: Thanks Jared. "How is NCARB addressing the criticism and concerns of ARE candidates regarding the digital whiteboard? And then what specific actions have been taken to address these concerns?" I think that may be helpful for Michelle and Jared to weigh in first since you're also active on the ARE 5.0 Community.

Wayne Hilbert [00:48:03]: I'm sorry, can you ... the question is—

Samantha Miller [00:48:06]: Repeat the question?

Wayne Hilbert [00:48:06]: Yeah.

Samantha Miller [00:48:07]: Oh, sure. So a lot of candidates have voiced their concerns over this switch from scratch paper to the virtual whiteboard. So, A, how is NCARB addressing these concerns? And B, what might we do in the future?

Wayne Hilbert [00:48:25]: Well, one of the things, you'll be able to play with the whiteboard here in the next couple of weeks, it will come out. So you'll have plenty of time to play with it. I think from a committee or board perspective or the jurisdictions is we really want to maintain security in the exam. That's very critical for the jurisdictions where you're going to get licensed. And then I'll pass it on to Michelle or to Jared to answer the rest of that.

Michelle Cohn [00:48:54]: I think following up on that, we're definitely listening to candidates and part of how we're addressing that is by just continuing to keep those lines of communication open and having events like this. I know that the community has been very active lately and I know that Jared has been very active also answering a lot of questions on the community. I know there have also been a lot

of questions posted on our blog. And part of the reason that we wanted to have this NCARB Live today is because we just released a lot of information yesterday. So being able to talk to our candidate community right away, hopefully explain and provide some more clarity on what we just released to all of you, is a way that we can continue to provide that information that you need and hopefully provide some of the why—the reasoning behind these changes.

Jared Zurn [00:49:48]: And I will follow up and say this. Like Michelle said, I've been on the community, I'm reading a lot of the posts. And actually, we communicated that information back to the Board of Directors. There was a Board of Directors meeting held just over a week ago where this was the one of the major topics that the Board really debated. And they took into consideration all of the different factors that are out there around NCARB's decision. I think it's critical to remember the why even behind NCARB pursuing this because there's a lot of comments in the thread right now about why is NCARB going so fast? Why is NCARB going so fast?

I fully acknowledge I was at NCARB when we transitioned from 4.0 to 5.0. And we did, we had 18 months, we communicated a lot, we put up information. And the reality is we had the time and the luxury to do that back then.
With the onset of the pandemic, this last year, we are hearing from candidates that are not able to test in test centers. They have underlying health conditions, it's not safe for them to put themselves at risk to go into a test center. And so NCARB is pivoting in a way to try to respond, to give all candidates access to the ARE. And yes, I will fully acknowledge, we are moving much faster than we have ever moved before on this issue. And we're doing that in an effort to be responsive to the candidates.

Along with that, we are making the necessary changes on security, because we have been looking at online proctoring for years and I can look to Neitha and Wayne on this. As part of the Exam Committee, I know they've investigated this for multiple years. We've gotten comfortable with the software, we're still testing it, and the reality is we're trying to move quickly to make this option available. Yes, the reality is some of you are not comfortable with these changes. I fully acknowledge that. And NCARB is going to keep trying to answer questions and give you tips on how to readjust.

And I'll continue to say there's a reason we're doing that cut score. I know it's complicated. I would love to do an hour long webinar just about the cut score because I guess I'm that much of a testing nerd to really help you understand the fact that all of these changes are going to be taken into account. There's questions about pass rates. Are pass rate is going to go up or down? I will tell you my gut reaction in knowing the changes that are taking place is I actually think pass rates are going to go up with these changes.

Candidates struggle with time on the ARE 5.0 today; we're addressing that. We're cleaning up some of the item types. We're going to this three-option multiple-choice, which the exam committee worked on last year. There's so many improvements to this exam, that yes, this the loss of scratch paper and the addition of the digital whiteboard, all of that was discussed by the Board of Directors. And in the totality, all of the things happening, the decision by the Board was to continue to move forward and not delay. And it was because it was the best overall decision to serve the candidate population and to serve the member boards.

Samantha Miller [00:52:42]: Thank you, everyone. So at the end of the day, it's really about balancing accessibility for our candidates, but also maintaining the security and integrity of a national licensing exam, right? If we had to boil it down. Okay, that's helpful. So we have some more questions about breaks, specifically not being able to go back and view previously addressed questions after you get back from a break. So can one of you just quickly remind candidates about the new policy, about the flexible break schedule?

Michelle Cohn [00:53:17]: Sure, I can take this one. Especially for maybe some of you who joined the webinar a little bit late, we can definitely just review those briefly. The break time, I know candidates have been used to 15 minutes of break time. And then with the onset of the pandemic and enhanced security procedures, that was increased to 25 minutes today at the test center. That is going to increase again. So in four of our six divisions, you will have 30 minutes of break time. And then there are two longest divisions, PPD and PDD, you will have 45 minutes of break time. Now, currently, candidates are used to ... They get one break. This is how long it is, kind of use it or lose it, sort of policy there.

Well, with our new break policy, you can divide that breakup into as many breaks as you choose. You could take one 30-minute break if you need that.

And that might be providing some added flexibility for candidates who just need a little bit more time to clear their heads or who need to eat something more, something like that, or for other candidates, you might prefer to take several smaller breaks. And so if you have a 30-minute break and you use the first seven minutes of it, well, great, then you've got 23 minutes of break time that you can still use later on in your exam. So you can really craft a new strategy for yourself in terms of how you want to use that break time, how you want to divide it up or use it all at once. It's really up to you, that flexibility there.

And how that works then in terms of reviewing your items, so, again, this goes to crafting that new strategy for yourself. When you return from your break, you will not be able to look at any items that you had looked at before your break. So those items will be locked. So you'll really want to make sure before you take a break that you take the opportunity that you need to review your items. I know some candidates say, "I want to review everything," other candidates say, "I just want to review the marked items." You'll have the opportunity just like today, where you have that review screen, you can see exactly which items you've marked, which ones you haven't answered yet. You'll be able to do that mini review, then take your break, and then you can approach the rest of your exam now knowing that all of those other items are behind you, you don't have to worry about them anymore, you can just move into the next portion of your exam.

Samantha Miller [00:55:56]: Thanks Michelle. So we have over 1,000 questions. So I think what we'll do is extend the webinar by about another 15 minutes. So our next question is about the rolling clock. "Can you please remind us what was the total extension provided from NCARB for the rolling clock, and do you anticipate that we will add any additional extensions?"

Jared Zurn [00:56:24]: So the total rolling clock extensions that have been granted thus far due to COVID-19, it was 15 months for all exams based on a March 1, 2020, date. So that basically pushes everybody into that May timeframe of 2021. As far as future rolling clock extensions, I would say that really is going to depend on the outcome of how this pandemic plays out in the country. So right now, we know all candidate scores as of March are protected through May. I think as we get into early 2021,

we're going to have to reassess where things are at as far as accessibility into test centers. And again, that's one of the reasons we're launching online proctoring. But I will say even if candidates have other conditions that are not allowing them to test, other medical conditions, there are always additional rolling clock extensions available through the standard exam policies.

Samantha Miller [00:57:17]: You just mentioned extensions, so extensions for accommodations. So we have a question related to that topic. "Will the same ADA accommodations be available for online testing as they are in Prometric test centers?"

Michelle Cohn [00:57:34]: I will say some of them, yes. So NCARB does have an accommodations process in place right now. So for those of you who haven't taken advantage of that, if you have a documented disability or a temporary condition that affects your ability to test, you can contact NCARB's customer service, they will walk you through the process through which you need to submit documentation, and apply for an approved accommodation. Now, Prometric test centers, of course, comply with all ADA requirements and can provide those accommodations to you in the test centers. Some of those accommodations will be able to be approved for online proctored testing as well. So that's something that you'll talk through with the customer service representative if candidates do need to reach out about an accommodation.

Some accommodations will not be applicable to the online proctor testing just based on security requirements or other potential factors. So there might be some limits on that for some candidates that might need to test in the test center for certain accommodations. But absolutely just reach out to NCARB's customer service team, and our team is able to really walk you through, again, the process for applying and what is going to be available versus not in the two-delivery modes.

Samantha Miller [00:59:05]: Thanks Michelle. "Will dropped Wi-Fi or internet be treated like a break, where you won't be able to go back and see previously viewed items?"

Jared Zurn [00:59:17]: Right. That is something to understand that a break is when a candidate chooses to take a break, leave the testing environment, whether it's online or whether it's onsite. So that's when the items get locked. If a candidate is actively testing and then let's say they lose their internet connection, what happens is the exam is going to go into a paused state and allow the candidate time to then reconnect. So in a paused state, it's not putting a candidate into a break, your exam is literally just paused. If you were on question 17, when you come back, you're going to be on question 17.

Samantha Miller [00:59:50]: That's helpful. Perfect. And I'll throw a question to Neitha and Wayne. "Are all of these changes going to make the exam easier?" I know that's something you all discussed at the committee level.

Wayne Hilbert [01:00:07]: I think there'll be parts of it that will be I think better. I don't know if I'd say easier. But I think having the flexibility, having few less multiple-choice, three responses instead of four, I think it will just make it a better exam. I know it's a little scary because it's something new, but we've been trying in the committees to make it a better exam, make it more accommodating. So I don't know if I answered the question or not, but that's my feeling. Neitha?

Neitha Wilkey [01:00:46]: Well, I would say it's not going to be easier. I don't expect it to be harder, because what we're testing for is still the same thing is a certain level of competency and that doesn't necessarily make a test harder or easier. I agree with Wayne that some of the things we're implementing through online proctoring are more candidate-friendly. And I think that when you feel that the process is more tailored to you, you're going to feel more comfortable with it. I know the Exam Committee debated a lot of the elements of these changes, and it came down to making it as best for our candidates as possible and maintaining fairness.

Samantha Miller [01:01:43]: Yeah, that's helpful. Can you have the calculator and the whiteboard open on your screen at the same time? Michelle?

Michelle Cohn [01:01:53]: Yes, you can. Again, candidates should think about the screen real estate, especially if they are testing from home and don't have that larger monitor. As I had mentioned earlier, you can certainly use a smaller monitor. It just means some more scrolling and a little bit more of a tighter fit for everything on your screen there. But certainly, that calculator will still be available to you, the references box will still be available to you, and then of course, the whiteboard. Jared had mentioned in his talk earlier that candidates actually might find they don't need to go into the references as much as they had in the past because a lot of our items have now been updated, so that any formula that you might need that is listed in those references is now actually provided to you in the question itself. So those references will still be there and you can pull those up alongside the calculator and the whiteboard, but you might find that you might not need to as frequently as you have in the past.

Samantha Miller [01:02:58]: Thanks Michelle. So when we switched from ARE 4.0 to 5.0, we provided some incentives for people to test early. Why aren't we doing something similar for the launch of online proctoring? Jared?

Jared Zurn [01:03:14]: Yeah. So the decision has been made that we're not offering incentives to candidates to go in and test as part of the holding of scores. That was a decision back in the 4.0 to 5.0 transition because at the time there was the dual modality that was happening, where people could be testing in 4.0, some candidates were testing at 5.0. And at the time, NCARB used the incentives as a way to speed up or expedite the cut score process. The reality is since this is a transition time, like we're literally flipping over from the current version to the new version, it was decided to not offer incentives.

Samantha Miller [01:03:54]: And I know, Jared, you touched on this a little bit earlier, that some candidates would like further clarification on why we didn't provide more time for them to prepare for the upcoming launch of online proctoring. As you mentioned before, we announced the ARE 5.0 about two years in advance and then we had an 18-month dual delivery system. So can you just provide another overview of why we're expediting timeline?

Jared Zurn [01:04:26]: The speed of this process is in response to the pandemic. It's an effort to get online proctoring launched as soon as possible. And we literally are in a as-soon-as-possible mode. So that's part of the reason to why people said... And I understand the question of, well, "why can't we have the whiteboard tool now?" is so we can prepare as much as possible. And the reality is we're still fine-tuning it because we went into development on this as soon as we could. It's not where we want it to be, or you as a candidate. And so we're still working on it. The reality is all of the planning is based on

everybody hitting the marks, and that's why we keep talking about the expected launch being November 16, because we want to ensure that what we roll out to the candidates is appropriate.

I will tell you the reality is from the assembling the forms, reducing the number of items—that's easy. That was really honestly the easy question because we can accomplish that work. It's the reliance on the technical, and I've seen several questions about the exam software and the crashing that some candidates experience when they're at test center. So we are working with our vendors to upgrade their application to get many changes made as soon as possible. And so what we continue to do is push to be responsive to the candidates in a fashion though that still allows us to be responsive to allow candidates the time to prepare. So that's why the mid-October launch of the whiteboard gives candidates the four weeks or so to practice that white virtual as much as possible, play with the larger exam, get used to the break functionality before the actual launch goes into effect.

Samantha Miller [01:06:10]: And Jared, you mentioned mid-October, a few viewers have asked a specific day for when they can start testing.

Jared Zurn [01:06:19]: Totally understand that question. I think you heard me say earlier, mid-October is that week of October 19th. And that is when you as candidates can really expect to hear more from NCARB. Because again, that's what we're doing. We're doing the work right now to check this, check that, do all these things, form assemblies or coming together, and it really is that just in time to make this happen to give candidates this option as soon as possible.

Samantha Miller [01:06:46]: All right. Thank you. We have a few more tech questions. "What does a 360-degree camera mean?" Michelle, you've chatted with me about that, so perhaps you'd like to answer that question.

Michelle Cohn [01:06:58]: Absolutely. So when we say a 360-degree view of your secure testing area, we literally mean if you're testing on a laptop, you're going to pick up your laptop and spin it around so that proctor can see your testing environment. If you are testing with just a separate monitor with a webcam, it will be a little bit easier probably, but you will be taking up that webcam to show your full testing area to the proctor assigned to you. Note that this will involve showing the area under your desk. You will also need to show the area behind your monitor. So if you're working off of a laptop, you should have a mirror handy to be able to show that full area so that your proctor can see everything in your secure testing area.

Samantha Miller [01:07:49]: Michelle, can you tell us a little bit more about the clean desk policy, so no water, what about plants?

Michelle Cohn [01:07:58]: Right. No, clean desk means clean desk. Unfortunately, we can't make any exception for one thing versus another. That is really the best way that we can ensure the security of the exam. And for Neitha and Wayne and their colleagues on all of our Member Boards, that is really how they feel confident about just the validity and the reliability of the exam as an assessment tool for licensure. So the clean desk policy is really an important part of that security. And what that means is nothing on your desk, other than your mouse, your keyboard, your monitor—those devices that you specifically need to actually take the exam.

Samantha Miller [01:08:46]: In the next few weeks and months, we'll provide photos, we've asked all of our exam team members to set up their at-home testing environment so that you can see all the different ways that you could make it work for you. So we'll have step-by-step instructions within the coming weeks. So we have time for a few more questions and then we will wrap up.

Jared Zurn [01:09:10]: Sam, I'm going to jump ahead and kind of scanning the questions as fast as I can.

Samantha Miller [01:09:13]: Oh, sure. They are a lot.

Jared Zurn [01:09:17]: So one of the questions is ... The question is, so "With the change to the break function, that the fact that when you go on break, the items are going to be locked, both in test centers and with your tests online, will candidates at the test center be able to have full access to their locker?" And the answer is absolutely yes. This is one of the changes that ... because we have candidates today that go into the test center and Prometric gives you a certain color key, and then you're not allowed to access things in your locker when you're on break. And if you do, if you access your cell phone, candidates actually can get disciplinary warnings for that act.

And so with the implementation of the new policy, you really frees up candidate access. When you go on break at a Prometric test center, your items are going to be locked behind you. So the reality is, yes, if you need to now actually pick up your cell phone, call your babysitter to see how things are going, you can do that. And that's the kind of thing where today, if a candidate were to do that, the Prometric test center administrator is going to write up the candidate for a security violation.

Michelle Cohn [01:10:19]: And Sam, I will jump in because I was also scanning the Q&A and another sort of nuanced question, which was a really good one. Someone asked, "If you skip ahead to do the case studies first, does not mean that those items that you skipped over are now going to be locked?" Again, we know that candidates sometimes do that. They start on question one, then immediately go to their exam summary screen and jump to those case studies to get those out of the way in the beginning part of their exam. So that's something that we have specifically talked with our developers about. And the answer is, no, those questions won't be locked for you. Before you even get to question one, the first screen you're going to see is that summary screen. And so that will allow you to immediately jump to the case studies without seeing a question before that so that you won't have to worry about accidentally locking yourself out of a question when you weren't intending to.

Samantha Miller [01:11:17]: That's helpful. Thanks, Michelle. So a few of our candidates haven't heard of PSI, can you briefly tell us about that test administrator?

Jared Zurn [01:11:28]: Certainly. So PSI is another test site vendor that provides services to various certification and licensure exams all across the country. They have both psychometric services as well as the test center network. What we're doing is we are going to be migrating to their test center network in that June 2021 timeframe. And so one thing I will caution candidates about I know when we released this early, some candidates went onto Google Maps and they typed in PSI test center and they realized that their local PSI test center seemed to be a really long way away. And so one of the reasons I will point out that we looked at PSI and are planning to move there is because they also partner with additional test centers. So please do not think that if you type in PSI test center, those are the only ones

available. We're going to be turning on a tool come spring that's going to allow you to find your local test center and plenty of time to plan your future testing appointments before this would ever go live.

Samantha Miller [01:12:32]: Thank you. Before we wrap up any NCARB Live, we always like to ask our panelists to share one parting thought that could be something really important that you want candidates to take away from today's webinar or keep in mind for the future. So let's start with Wayne.

Wayne Hilbert [01:12:55]: This is a test that you're going to be taking that's approved by 55 jurisdictions, and getting 55 jurisdictions to approve a test is not the easiest thing in the world. But it's actually a compliment to NCARB that this can be pulled off the way it is. So that's my thought I guess on it.

Samantha Miller [01:13:18]: Thanks, Wayne. How about Michelle?

Michelle Cohn [01:13:24]: I guess my key takeaway is just be open to hearing the new information that NCARB is releasing. We've talked a lot about the pace of this change. It really is about this pandemic speeding up areas that we have been researching anyway. And so we were honestly glad to say like, "Well, good thing we've already started looking into this, because now we're well-positioned to just be that much closer to a solution for our candidates." So we are truly providing the information to you as soon as we can, and we will continue to do so. And so I guess for our candidates, just hang in there as we provide more and more information to you so that, again, we want to help you prepare for that first day with the new testing.

Samantha Miller [01:14:16]: Thanks, Michelle. How about Neitha?

Neitha Wilkey [01:14:19]: I want you to know that we all want you to be successful. And NCARB does a lot of work to put together tools and the community. You can go to your state, go to architects in your firm, we all want you to succeed because you are our future and we're going to do everything we can to help you do that.

Samantha Miller [01:14:45]: Thanks, Neitha. And how about Jared?

Jared Zurn [01:14:48]: I guess the last piece of advice I'll give candidates, I've seen lots of comments in there about "Have we tested the whiteboard? Can you use the whiteboard to take this exam?" And the answer is I'm going to say is, yes, we have. The reality is I share with candidates that I still, as the vice president examination, go in and test the exam, I'm testing it tomorrow morning again. And I still try to pass. I go and try to pass this exam when I take this exam because I'm an architect, I want to have this knowledge, I want to still show that I have this knowledge. And so I understand that there's this anxiety around the whiteboard tool. And candidates, there's anxiety now around like locking of items and things like that. And the thing to understand about this exam is that it is about ensuring fairness, it's about ensuring consistency across all 55 Member Boards. That's one of the huge benefits that Wayne had alluded to that it's like you pass the ARE once you're done. You don't have to take it again.

And so NCARB is charged with ensuring that this exam, the security is not lowered. And so I think questions about "Why are we locking items on break?" Well, we're locking items on break because it's a more secure way to administer the exam. One of the benefits of getting rid of scratch paper, I know it's

a disadvantage you may feel as a candidate, but to us, it's security. And that security gives our member boards confidence in your ability to actually practice architecture independently. And we can't forget that the goal of this exam is to make sure that each of you, including myself, including Wayne and Neitha, thank you very much for being here, and for Michelle, it's like, "Yeah, I can sign and seal a set of drawings that I am fully responsible for an estate."

And so, yeah, this exam, it's not easy. The exam has never been easy. I failed the exam when I took it. But what it is is it's going to measure competency and that's what matters to our boards. So NCARB takes that very seriously and we also take very seriously providing access. And so we're pursuing online proctoring to maintain access during this pandemic and into the future. And I would just say, I understand as a candidate, it's like pay attention just like Michelle said and just engage in preparing for the exam that's in front of you and not overstressing about the changes because change is inevitable and the exam is constantly evolving.

Samantha Miller [01:17:18]: Thank you, everyone. That's all sage advice for our candidates. And we'd like to thank all of you viewers for joining us. If at any point you came on late or have had to drop off early, this webinar will be available on our YouTube channel tomorrow. And as everyone's mentioned, please continue to connect with us either through the ARE 5.0 Online Community on social media or by calling our customer service team. So we hope to see you again soon. We'll have many more webinars about the launch of online proctoring, and we're available to help you out. So thanks, everyone. Have a good night. Bye-bye.