



American Student Dental Association

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Engage?

The primary purpose of [Engage](#) is to inform dental students on [critical issues](#) and rally in response to legislative activities that impact their profession. This is mostly accomplished through action alerts prompting students to contact their legislators.

Why should I use Engage?

The issues that impact you as a dental student and future dentist are continuously being discussed in Congress and state legislatures. Issues you care about, such as student debt, licensure, Medicaid and Medicare, barriers to care, midlevel providers, health care reform, STEM and dental school funding will affect how you practice for years to come. Involving yourself in the process and taking action provides you a voice in these discussions and can significantly improve your ability to shape the future of the dental profession.

How do I use Engage?

ASDA members are driven to Engage to voice their position to their elected officials by writing a letter, tweeting a representative, signing a petition or sharing a personal story.

1. **Connect with your lawmakers:** Action alerts are sent to ASDA members with a pre-drafted (form) letter that can be edited by the member or used as is. Members use their respective zip code to establish their audience. Once the member has finished their letter, it is submitted electronically to their state or federal lawmaker.
2. **Track important legislation:** Engage features a bill tracking function that allows users to follow pertinent bills through the legislative process. This includes a summary of the bill, information on its sponsor(s), ASDA's position and current status. A critical part of advocacy is understanding the process. Knowing where a bill is headed and who will decide its fate helps ASDA focus its advocacy efforts while keeping members informed.
3. **Follow current events:** Engage also includes a customized newsfeed, tailored specifically to dental students and organized dentistry. The newsfeed filters national and local news outlets and provides continuously updated articles, based on criteria defined by ASDA.

Who are my legislators?

You can [look up your lawmakers](#) based on your zip code. This information will also be provided to you when you take action on a bill.

How can I take action?

Engage features timely issues that impact ASDA members at the top of the page—click the TAKE ACTION button. This will lead you to a section where you fill out some information about yourself. This information is required in order to determine who your federal or state lawmakers are.

Once you've filled out the information, you'll be taken to a form letter. Remember to type your name before hitting submit. Based on the information you provided, this will be sent to your respective lawmaker (seen in the "recipients" box to the right of the letter).

You'll receive a thank you message, both on the page and via e-mail. The webpage will allow you to share the action via Facebook, Twitter or e-mail. Feel free to share with fellow students, faculty or patients.

Can I edit or change the form letter?

Depending on the issue, you may be able to edit the form letter. If so, feel free to add personal stories that help illustrate why this issue is important to you and how their decision will impact your dental education or profession. However, be sure not to stray from the main message of the original letter.

How do I know when to take action?

- Visit the Engage site at www.ASDAnet.org/Engage to see which issues require immediate action.
- For critical or time-sensitive matters, ASDA will send an action alert to your e-mail that will prompt you to take action. As an ASDA member, you do not need to sign-up; you are automatically enrolled. You can opt out of this service at your convenience.

What if I live in a different district than where I attend dental school?

You should use the zip code for where you are registered to vote. But lawmakers who represent districts with dental schools want to hear from you, too. Depending on the issue, you are able to send a letter to different lawmakers if you have the correct zip code.

What are the key issues that ASDA advocates for or against?

ASDA submitted a [2013 Federal Legislative Agenda](#) to the 113th Congress. The agenda outlines ASDA legislative priorities, which include: student debt, barriers to care and health care reform – dental materials.

How are these issues decided?

ASDA's [Council on Advocacy](#) and [Executive Committee](#) works with stakeholders in organized dentistry to identify and monitor legislative issues that could impact dentistry.

Who should I contact with questions about Engage or advocacy opportunities?

- Your legislative coordinator (listed at www.asdanet.org/council/advocacy.aspx)
- Your chapter's legislative liaison