

1 **Resolution Number:** 401-2024

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3 **Title:** ASDA's Position on the future supply of dentists

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5 **Reference Committee Assignment:** Professional Issues

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7 **Sponsor(s):** Kenny Tran Alternate Delegate Midwestern Arizona

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9 **Financial Impact:**

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11 **Board of Trustees Comments:** The Board appreciates the sponsor's observation about new
12 schools opening and what the implications of those new school openings may mean in the
13 future. However, the mission of ASDA states that we are an organization that "protects and
14 advances the rights, interests and welfare of dental students." Measures that restrict ASDA's
15 ability to support all future dental students does not align with our current mission. Therefore,
16 the Board recommends a no vote.

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18 **Reference Committee Comments:** Based on the verbal testimony shared, the problem of
19 access to care is incentivizing dentists where to go, not about the number of dentists
20 themselves. Based on verbal and written testimony that the Reference Committee received, it's
21 not ASDA's job to take a stance on whether dental schools should open. By not supporting all
22 future dental students, we are not in alignment with our mission. The Reference committee
23 recommends a no vote.

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25 **Background:** According to the HRSA, there is a shortage of 10,877 currently in the United
26 States. However, with multiple new schools being opened, this may change. Accounting for
27 recent graduates from expected school openings, the projected number of dentists per 100,000
28 is expected to rise from 60.8 to 67 in the next 20 years. The ADA Health Policy Institute has
29 noted in recent years that the rate of new graduates and retirees has maintained a 1 to 1 ratio.
30 New dental schools cite a shortage of dentists as a reason why more dental schools are needed.

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32 The approach to improve access to care is not opening new schools or increasing class sizes but
33 incentivizing current students and dentists to work in rural areas via more student loan
34 repayment programs. With new schools opening yearly and stagnant dentist wages in major
35 metro areas, action must be taken to protect our profession.

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37 Dentistry should be cautious with more schools rapidly opening and prevent an over-saturation
38 of dentists. The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) sets the pace for accreditation of
39 new dental schools. To prevent an over-saturation of dentists, CODA may consider adjusting
40 the timeframe of the accreditation process. This could include increasing the time it takes to
41 receive initial accreditation and increasing the criteria a school needs before applying. These
42 would allow CODA to have further control in the rate at which schools open.

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44 ASDA represents current and future dental students across the country. Speaking and
45 providing input on new dental school openings is necessary to protect our future.

46

47 *Therefore, be it*

48

RESOLUTION

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50

51 **Resolved**, that the American Student Dental Association supports the measured opening of
52 dental schools and class size increases to meet any existing shortages of dentists. With the
53 measured opening of schools and changes in class sizes being defined as: all school openings
54 and class size increases shall not lead to exceed an increase of 1% in graduates per year.

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56 **Further resolved**, the American Student Dental Association board of trustees 2024-2025 is
57 urged to investigate the feasibility of appointing the duty of advocating for measured opening
58 of new dental schools to prevent over-saturation of the profession to the council on advocacy.

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60 **Further resolved**, that the American Student Dental Association executive committee is urged
61 by the House of Delegates to work with the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)
62 leadership regarding measured opening of dental schools and class size increases.

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65 **Action:** The Chair moves 401-2024 with a recommendation of a no vote.

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69 Reference: [https://adanews.ada.org/ada-news/2023/september/dental-schools-and-the-
70 future-supply-of-dentists/](https://adanews.ada.org/ada-news/2023/september/dental-schools-and-the-future-supply-of-dentists/)

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72 ADA Health Policy Institute research brief, "Projected Supply of Dentists in the United States,
73 2020-2040