



**News Release
For Immediate Release
August 26, 2005**

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WREB HOLDS FORUM TO DISCUSS CLINICAL EXAMINATIONS FOR LICENSURE

As controversy and confusion whirl around the dental examining field, licensing examiners, representatives from 20 dental schools throughout the country, as well as representatives from the American Dental Education Association, met on July 22nd near Portland, Oregon. The Forum, sponsored by WREB, was held during the Western Conference of Dental School Deans and Examiners.

WREB has announced plans to shed its regional status and become a national testing agency. The educators and examiners who attended the Western Conference praised the opportunity to meet and discuss their common goals and current issues, while also recognizing the unique roles and responsibilities of each group.

The main issues addressed in discussion concerned the traditional exam format: treatment out-of-sequence, multiple-stage testing during the academic year and the problems that presents, the proper location of re-testing for students, and the excitement produced by the development of computerized prosthodontic and periodontal exams. The educators encouraged examiners to explore additional uses of technology (such as the computerized exams) as one way to reduce the need for use of patients in the exam process.

Both educators and examiners agreed upon a common goal: quality dental care for the public. This common goal is a basis for continued cooperation between educators and examiners. Dr. Stephen Young, Dean of the Dental School at the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, summed up the tone of the discussion: "Faculty and examiners working together will provide a better assessment than either group could produce alone."

Educators expressed their support for having two national exams rather than one, allowing state boards and schools a choice in exam selection. As the examining communities around the country shift into new and untested alliances, WREB will maintain the high quality of its current exam while continuing to make exam enhancements utilizing the expertise of deans and educators and all other parties of interest. Dr. Lorin Peterson, President of the WREB Board of Directors, reinforced the importance of having two national exams: "I think all states should accept both WREB

and ADEX test results. Candidates would have mobility, schools would have a choice of which exam they utilize, and the competition between two exams would make each exam better.”

WREB is a testing agency that has been providing clinical licensure exams for dentists and dental hygienists since the mid 1970s. WREB currently examines at 22 dental schools throughout the country and has announced plans to offer the exam on a national basis. WREB is already accepted for licensure requirements in 32 states.

This Forum was such a success that WREB plans to include future Forums as an annual feature of the Western Conference.