



The Commission on Dental Competency Assessment and the Western Regional Examining Board, the two leading dental competency assessment organizations in the United States, are pleased to announce their intention to combine into one organization to further serve the oral health professions. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on June 15, 2021, outlining the intent of the merger.

The new entity will be known as CDCA-WREB. Together, the merged entity will administer the ADEX exams which are accepted in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico as the basis for initial licensure for dentists and dental hygienists. The existing Boards of Directors of CDCA and WREB will combine to provide governance oversight to the combined entity with equal representation from both Boards.

The transition to fully operationalize the merger is expected to be ongoing throughout 2022. During this year, the combined organization will implement best practices from both organizations to create new processes to better serve all key constituencies. The combined organization intends to administer both the ADEX exam and the current WREB exam throughout 2022 and will begin to administer only the ADEX exam at all locations for the Class of 2023. CDCA-WREB will maintain two offices to best serve schools and candidates throughout North America. Exams will be administered in manikin, patient and computer based OSCE formats that satisfy state board requirements.

Dr. Rob Lauf, President of WREB states: “Members of the Boards of Directors of both organizations enthusiastically and unanimously support this plan and recognize the need to administer a single national psychomotor performance exam to simplify the process for obtaining licensure for dental and hygiene candidates and provide maximum portability.”

There is already considerable overlap. Many states by law recognize both the WREB and CDCA-administered examinations as the basis for licensure and many examiners serve both organizations. Combination is a logical next step for both agencies. In reflecting on the merger, Dr. Harvey Weingarten, CDCA Chair, commented that “the pandemic highlighted the complexity of the licensure process for candidates, state boards, and for both our agencies and expedited innovation across the industry, making this collaboration more important than ever before. This is a long-awaited defining moment in the history of the dental profession. We are the only remaining health profession that has not defined a single, national pathway to licensure.”

Together CDCA-WREB will become one of the largest organizations providing initial dental licensure testing and will have the most experienced staff in the industry. Together the two agencies have provided independent third party, mission-driven services to state dental boards for a combined 100 years. The merged entity will be able to further devote its time, effort, and resources to the continued development of the exams it administers. Having a single exam will simplify the licensure process for candidates, for state boards and for dental education programs.

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