



Mid-Atlantic Advocacy Academy ASDA Districts 2, 3, and 4



Student Debt and the Higher Education Act

The American Student Dental Association (ASDA) recognizes dental student debt as one of the major issues facing dentistry. In 2016, the average debt for all graduating, indebted dental school students was \$287,331. That is four times the amount of debt that dental students faced when graduating in 1990. For these reasons, ASDA consistently lobbies on the behalf of those taking out thousands of dollars of loans every year just to obtain a dental school education.

As a part of addressing the issue of rising student debt, ASDA encourages lawmakers to include the following components in future state and federal legislation :

- Expansion of the tax deductibility of interest on education debt, student scholarships, and loan repayments
- Reduction of student loan interest rates
- Improved access to public service loan forgiveness programs
- Loan forgiveness of tuition for dental students and residents participating in underserved areas after graduation
- Scholarship opportunities for dental students and residents practicing in underserved areas after graduation
- Tax deductibility and rebates for dentists practicing in underserved areas
- Prohibiting the compounding of interest during loan repayment and the capping of interest rates upon graduation
- Strengthening regulations for the protection of private student loan borrowers

In addition to the above principles, ASDA is also lobbying for certain elements to be included in the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA). This includes alleviating educational debt, allowing students to refinance their loans more than once, and alleviating barriers for students want to work in underserved areas.