

Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2010

BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS

July 2010



**DIVISION OF CORPORATIONS, BUSINESS
AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING**

This Annual Performance Report is presented in accordance with Alaska Statute 08.01.070(1) and Alaska Statute 37.07.080(b). Its purpose is to report the accomplishments, activities, and the past and present needs of the licensing program.

**ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS
FY 2010 ANNUAL REPORT**

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ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS
FY 2010 ANNUAL REPORT
IDENTIFICATION OF BOARD

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Date Appointed</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Robyn Chaney Public Member PO Box 25 Dillingham, AK 99576	March 1, 2009	March 1, 2013
David L. Eichler, DMD Dentist 3375 Badger Road, No. 1 North Pole, AK 99705-6133	March 1, 2007	March 1, 2011
Cheryl Fellenberg, RHD Dental Hygienist 4520 West Lakeside Drive Wasilla, AK 99654	March 1, 2007	March 1, 2011
Thomas J. Wells, DDS Dentist 2550 Denali St, Ste 1200 Anchorage, AK 99503	March 1, 2010	March 1, 2014
Mary Ann Navitsky, DDS Dentist 300 Monastery St. Sitka, AK 998355	March 1, 2009	March 1, 2013
Arne R. Pihl, DMD Dentist 1621 Tongass Ave, Suite 301 Ketchikan, AK 99901	March 1, 2007	March 1, 2011
Deborah W. Stauffer Dental Hygienist 3843 Eastwind Dr. Anchorage, AK 99516	March 1, 2009	March 1, 2013
Newell Walther, DDS Dentist 1700 E Bogard RD, Bldg B, Ste 204 Wasilla, AK 99654	March 1, 2007	March 1, 2011
Clifford D. White, DDS Dentist PO Box 130 Dillingham, AK 99576	March 1, 2009	March 1, 2013

ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS

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IDENTIFICATION OF STAFF

Brenda Donohue, Licensing Examiner

Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
P.O. Box 110806
Juneau, AK 99811-0806
Work: (907) 465-2542
Fax: (907) 465-2974

Sher Zinn, Licensing Supervisor

Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
P.O. Box 110806
Juneau, AK 99811-0806
Work: (907) 465-3262
Fax: (907) 465-2974

Jo Anna Williamson, Investigator

Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1500
Anchorage, AK 99501-3567
Work: (907) 269-8614
Fax: (907) 269-8156

ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS
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NARRATIVE STATEMENT

These are my thoughts and reflections in my eighth and final year as a member of the Board and in my fourth year as President of the Board. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the State in this capacity and will continue to seek ways to contribute to our system of self-government.

Let me begin by saying that the dental profession in Alaska is vital contributor to the health and well-being of Alaskans and, in my opinion, is functioning well in that capacity. I have some reservations about the future that it may not be able to maintain its current level of quality and efficiency of service. In my observations of today's dental graduates I see a decline in the quality of work and knowledge produced by the schools. It is consistent with the declining productivity which encompasses all of American education, from K-12 through post-secondary institutions. This does not bode well for our future and as a state, I recommend we do everything in our power to increase the demands for excellence in education rather than accepting the mediocrity we seem to allow. Most work I see in licensure exams I would not allow in my mouth or those of my friends but the reality is that that is what is being produced by our schools and so we expect new graduates to learn and practice on our citizens. Schools are placed in the difficult position of deciding to pass a student, holding them back, or expelling them from school. Unfortunately, financial pressures and threats or actual lawsuits prevent the schools from their ethical and moral obligation to society of graduating only qualified students.

Our relationship with WREB as administrator of licensure exams may need to be reconsidered in light of the declining standards necessary for success on the exam. As exam agencies become more regionalized there is injected an element of competition that should be confined to a for-profit business. I have heard comments regarding the content of the exam by WREB leadership regarding market share when inquiry is made as to the decline in rigor of the exam content. These comments disturb me when I consider the nature of the exam and the Board's function of protecting the public by ensuring the competency of licensees. As an examiner, I don't care how large a market share WREB has in the pool of applicants; I just want to be sure that those who pass the exam and apply for licensure are competent and I have reservations whether that remains true today.

An issue affecting the health of the profession and its ability to meet the needs of Alaskans is the call for what has been termed mid-level providers as a means to increase "access-to-care", or what may more properly be termed cheaper care. Various states and agencies are developing new models for care-providers yet we see no research into the models actually fulfill the claims made by their proponents. From the anecdotal inquiries I have made no model of care anywhere in the world provides the care and quality for less money than the private practice model prevalent in the United States today.

Every government-agency subsidized model is plagued by the extremely high overhead costs inherent in a model that has no incentive for efficiency yet there remains an attraction to government intervention into the provision of care in the face of any evidence of success of these models.

The professions involvement in the Medicaid system suffers from the usual problems that never seem to be addressed or considered. The bureaucracy portion of the system seems to do fine regardless of the volume of actual care provided but the actual care-provider takes all the blame for the systems inadequacies. The profession has some real changes that would help get the care to those who need it but there seem to be no open ears listening.

The function of the Board in professional discipline has been plagued by the turtle pace of investigations. It takes far too long for the process to provide effective intervention when it is obviously needed. We currently have outstanding investigations of three, five and seven years. Currently, it takes far more than a year from receipt of a complaint to filing of an accusation. This is a disservice to the public we are sworn to protect, yet the Board itself is powerless to affect any change. The courts even weighed in on

the subject in a case that was appealed expressing concern about the lack of Board involvement in the process since we are the ones with the expertise in the matters of consideration yet remain on the sidelines effective reduced to a figurehead applying our rubberstamp to the decisions. It currently may take more than ten years from the time we know a licensee lacks the competence to practice to the time we conclude any disciplinary action. Meanwhile, the public is harmed and we can do nothing. It needs some serious attention yet I fear it may continue to be ignored as the Board receives new members who need time to observe the system in all its inefficiencies before they discern the need.

Comment is appropriate concerning recent FTC action against the North Carolina dental board based on allegations that the NC dental board cannot be allowed to define the practice of dentistry due to an inherent conflict of interest, thereby destroying the very foundation on which all state professional boards function. I urge the State to be very vigilant and aggressive in this intrusion by the Federal Government into the power of a state to protect their people. The case is docket no. 9343 of the FTC dated June 17, 2010.

Last year I broached the subject of revision of the Dental Practice Act recommended by the Department of Law. A committee of Board members, dentists and hygienists met many times over the past year and drafted language we think meets the needs of the State in regulating the dental professions. It has been submitted and I hope to see the fruits of our efforts this year as the Legislature considers the Board in this sunset year.

We are partially through the process of drafting new regulations for extended function for dental auxiliaries. It will be some time before we can assess the efficacy of these measures in provision of dental care.

As a board we are unanimous in our praise and appreciation of our immediate support staff in the department and the good work they do in serving the State.

I thank you for this opportunity of service and continue to be available in the future.

David Eichler
President, Alaska Board of Dental Examiners

**ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS
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 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY 2011**

Hold four Board meetings per year at approximately \$6,950 each	\$27,800
Travel, conference fees and per diem for one Board member and one staff person to attend the annual American Association of Dental Boards (AADB) meeting, and the staff person to attend the American Association of Dental Administrators meeting immediately preceding the AADB meeting.	\$6,050
Travel and per diem for one Board member to attend the AADB mid-year meeting. Third-party reimbursement for airfare, one day hotel, one day per diem, and ground transportation.	\$1,950
Travel and per diem for one Board member to attend the Western Conference of Dental Examiners meeting	\$1,860
TOTAL COSTS	
	\$37,660

The Board of Dental Examiners will hold their September meeting to Dillingham, in order to provide more access, statewide, to the board meetings for interested parties. In addition, they have reduced the June meeting to one day, as they believe that is sufficient to conduct their business. This involves the scheduling of four meetings per year, the June and December meetings to be held in Anchorage, the Feb./March meeting to be held in Juneau and the Sept. meeting in a different location to be determined each year. The board feels very strongly that a member of the board attend the American Association of Dental Boards (AADB) Annual Meeting and Semi-Annual Meeting, and The Western Conference of Dental Examiners each year. In addition, they feel it is very important for the Licensing Examiner to attend the AADB/AADA Annual Meetings in order to gain a first-hand understanding of national licensing and licensing board issues.

The Board expects no significant changes in current costs for other budget line items (communications, memberships, advertising/printing, etc.)

The following budget request for travel is based on July 2010 travel costs and per diem rates. It assumes attendance at each meeting by one board member from Ketchikan, one member from Sitka, two members from Dillingham, two board members from the greater Anchorage area, one board member from the greater Fairbanks area, two board members from Wasilla, and one licensing examiner from Juneau. The February/March meeting will be scheduled for two days, the September, December and June meetings will be scheduled for a minimum of one day.

**ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS
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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROPOSED LEGISLATION FOR FY 2011**

The Board of Dental Examiners has no recommendations for proposed legislation at this time.

**ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS
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REGULATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY 2011**

The Board continues to pursue regulation changes as needed to refine the regulations for dentists and dental hygienists.

The Board is working on the following regulation projects:

Enabling regulations for restorative function license endorsement for dental hygienists (AS 08.32.085)

Enabling regulations for restorative function certificate for dental assistants (AS 08.36.344)

The Board does not anticipate any other large regulation projects in the near future.

ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS
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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FY 2011

1. Establish communications with the Department of Law and work closely with the Attorney General's office to improve procedures for investigations, disciplinary actions and licensing.
2. Continue streamlining application process for Dentists and Dental Hygienists. The Board is requesting that the requirement for verification of association membership for dentists be deleted, as it is not necessary.
3. Continue to pursue a better relationship with legislative branch of state government for the purpose of improving communications on issues affecting the health of the public.
4. Support a cooperative relationship with dental education institutions so that they continue to supply an adequate number of quality-trained allied health professionals.
5. Assist the division in the establishment of fines commensurate with costs incurred for investigations, hearings, and disciplinary actions.
6. Post Annual Newsletter on Dental Board's website.
7. Provide an annual disciplinary report to be available on the Board web page.
8. Request an itemized statement of the charges from the Dept. of Law.
9. Work on having board's "designee" approve for licensure all applicants who meet the requirements, except the applicants for dental and dental hygiene license by credentials.
10. Support on-line license renewal. The Board is supportive of dropping the need for each licensee renewal to include a copy of the current CPR or ACLS certification, and instead require a statement verifying the licensee holds a current certification. If audited the certification must be provided.

**ALASKA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS
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SUNSET AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board of Dental Examiners has a Sunset Performance Audit in progress as the Board is due to terminate on June 30, 2011.

FISCAL YEAR 20____ STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

Program: _____

AS 08. _____

12 AAC _____

Name of Individual Completing Report: _____

Date: _____

CATEGORY	NEW – ISSUED DURING FY 20____	TOTAL AS OF 6/30/____	EXAMINATION/ CREDENTIAL
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A. Current Active Licenses, Endorsements, Permits

(student, locum tenens, limited, courtesy licenses)

List type and if issued by examination or credential, as applicable

(Do not list “temporary permits” or “temporary licenses”)

Example: License Type	10	250	Exam: 6 Credentials: 4
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
TOTAL			

B. Current Inactive Licenses (not lapsed licenses)

(Only Medical, Chiropractic, CPA, and Real Estate)

CATEGORY	TOTAL AS OF 6/30/____
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
TOTAL	

