

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION  
LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK

**OPERATING POLICIES**

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**CATA OPERATING POLICIES**

Adopted January 19, 1985

Revised June 2023

The following are considered operating policies for the conduct of the organization and shall not conflict with any CATA Bylaws. These policies may be changed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, Governing Board, or by a General Assembly Meeting during the Annual Conference.

Rev: June 2023

## CONFERENCE POLICIES

### I. Dates

- A. The annual Conference shall be held at the end of June, with the dates being set by Governing Board one year in advance.

### II. Registration

- A. Any individual who meets the criteria of active or associate membership must register to participate in Conference activities.
- B. Active and associate members will receive reduced registration fees, which will be set annually during the Mid-Winter Governing Board Meeting.
- C. Those individuals who pre-register will receive a reduced rate.
- D. Conference pre-registration for Student Teachers shall be free. A fee will be charged for those who register after May 31.
- E. All participants must display Conference registration badges to participate actively in Conference activities.
- F. Guests may register for Conference.

### III. Conference Program

- A. Conduct Pre-Conference program for new teachers, which should include CATA organization review and conference orientation.
- B. Introduce new teachers during sessions.
- C. Provide opportunities for professional development.
- D. Provide recreational/social activities.

### III. Annual Banquet

- A. The hosting of the annual Banquet shall be on a rotating basis as follows:
  - 1. San Joaquin Region                      2026
  - 2. South Coast Region                      2027
  - 3. Central Region                              2028
  - 4. Southern Region                            2029
  - 5. North Coast Region                      2024
  - 6. Superior Region                            2025

III. Annual Banquet (Cont'd)

- B. The host region must work closely with the Governing Board and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Agricultural Education Department when planning and conducting the Banquet.
- C. The Banquet shall be planned as a “break-even” financial activity.
- D. CATA awards will be presented at the Banquet.

IV. Farm and Idea Show

- A. The exhibitors’ fee for the annual Farm Show shall be set annually at the Mid-Winter Governing Board Meeting.
- B. CATA regions will provide hosts for the Farm and Idea Show to chair the activity and to clean up.
- C. Farm and Idea Show responsibility will be on a regional rotation (to follow the year region is responsible for the Banquet).

V. Conference Minutes

- A. Conference highlights will be published in the October issue of the “Golden Slate.”
- B. A full set of Conference minutes shall be posted on the CATA website by September.

VI. Reimbursements

- A. Conference reimbursements that are made for individuals attending the California Agricultural Teachers’ Association Summer Conference will be made to the originator of the check or purchase order.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POLICIES**

### I. Executive Committee Meetings

- A. The Summer Planning Meeting shall be held following Conference.
- B. The Spring Planning Meeting shall be held during State FFA Leadership Conference.
- C. Special meetings may be called by the President. Past special meetings have included:
  - 1. Post Conference Meeting
  - 2. NAAE Convention
  - 3. Pre-Winter Governing Board Meeting
  - 4. Pre-Conference Governing Board Meeting
  - 5. Executive Committee Meeting / Executive Director Evaluation

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POLICIES

### I. Office Location

- A. The CATA Executive Director's office will be located near Sacramento, California.
- B. The Association will pay such costs as are necessary in the acquisition and maintenance of such an office.

### II. Travel Expenses

- A. The Executive Director shall be permitted wide latitude in identifying which meetings and activities are anticipated to be of value to the Association. The Executive Director should consult with the Association President at such times when questions might arise regarding this general policy.
- B. All travel should be planned and organized in such a manner that optimum benefits shall result for the Association. The Association shall pay for travel and meals that are directly related to the performance of the duties of the Executive Director. Mileage from the Director's residence to the office and return will not be reimbursed.
- C. Cost incurred for air, bus, or train travel shall be reimbursed at the actual cost of the ticket. Mileage shall be reimbursed at the rate that is in effect at the time of travel for the State of California employees.
- D. An allowance shall be permitted for the purpose of paying lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. Reimbursements shall be made in accordance with state employee guidelines.

### III. Hiring Process

- A. The CATA Executive Committee, FFA Foundation Board Chair, California Association FFA Board Chair, three Past CATA Presidents, CATA Executive Assistant, and the California FFA Foundation Fund Development Director will serve on the interview committee, excluding any of those interested in the position.
- B. The interview will consist of a writing prompt (30 minutes) and an interview (30 minutes) with the interview committee.
- C. At the conclusion of the interviews, the interview committee will select the new Executive Director and come to a consensus on the terms of employment.

### III. Terms of Employment

- A. The Executive Director serves at the pleasure of the Governing Board and is employed for an indefinite period. The employment and/or dismissal of the Executive Director shall be determined by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- B. The President shall present to the Governing Board at the Pre-Conference Meeting appropriate recommendations regarding the employment, dismissal or continued employment of the Executive Director. Such recommendations may include but not necessarily be limited to: salary, fringe benefits, travel provisions, and a budget for the Executive Director's operations.

### IV. Evaluation

- A. The President, in consultation with the Association's Executive Committee, is empowered to conduct performance evaluations of the Executive Director yearly during the Summer Executive Committee meeting.
- B. Evaluation conferences will be held between the Executive Director and the Executive Committee. Fiscal audit and review will occur at each of the evaluation conferences.
- C. At the conclusion of the Executive Committee Meeting the performance evaluation procedure, decisions regarding employment, dismissal, or continuing employment will be made known to the Executive Director. Such recommendations may include, but not necessarily be limited to: salary, fringe benefits, travel provisions, and a budget for the Executive Director's operations.

### V. Salary

- A. The annual salary of the Executive Director shall be set by the membership upon a recommendation from the Budget and Audit Committee.

### VI. Fringe Benefits

- A. The Executive Director's salary shall include a benefit stipend equaling 30% of his/her salary, which may be utilized for purposes of providing all or part of the costs of health insurance.

VII. Working Days, Vacation Allowance, and Sick Leave

- A. The Executive Director position is to be considered as a full-time employment obligation with holidays similar to those accorded employees of the State of California:

1.	New Year's Day	January 1
2.	Martin Luther King	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in January
3.	Lincoln's Birthday	February 12
4.	Washington's Birthday	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in February
5.	Cesar Chavez Day	Last Monday in March
6.	Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
7.	Juneteenth	June 19
8.	Independence Day	July 4
9.	Labor Day	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in September
10.	Veteran's Day	November 11
11.	Thanksgiving Day	Day after Thanksgiving also
12.	Christmas Day	December 25

- B. The Executive Director will be granted vacation credit in accordance with the vacation schedule in effect for employees of the State of California.

Employees shall not be entitled to vacation leave credit for the first six months of service. On the first day of the monthly pay period following completion of six qualifying monthly pay periods of continuous service, all full-time employees covered by this section shall receive a one-time vacation bonus of forty-two hours of vacation credit. Thereafter, for each additional qualifying monthly pay period, full-time employees shall be allowed a credit for vacation with pay on the first day of the following month as follows:

0-3 years	7 hours per month
4-10 years	10 hours per month
11-15 years	12 hours per month
16-20 years	13 hours per month
20+ years	14 hours per month

Earned vacation time accrues to a maximum of 425 hours. No additional vacation will be earned until accrued vacation time is used. The maximum vacation payout at the time of separation is 160 hours.

- C. Sick leave will be in accordance with the State of California schedule of eight hours per month.
- D. Mandatory Paid Shutdown – The FFA Center is closed from December 25<sup>th</sup> through January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

VIII. Line of Authority/Responsibility

- A. CATA members shall express their interest and desire to the Governing Board Members for actions or services to be performed by the Executive Director.
- B. The Governing Board shall adopt policies and procedures which represent the interests and desires of the membership.
- C. The State CATA President has responsibility for assuring that approved policies and procedures are implemented. The President must consult with the Executive Committee if deviations from adopted policies are deemed necessary. Such deviations should be judiciously exercised and considered as one-time exceptions, not as formal policy or procedure deviations.
- D. The Executive Director shall perform the duties of this position in concert with the policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Board. The CATA President shall provide general coordination to the Executive Director and shall be consulted regarding policy or procedural deviations.
- E. It is the intention of CATA that the Executive Director be provided the widest possible latitude in fulfilling the duties of the office. While communication with all association officers and members is to be encouraged, operation authority is channeled through the Governing Board to the CATA President and then on to the Executive Director.

## FISCAL POLICIES

### I. Audit

- A. An audit or review of the financial records will be conducted at each evaluation conference during the Summer Executive Committee Meeting.

### II. Bond

- A. The Executive Director and the office staff shall all be bonded.

### III. Expense Vouchers

- A. All expense vouchers from Governing Board members must be approved by the CATA Treasurer or Executive Director.

### IV. Salary and Office Expenses

- A. The Executive Director's salary and regular office expenses will be paid each month without any approval necessary by the President or Treasurer.
- B. The salary schedule for the Executive Director and Executive Assistant will be adjusted annually for COLA according to the state rate.
- C. The salary for the Executive Director and Executive Assistant will include a benefit stipend based on 30% of their salary.

### V. Annual Budget

- A. The Annual Budget shall be reviewed and revised by the Budget and Audit Committee during the Annual Conference, by the CATA Treasurer.
- B. This budget shall be presented to the membership for approval and adoption during the Annual Conference.

### VI. Annual Dues

- A. The Governing Board shall not raise dues until the reserves fall below 25% of the operating budget.

### VII. Savings

- A. For the purpose of insuring the financial stability of the organization in the event of economic constraints, and to engage in special projects, the Governing Board shall maintain a savings account equal to 25% of the prior year's operating expenses. If savings exceed three years of operating expenses the Governing Board will refer with recommendations to the Budget and Audit Committee at Summer Conference how to reduce the savings.

05.04.01

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## GOVERNING BOARD POLICIES

- I. Biannual Governing Board Meetings
  - A. The Mid-Winter Governing Board Meeting shall be held during the month of January.
  - B. The Pre-Conference Governing Board Meeting shall be held during the month of June.
  
- II. Governing Board Minutes
  - A. Governing Board Minutes shall be available for posting at the regional meetings.
  - B. Mid-Winter Governing Board Minutes shall be summarized and posted on the CATA website.
  - C. The Pre-Conference Governing Board Minutes will be included in the Conference minutes which shall be summarized and posted on the CATA website by September.
  
- III. Expenses
  - A. The Governing Board's expenses incurred for travel, lodging, and meals will be reimbursed by CATA in accordance with the following:
    - 1. Original receipts are necessary for all expenses (including hotel) claimed.
    - 2. Meals are reimbursed at the maximum rate of \$40 per day, including tips.
    - 3. Reimbursement for hotel movies, personal telephone calls, etc. will not be allowed.
    - 4. Airport parking will be reimbursed for vehicles left in long term parking only.
    - 5. Mileage paid for use of personal vehicles will be paid at the current IRS rate.
  - B. The Pre-Conference Governing Board's expenses incurred for travel, lodging and meals will not be reimbursed by CATA.
  
- IV. Reports
  - A. Governing Board members are required to present a typed report at the Mid-Winter and Pre-Conference Governing Board Meetings detailing their involvement during the year to the CATA Secretary.

V. Screening and Resolutions Committee

- A. The President-Elect, Division Chairpersons and Regional Presidents shall serve as the Nominations/By-Laws/Professional Awards Committee during the Mid-Winter Governing Board Meeting.

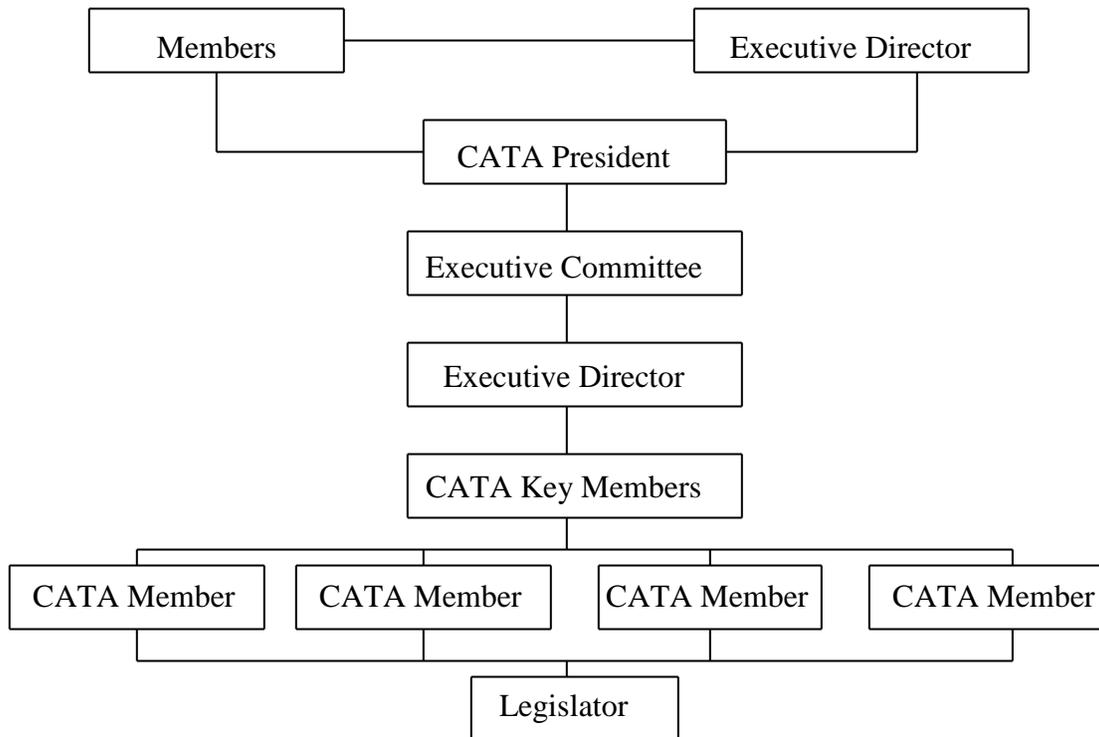
VI. Ex-Officio Members

- A. The Governing Board shall be empowered to appoint ex-officio members to serve in designated capacities on behalf of the Governing Board.
1. They will serve as non-voting members.
  2. Expenses will be reimbursed by CATA.
  3. These ex-officio members will serve subject to yearly reconfirmation by the Governing Board.

## LEGISLATIVE POLICIES

- I. All legislative items to be considered for support or opposition shall be submitted to the Executive Committee through the President.
- II. Legislative action shall be determined by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee's position will then be made known to the Executive Director for action.
- III. If legislation is clearly supportive of a CATA position statement, the Executive Director may automatically support such legislation.
- IV. If legislation is clearly in opposition to a CATA position statement, the Executive Director may automatically oppose such legislation.
- V. The Executive Director shall support budgetary items which benefit secondary and post secondary agriculture programs.
- VI. A legislative network is formed so that prompt action may be taken whenever legislative action becomes necessary.

### LEGISLATIVE NETWORK



## **MEMBERSHIP POLICIES**

### I. Membership Goals

- A. Regional and sectional membership goals shall be set annually by the Regional Presidents and approved by the Executive Committee during their Summer Planning Meeting.

### II. Beginning Teachers

- A. Beginning teachers are defined as those teachers who are eligible to become active CATA members for the first time.

### III. Regional and Sectional Membership Incentives

- A. Regions and sections will receive recognition at Conference for reaching their membership goals.
- B. In addition, the Treasury of each region and section which reaches its goal will be eligible to receive a cash award not to exceed \$350 total.

### IV. Mid-Year Teachers

- A. Agricultural teachers employed beginning mid-year may become members by paying one-half of the current membership rates.

## STATE OFFICER POLICIES

### I. Qualifications

- A. All nominees for the state office of Treasurer shall meet the following qualifications.
  - 1. Applicants must meet eligibility requirement set forth in the Bylaws.
  - 2. Applicants must have been a State Division Chairperson or a Regional President.

### II. Vacancies

- A. If an office becomes vacant, the President shall first approach Past State Presidents. If none wish to serve, the President shall be empowered to appoint a Past Regional President. The position shall be filled by election at the following state conference.
- B. In the event the office of the Presidency becomes vacant, the President-Elect shall succeed to the Presidency.

### III. Reimbursements

- A. CATA will reimburse the expenses of the President, President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer to the National NAAE Convention.
- B. CATA will reimburse the expenses of the President-Elect and the Secretary (or their designees) to the Region meetings.

### IV. Travel Expenses

- A. Reimbursement for meals, lodging, and transportation will be reimbursed by CATA in accordance with the following:
  - 1. Original receipts are necessary for all expenses (including hotel) claimed.
  - 2. Meals are reimbursed at the maximum rate of \$40 per day, including tips.
  - 3. Reimbursement for hotel movies, personal telephone calls, etc. will not be allowed.
  - 4. Airport parking will be reimbursed for vehicles left in long term parking only.
  - 5. Mileage paid for use of personal vehicles will be paid at the current IRS rate.

## AWARDS POLICIES

### I. Teacher of Excellence

#### A. Qualifications

1. Applications for Teacher of Excellence must have successfully completed ten years of instruction in agriculture education. Eligible to apply in their eleventh year and thereafter.
2. Applicants must have been paid members of the California Agricultural Teachers' Association for at least ten years.
3. Applicants must have held at least one CATA sectional, regional, or state office.
4. Be a current paid member of CATA by the fall regional meeting of the year nominated.

#### B. Selection Process

1. Each region will be entitled to submit two nominees. In addition, regions may submit one additional nominee for each succeeding increment based on membership participation as verified by the State Treasurer's final count at Summer Conference. The increment scale will be as follows:

Every Region	2 nominees
75 + Members	3 nominees
100 + Members	4 nominees
125 + Members	5 nominees
2. All regional nominees must complete and submit the CATA Teacher of Excellence application form.
3. All completed applications must be received by February 15 in the CATA office. All applications received after February 15 shall be disqualified from competition.
4. All Teacher of Excellence nominees shall be judged by an impartial scoring committee consisting of six former Teacher of Excellence winners (one from each region), and two state officers (Past President and President). In the event that any of the forenamed state officers are themselves nominees for this award, then said officer shall be removed from the scoring committee and replaced by the next highest-ranking state officer.
5. Each of the six former Teacher of Excellence scoring committee members shall be selected by their respective CATA Regional Presidents in consultation with their Regional Supervisors.

05.09.01

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I. Teacher of Excellence (Cont'd)

B. Selection Process (Cont'd)

6. The State CATA President-Elect shall provide a scorecard by which to judge the nominees.
7. The scoring committee shall meet during the State FFA Convention, upon the direction of the State President.
8. Each member of the scoring committee shall rank in numerical order all applications on a descending scale of 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., with "1" being the highest score obtainable.
9. The CATA Executive Director, or his designee, shall tabulate the results and determine the winners.
10. With the exception of the CATA Executive Director, his designee, and/or the CATA President-Elect, no one on the scoring committee is to know the identity of the successful applicants resulting from the judging process.
11. The successful applicants shall be announced at the Annual Banquet during CATA Summer Conference.

II. CATA Pathway Teacher of the Year

- A. This award distinguishes CATA members who emphasize concepts, principles and applications related to their pathway curricula.
- B. The applications for these awards can be obtained online at [www.calagteachers.org](http://www.calagteachers.org). All completed applications must be received by February 15 at the CATA office.

III. CATA Outstanding Program Awards

- A. There shall be five divisions of these program awards. The five divisions are:
  1. 1 Person Secondary Program
  2. 2-3 Person Secondary Program
  3. 4 or More Person Secondary Program
  4. 1-3 Person Post Secondary Program
  5. 4 or More Person Post Secondary Program

III. CATA Outstanding Program Awards (Cont'd)

- B. The applications for these awards can be obtained online at [www.calagteachers.org](http://www.calagteachers.org). All completed applications must be received by February 15 at the CATA office.
- C. These awards will be judged by the regional designees during the State FFA Leadership Conference, upon the direction of the State President-Elect.

IV. CATA Outstanding Agriculture Teacher

- A. The purpose of this award is to recognize outstanding agricultural education teachers who received the Teacher of Excellence Award and have taught at least twenty years for their participation and leadership in civic, community, agriculture/agribusiness and professional activities.
- B. The applications for these awards can be obtained online at [www.calagteachers.org](http://www.calagteachers.org). All completed applications must be received by February 15 at the CATA office.
- C. This award will be judged by the regional designees during the State FFA Leadership Conference, upon the direction of the State President-Elect.

V. CATA Outstanding Young Teacher

- A. The purpose of this award is to encourage and recognize outstanding young agricultural education teachers who are in their third to seventh year of teaching for their participation and leadership in civic, community, agriculture/agri-business, and professional activities.
- B. The applications for these awards can be obtained online at [www.calagteachers.org](http://www.calagteachers.org). All completed applications must be received by February 15 at the CATA office.
- C. This award will be judged by the regional designees during the State FFA Leadership Conference, upon the direction of the State President-Elect.

VI. CATA Hall of Fame

- A. Qualifications
  - 1. Eligibility for induction into the Hall of Fame will begin three calendar years after official retirement. A retired Agriculture Educator is a person who has retired from Agriculture Education and has gone through the CATA recognition process, or is an Agricultural Educator who has died in service.
  - 2. For Agricultural industry leaders and others, they may be nominated and honored at any point in their career, regardless of retirement status.

VI. CATA Hall of Fame (Cont'd)

B. Selection Process

1. Each region may select up to two individuals to nominate for induction into the Hall of Fame by any established method. The person nominating the individual is responsible for ensuring that the application is completed.
2. Agricultural Educator nominees must have been paid members of CATA.
3. All regional presidents or their designee shall complete and submit the Agriculture Education Hall of Fame application form.
4. All nominee applications shall be forwarded to the CATA office by February 15<sup>th</sup>.
5. Governing Board will annually review and appoint the selection committee members, and the current State President-Elect shall serve as a non-voting chairman of this committee.
6. An impartial selection committee consisting of twelve past CATA Presidents or Hall of Fame inductees shall judge all Hall of Fame nominees. The selection committee shall represent a cross section of the state.
7. Based on biographical information the committee will make their selections.
8. The committee will confer prior to the close of the State FFA Leadership Conference to determine the inductees.
9. The Hall of Fame selection committee shall make their selection of inductees based on a “qualified” or “not qualified” designation for each prospective candidate.
10. The nominees must receive a “qualified” designation from a majority of the selection committee to be eligible for induction.
11. Regional presidents shall be notified of the inductees immediately following the selection committee meeting.
12. Upon selection, the region from which the candidate was nominated is charged with supplying the committee with an 8 x 10 picture (headshot preferred).

VI. CATA Hall of Fame (Cont'd)

B. Selection Process (Cont'd)

13. The State CATA President is charged with gathering all materials and producing the framed photo and biography (100 words).
14. Each year the current inductees' picture will be displayed at the CATA Summer Conference.
15. The Hall of Fame induction ceremony shall occur at the at the Annual Summer Conference.
16. A suitable location will be found to house and display the pictures of all the inductees into Hall of Fame at the State FFA Center.

VII. NAAE Awards

- A. All NAAE Award Applications must be submitted online by May 15. Any applications postmarked later shall be deemed ineligible.
- B. All NAAE Awards will be judged by the NAAE Region Vice Presidents.

VIII. Teacher Mentor Award

- A. This award encourages experienced teachers to become mentors for beginning teachers, and it will provide beginning teachers a way to say thank you to the experienced teachers who have influenced them through leadership and guidance.
- B. The applications for these awards can be obtained online at [www.calagteachers.org](http://www.calagteachers.org). All completed applications must be received by February 15 at the CATA office.

## **RESOLUTIONS POLICIES**

### I. Resolutions

- A. All issues of statewide concern shall be presented in resolution form.
- B. Resolutions developed within the organization are meant to be disseminated within the organization and are not meant for public discussion.
- C. Resolutions must be developed according to the guidelines on the following pages.

I. Resolutions (Cont'd)

**SAMPLE RESOLUTION FORM**

**REGIONAL MEETING RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, CATA is an organization of professionals in vocational agriculture;  
and

WHEREAS, attendance by professionals at regional CATA meetings is critical  
to the success of the organization and profession; and

WHEREAS, CATA regional meetings consist of vital business and inservice;  
and

WHEREAS, many regions of CATA schedule several events (i.e., judging  
contests, FFA meetings and/or competitive events) which directly  
conflict with CATA regional meeting attendance and participation;  
therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the CATA Governing Board go on record as strongly  
recommending to the regional supervisors, CATA regional  
officers, and CATA membership to schedule CATA regional  
meetings on a day when no other activity is scheduled which  
would conflict with meeting attendance and participation.

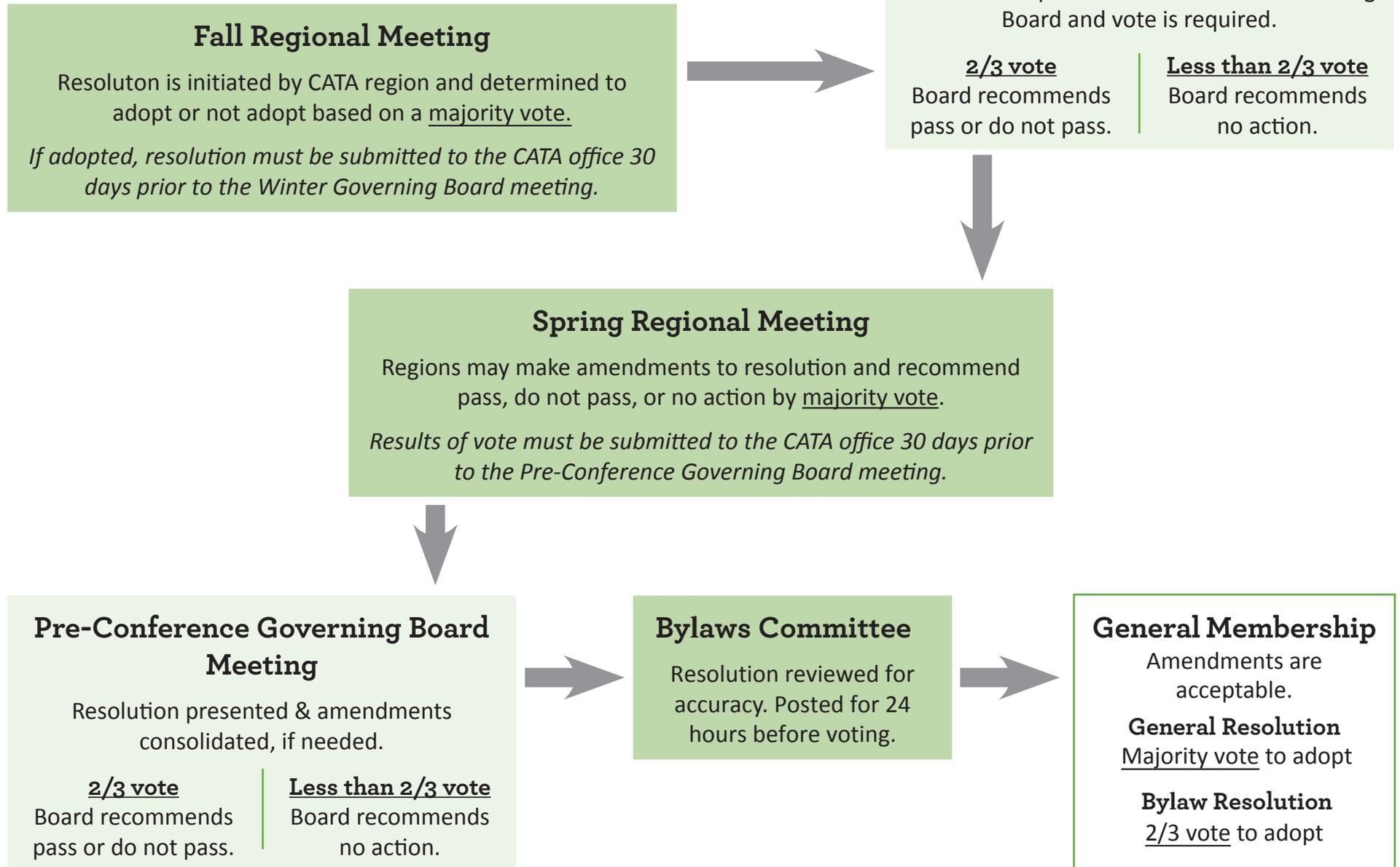
Resolution No: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

## Resolution process for items presented at Fall Regional Meetings



*Start Here*



# Resolution process for items presented at Winter Governing Board

↓ *Start Here*

**Winter Governing Board**  
Resolution is presented to the CATA Governing Board and vote is required.

<b><u>2/3 vote</u></b> Board recommends pass or do not pass.	<b><u>Less than 2/3 vote</u></b> Board recommends no action.
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**Spring Regional Meeting**  
Regions may make amendments to resolution and recommend pass, do not pass, or no action by majority vote.  
*Results of vote must be submitted to the CATA office 30 days prior to the Pre-Conference Governing Board meeting.*

**Pre-Conference Governing Board Meeting**  
Resolution presented & amendments consolidated, if needed.

<b><u>2/3 vote</u></b> Board recommends pass or do not pass.	<b><u>Less than 2/3 vote</u></b> Board recommends no action.
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**First CATA Conference Regional Meeting**  
Resolution is presented and amendments are acceptable.  
Recommend pass, do not pass, or no action by majority vote.

**Special Governing Board Meeting at Conference**  
Resolution presented & amendments consolidated, if needed.

<b><u>2/3 vote</u></b> Board recommends pass or do not pass.	<b><u>Less than 2/3 vote</u></b> Board recommends no action.
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**Bylaws Committee**  
Resolution reviewed for accuracy. Posted for 24 hours before voting.

**General Membership**  
Amendments are acceptable.  
**General Resolution**  
Majority vote to adopt  
**Bylaw Resolution**  
2/3 vote to adopt