



# Professional Improvement

*Last Updated December 2024*

## Policy

**Purpose:** To guide the Association for professional improvement matters.

1. Conduct a Professional Development Conference annually for members to develop and maintain their professional certification.
2. Create and/or provide opportunities for professional development throughout the year.
3. The Association encourages professional and ethical conduct through Growing Our Future Magazine, social media, and our website.
4. Provide opportunities for members to apply for NAAE awards.
5. Maintain a Mentor Program to provide support for first-year teachers to assist them in being successful.
6. Promote the membership to apply for other professional awards, including those at the school, district, state, and national levels.
7. Maintain proper documentation with the Texas Education Agency for providing professional improvement hours for teacher accreditation.
8. The Association should provide example summer plan forms and a list of suggested activities that could be included in a summer plan.

## Operational Protocols

1. Promote the ATAT Professional Development Conference and other agriculture education professional development through available channels to administrators and teachers.
2. Encouraging agriculture science teachers to attend at least one in-service workshop of their choice each year in addition to the ATAT Professional Development Conference.

3. Encourage all agricultural science teachers to conduct themselves ethically and professionally. This information should be printed in the Association's publication once a year. Please refer to the ATAT Code of Ethics.
4. Encourage teachers to use discretion and remain non-confrontational when dealing with students, parents, fellow educators, and the public.
5. Encouraging school administrators to attend FFA and agriculture science teacher functions.
6. Encourage agriculture science teachers to become affiliated with other professional organizations that may be relevant to their programs.
7. Remind teachers of NAAE award deadlines on May 1.
8. Encourage agricultural science teachers to write plans for a successful summer program. Copies of such plans should be made available to school administrators.
9. Maintain a teacher lesson plan hub on the website.
10. The Association utilizes our Austin building and locations around Texas to host workshops and/or training sessions for members throughout the year.
11. The Board of Directors models professional behavior at all official ATAT and FFA functions.
12. Collaborate with Teach Ag and Texas FFA to encourage students to consider agricultural education a career.
13. Utilize experienced teachers in the area to visit with University students and the ATAT Executive Director about teaching agriculture science.
14. Maintain the Mentor section on the ATAT website to ensure it is prominent and easily accessible to early career teachers.
15. Promote the use of local advisory committees.
16. Include articles encouraging students to pursue ag education careers in the Texas FFA News and collaborate with Teach Ag to encourage agriculture science teachers and students to participate in all activities that contribute to learning experiences.
17. Make a more accessible ag ed calendar.