



District Council Conference Call Minutes
February 25, 2026
8:30am

I. Call to Order 8:30am

- President Gage called the meeting to order at approximately 8:30am

II. Roll Call:

- **Members Present:**
 - Matt Gage – District President
 - Ray Davis – District Director
 - Ashley Thrasher – District Vice President
 - Erin Cash – District Secretary
 - Mat Lyden – District Treasurer
 - Penny Lynch – President, DCATA
 - Caroline Siebens – President-Elect, MATA
 - Nina Walker – President, NCATA
 - Abby DeDecker – President-Elect, SCATA
 - Kirk Armstrong – President, VATA
 - Suzy Konz – President, WVATA
- **Guests Present:**
 - Andy Massey – District Parliamentarian
 - Katie Walsh Flanagan – Past District Director
 - Xavion Santiago – President-Elect, DCATA
 - Tom Campbell – President-Elect, VATA
 - Erin Moore – Student Senate Faculty Advisor
 - Zachery Richards – Governmental Affairs
 - Tad Nickerson – COPA Task Force
- **Members Absent:**
 - Rachel Moore – President, MATA
 - Will Christman – President, SCATA

III. Read and Approve the Consent Agenda – Matt Gage

- a. Approval of minutes of previous District Council Meeting – 1/28/2026
- b. Caitlin Hart – SCATA Rep to the MAATA Secondary Schools Committee
 - a. Motion to approve – Caroline Siebens
 - 1. 2nd – Suzy Konz
 - 2. No Discussion
 - b. Passed unanimously

IV. MAATA Governmental Affairs Committee COPA Task Force – Zach Richards

- a. March 30-31, 2026 Capitol Hill Day
 - a. Monday Policy Summit and Tuesday going to Legislatures offices to meet and greet
- b. \$5,000 to help with travel by the MAATA
 - a. This has helped every state to attend (VA is looking for a representative)
- c. Doubled the grant budget to \$12,000 for the Governmental Affairs Grant

- a. Extended the deadline to March 27th, application has been sent to all state presidents and NATA leaders
- b. Hoping to get funds to every state
- d. Bi-monthly meetings with all state representatives (VA is looking for a representative)

V. COPA Task Force – Tad Nickerson

- a. Reviewed the survey that was sent out to determine if there is enough interest, only received 35 responses
 - a. Why are people not responding? Do people know what COPA is?
 - b. Would be helpful if there are representatives at the state meetings to promote and help people understand the COPA umbrella
 - c. They will get through the Fall before deciding if a COPA MAATA Committee is needed

VI. Student Senate/Programming – Erin Moore

- a. Finishing up speaker selection
- b. Joining MAATA in the bone marrow service project
- c. Looking for 1-2 people to help write questions for the Quiz Bowl

VII. District Secretary – Erin Cash

- a. Drop Box:
 - a. All documents going forward will be found in DropBox, not through email
- b. Membership updates from NATA – Katie Scott
 - a. Trending ahead of 2023, 2024 and 2025
 - b. Students continue to be the best performing category
 - c. New members are positive trending – students but also Employer Membership Program
 - 1. 8 new employers which has earned \$114, 786 in dues revenue and \$21,069 new members
 - d. Returning Win-Back members (had a year gap in membership status)
 - 1. Peer leader influencers reaching out worked 9 of 16 times for rejoining
 - e. 78% renewal rate (benchmark is 81-84%)
 - f. NATA Goals:
 - 1. Market penetration of certified ATs > 50%
 - 2. Market penetration of AT Students > 90%
 - 3. Market penetration of Career Phases > 45%
 - 4. Total Member Renewal 2026: >88%
 - 5. Total Career Starter Retention: >85%
 - 6. Membership Goal: 32,327 paid members
 - 7. Employer Membership Count: >1,500
 - 8. Improved Volunteer Satisfaction
 - 9. Improved Member NPS
- c. Newsletter Due Date –
 - a. April 15, 2026
 - b. October 14, 2026
- d. Monthly E-Blast Due Dates – Please keep short and sweet
 - a. March 23, 2026
 - b. May 18, 2026
 - c. August 17, 2026
 - d. September 7, 2026 Combo E-Blast with All Awards, Grants & Scholarships
 - e. December 7, 2026

VIII. District President – Matt Gage

- a. Scholar Award
 - a. A lot of discussion – when, how and to whom it is distributed
 - b. Motion to table the discussion for now – Ray Davis
 - 1. 2nd – Mat Lyden
 - 2. No Discussion
 - a. Passed unanimously
- b. Adam Wall, Will Christman, Abby DeDecker, & Matt Gage interviewed Caitlin Hart to be the SCATA rep to the MAATA Secondary Schools Committee
- c. Brandi Anderson and Matt Gage discussed the COPA survey numbers and the possibility of extending the COPA Task Force timeline to end in the Fall 2026 to allow more time to collect data from members at the MAATA Symposium and state association meetings.
- d. Spoke with LaJoy Paige about an opportunity EDAC has to support the NextGen Sports Medicine & Performance Workshop on Saturday, April 26 (10:00 AM – 2:00 PM) for high school students
- e. MAATA Committee Vacancies by State:

- a. District of Columbia
 - 1. Education committee
 - 2. LGBTQ + Committee
 - 3. Research & Grants Committee
 - 4. Secondary Schools Committee
 - 5. Young Professionals Committee
- b. Maryland
 - 1. LGBTQ + Committee
 - 2. Secondary Schools Committee
- c. Virginia
 - 1. LGBTQ + Committee
- d. West Virginia
 - 1. Ethnic Diversity Committee

IX. District Vice-President – Ashley Thrasher

- a. 2026 Meeting
 - a. Education Program
 - 1. Speakers and schedule have been added to the [website!](#)
 - 2. Once we get bios and headshots, that information will be added
 - b. [Call for Free Comms](#) is open. Please encourage your network to submit a Free Comm!
 - c. Director's Reception will be Saturday night at Truist Baseball Stadium to watch the Winston-Salem Dash take on their cross-town rivals, the Greensboro Grasshoppers! Your ticket includes the game and dinner at the game. Your ticket is included in the cost of your symposium registration, but you will need sign up for the game to reserve your seat. Additional tickets may be purchased for \$30. [Just add a ticket to your cart when registering for the conference!](#)
 - d. Registration update
 - 1. 42 registered
 - a. 19 certified members
 - b. 18 HOF
 - c. 1 student
 - d. 4 complimentary
 - e. Vendors
 - 1. Gold: 1
 - 2. Silver: 1
 - 3. Bronze: 2
 - 4. Exhibitor: 8
 - f. Each program is getting 2 free student registrations
 - g. Hotel—make sure you book your hotel! It's a busy time in Winston-Salem, and it will book up fast
- b. MAATA 2027 and beyond
 - a. MAATA 2027
 - 1. April 30-May 2 at Embassy Suites Charleston, WV
 - b. Dates
 - 1. We had/have the early May dates for three years (2025, 2026, 2027)
 - 2. 2025 attendance: 262
 - 3. 2024 attendance: 225
 - c. At the next DC meeting, we will discuss dates for future meetings, so please be ready to provide input

X. District Treasurer – Mat Lyden

- a. Plans to give a detailed quarterly financial report vs the monthly
- b. Discussed investment strategy and check points set up with our Financial Advisor, Zach Wimmer (former ATC)

XI. District Director – Ray Davis

- a. NATA upcoming Town Halls
- b. NATA Month is coming up and there will be a video series for NATM for students along with a Kahoot night for BOC prep – please share with your members

XII. Past District Director – Katie Walsh Flanagan

- a. District Director applications are open until March 8th and the election will be held after. If an applicant is from a state that is on the vetting committee, that will need an additional meeting but will wait to see if that is needed.

XIII. State Presidents Reports:

- a. *District of Columbia* – Xavion Santiago
 - a. Currently DC is working on our Honors and Awards event. Which we will have in June. We are hoping to offer a take home CEU for attendees.
 - b. We have also locked in a date and location for our High School Symposium. This event will be open to high school students in the DMV to get a taste of what athletic Training is all about.
 - c. Finally the rock n Roll marathon which is one of our biggest fundraisers is around the corner.
- b. *Maryland* – Caroline Siebens
 - a. We recently hosted a highly successful symposium in collaboration with DCATA, welcoming over 80 attendees. The event provided meaningful professional development opportunities and strengthened regional collaboration among athletic trainers. We are grateful to everyone who contributed to making the symposium a success.
 - b. We also held a successful Advocacy Day in Annapolis, further elevating the visibility of athletic trainers across the state. During Advocacy Day, Ken Kerr recognized MATA on the floor of the Maryland House of Delegates, highlighting the important work of athletic trainers and formally acknowledging our impact on student-athlete health and safety. This recognition reflects the strength of our ongoing legislative relationships and advocacy efforts.
 - c. We have issued our annual call for Honors and Awards and are currently awaiting the review and selection of recipients. This year, we are excited to share that our Honors and Awards format will be changing. Rather than limiting attendance to award recipients and a guest, as a ticketed event. The event will be open to all members. We are planning to host the celebration in June in collaboration with our annual business meeting, creating a more inclusive opportunity for engagement and recognition across the state.
 - d. On the legislative front, we continue to actively testify in both Howard County and Frederick County while maintaining strong advocacy efforts for athletic trainers in public schools. Our focus remains on advancing policies that support appropriate medical coverage and recognition of the value athletic trainers bring to student-athletes and school communities.
 - e. Additionally, several of our members will be participating in Capitol Hill Day in March, further strengthening our advocacy presence and ensuring Maryland's voice is represented at the national level.
 - f. We are also continuing to plan for our PAC fundraiser, which we hope to hold in May or June. This effort remains an important part of sustaining our advocacy initiatives and supporting our legislative priorities.
- c. *North Carolina* – Nina Walker
 - a. Last MAATA Meeting as NC State President, thank you for all your amazing work Nina!!
 - b. NCATA had a virtual committee day on Sunday. Each committee presented on what their committee does, how they do it and then they had breakout rooms where members could go and talk to each committee chair. They recorded it and will be posting to their YouTube page
 - c. North Carolina will be using the same acronym as South Carolina – BEACON created by LaJoy Paige
 1. Belonging, Empowerment, Access, Collaboration, Opportunity and Navigation
 2. Were having some challenges with DEI so now they will be their own group but there will be crossover with SC = BEACON Carolinas
 - d. Working on their NCATA Conference which will be the last year at the Beach. Keynote speaker is Denny Kellington from the Panthers (was with the Bills for D. Hamlin)
- d. *South Carolina* – Will Christman
 - a. Feb 21 we will host our Secondary School Workshop in Columbia
 - b. GAC - We have a bill in the House to give Public School AT's loan forgiveness of \$7,500.00 per semester worked for a max of 4 years. Follow several other bills
 - c. Annual Symposium July 15-17 in Columbia, SC Website will be go live April 15 and Early Bird Registration will open May 1. Pre-Con Event will be a Mass Casualty Event
 - d. SCATA EC ballots will go out March 1, we have 1 candidate for each position
- e. *Virginia* – Kirk Armstrong
 - a. Legislative Day (February 13, 2026)
 1. Big success thanks to all that attended
 2. Met with legislators on both sides of the aisle to ask for support of HB 841 and SB 728
 3. Emily Madrak (University of Virginia) brought 9 professional students to participate in legislative meetings
 - b. Dry Needling Bill
 1. HB 841 passed the House of Delegates
 2. Did not pass the Senate committee, but will go to the Senate via cross-over
 3. Senate will discuss and vote this week (likely Thursday)

- c. Financial Reserve Guidelines
 - 1. Developed financial reserve guidelines to identify thresholds to keep in each account (and when to move funds from check/savings into investment account)
 - 2. Will be reviewed and voted on at March VATA EC meeting
- f. *West Virginia* – Suzy Konz
 - a. Wednesday is Capitol Hill Day. There is a bill (Senate Bill 657) that they would like to have further discussion on mandating soft shell helmet covers amongst other things including the West Virginia Board of Physical Therapy to be involved with the process of creating education, EAPs, etc.
 - b. State meeting is March 28th at West Virginia Wesleyan

XIV. Adjournment of meeting

- a. Motion to adjourn meeting – Nina Walker
 - a. 2nd – Will Christman
 - b. Passed unanimously
 - c. Meeting was adjourned 10:00am