MAOPS Guide to Writing Great Resolutions

- Do you ever wonder how MAOPS and other organizations develop their positions on issues? It all starts with you, the individual member. Every member, committee and affiliate has the ability to start the process of enacting **MAOPS and AOA policy**. All it takes is an idea and a little personal initiative.

- **Resolutions** are the organization's way to set policy to guide their advocacy efforts for the profession. If you feel an issue is important, there is a good likelihood others feel the same way. You can do one of two things: <u>do something about it</u>, or don't. If you choose the former, a resolution for consideration by the MAOPS Board of Trustees is the first step.

- This **guide** is intended for use by individuals, affiliates, committees, and MAOPS leadership in the preparation of resolutions for consideration by the **MAOPS Board of Trustees**. There are some **simple strategies** that can be used to help ensure that your resolution is interpreted correctly by reviewers and the Board of Trustees.

Resolution Steps

- The **first step**, once you decide to take action, is to **define the issue**. This often is not as easy as it sounds. So many issues facing the profession have such a large number of variables that it can be hard to stay "on point." It is important to keep the resolution focused on a **single point** and not turn it into an all-encompassing "monster." Sometimes complex issues may involve writing more than one resolution, each taking a "bite" out of the overall problem. The more complex your resolution becomes, the more likely it is to be disapproved or referred back to you for clarification. So keep it as focused as possible.

- The **second step** involves a little more **research** on your part. It may be that MAOPS already has policy in place on the issue. Contact the Central Office staff and ask them to determine if there is a current policy regarding your issue and if so, does it address it the way you think it should? If not, then it may be time for you to write a resolution on the issue.

- Once you have researched current policy on the issue and you have determined a resolution is needed, the **next step** is actually **writing** the resolution. It is important that you use the proper **template**, which is available from the Central Office. Word it clearly, remain focused on the single issue you have identified, and given an immediate idea of what the issue is.

3 Important Resolution Components

Title – the title should be short and specific.

"Whereas" statements – provide the background for the issue. Research/evidence should be provided to support the need for your resolution. These should be factual statements and should not be based on feelings or opinion. They should be supported with evidence that is cited in the resolution.

"Resolved" statements – tell what the policy is going to be and/or the action to be taken. Again, these statements should be focused on the specific issue and stand alone in their meaning. Good resolved statements are brief. Should more than one action be desired, then more than one resolved statement should be used, and the need should be supported in your "whereas" statements.

● Resolutions must be submitted to the Executive Director of MAOPS at least **5 days** prior to the Board of Trustees meeting at which they will be considered. However, earlier is better, as often, the staff will be asked to research current MAOPS and AOA policy regarding the issue and this could delay its appearance on the Board agenda.

● Once correctly submitted, resolutions are reviewed by the Board of Trustees who can recommend the following actions: 1) Affirm, 2) Affirm with Amendments, 3) Disapprove, or 4) Refer back to the author(s) for further clarification. The author(s) of the resolution being present to discuss the resolution is a big advantage in getting it affirmed, as the Board can get clarification and make amendments on the spot. Affirmation requires 2/3 vote of the Board.

● Once affirmed by the Board, the resolution is given "pending" status and must be submitted to the membership for a thirty day comment period. Any comments contrary to the Board's action must be considered by the Board at its next meeting. If no such comments are submitted in thirty days, the resolution automatically becomes MAOPS policy and does not have to be reconsidered by the Board.

Top 10 Tips for a Successful Resolution

1. Identify an issue of importance to a large number of members
2. Ensure no policy already exists
3. Use the proper template to write the resolution
4. Use accurate "Whereas" statements with supporting Citations
5. Stay focused on a single issue
6. Gather support by submitting it through an affiliate or committee
7. Submit it in a timely fashion
8. Be present at the Board meeting at which it will be considered
9. Lobby for its approval – discuss the need for it with Board members
10. Don't assume everyone agrees with you; be prepared to defend it