



# TSTA NEWS

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TSTA applauds Gov. Abbott for keeping all school buildings closed during health emergency

Texas State Teachers Association President Noel Candelaria issued the following statement:

“We applaud Gov. Abbott for ordering all school buildings to remain closed for the remainder of the spring semester, a step that the Texas State Teachers Association called on the governor to take on April 1. This finally removes uncertainty for hundreds of Texas communities and, health experts say, will help slow the spread of the coronavirus. This is an important health and safety measure for millions of Texans because experts don’t know when this pandemic will subside. Meanwhile, teachers will continue to work with their students to provide lessons and activities -- remotely -- as they have been doing for several weeks.

“The state also must continue working with school districts to ensure educational equity for students with special needs, English language learners and economically disadvantaged children whose families can’t afford computers or Internet access. And school districts must be required to continue finding ways to safely distribute free meals to students in need.”

TSTA also is demanding that the governor and the state:

- Continue to fully fund school districts and require them to continue paying and providing benefits to hourly employees. Many of these support workers are risking their own health to clean and protect school facilities, and others are helping feed children while their schools are closed.
- Guarantee paid sick time for all school employees affected by COVID-19 and for employees required to care for ill family members.
- Waive all teacher appraisals for this academic year because of the extraordinary circumstances created by the coronavirus emergency, including the inability to conduct direct classroom observations.