



# TSTA NEWS

TEXAS STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION 8716 N. Mopac Expressway, Austin, TX 78759 • 877-ASK-TSTA • www.tsta.org • Fax 512-486-7049

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 23, 2020

Contact: Clay Robison

clayr@tsta.org

cell: 512.535.8994

## **TSTA: State needs to order mask use on school campuses**

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

“In their haste to reopen schools in the midst of a deadly pandemic, Gov. Abbott and Education Commissioner Mike Morath are refusing to order school districts to impose mask requirements on campuses or compel a systemic regimen to protect the safety of millions of Texans who are part of our public school system. If schools are going to be forced to reopen prematurely, the Texas State Teachers Association demands that the governor and the education commissioner require every school district to mandate everyone entering a school campus or other workplace — students, teachers, staff, everyone — to wear a mask and be screened for COVID-19 symptoms.

“The Texas Education Agency has prepared a list of guidelines, many of them good, for school reopenings, but safety remains first and foremost for educators and students. And one of the most important safety recommendations from epidemiologists and other health care professionals is missing from the TEA list — a mandate that everyone on a school campus must wear a mask. The governor can preach the benefits of wearing a mask all he wants, but as long as he continues to dodge responsibility for issuing a mask order, some school officials won’t require them, and health risks for students and school employees will rise. The governor needs to be a leader and take the initiative on this critical health and safety issue.

“Districts can be allowed to ease the mask requirement under certain circumstances, including at mealtimes, but masks must be a mandate for schools, not a recommendation.”

TSTA also has set a list of other standards for safe schools, based on the recommendations of health care experts, which [can be viewed here](#).