



TSTA NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 18, 2020

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TSTA: Governor in too big a hurry to reopen schools while pandemic is still raging

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

“For several days now, we have been seeing record numbers of new COVID-19 cases in Texas, but Gov. Greg Abbott apparently would like us to think we have this pandemic licked. Far from it. We don’t even know when the pandemic will hit a peak, and part of the reason is that Gov. Abbott rushed to reopen restaurants, amusement facilities and other businesses too soon. Now, he seems to be in a big hurry to reopen schools, putting the health and safety of millions of Texas school children, educators and their families and communities at risk.

“We should be in no hurry to reopen school buildings, and safety should be the first and foremost consideration when we do. Teachers and other school employees need to be directly involved in planning for the safe reopening of school facilities. They have to work in school buildings. The governor and the state education commissioner don’t.

“When schools are reopened, the governor and the Texas Education Agency must require, among other things, that all students, employees and anyone visiting a school have a mask available and be given temperature checks and other observations for COVID-19 symptoms before entering.

“Guided by the recommendations of epidemiologists and other health care experts, the Texas State Teachers Association has developed a list of safety standards that should be required of every school and school district. This list is here: <https://tsta.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/TSTAstandardsForSafeSchools.pdf>

“We all want to see Texas’ economy begin to recover. But safe schools and healthy students, educators and communities are key to that recovery.”