



# TSTA NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **TSTA calls for Gov. Abbott to restore mask mandate for all schools, following change in CDC social distancing guidelines**

Texas State Teachers Association President Ovidia Molina released the following statement:

We are concerned about the CDC's change from six to three feet for socially distancing guidelines for public schools, especially in districts that have removed their masking requirements for students and employees. We agree with the CDC that students and school staff must be masked, and we call for Gov. Abbott to reinstate his mask mandate, at least for all public schools.

This social distancing change also will increase the importance for all districts to practice other COVID-19 mitigation measures, including testing, hand-washing, improved ventilation systems and vaccinations for school staff, and the state must provide the necessary funding.

We call on the state to use all of the \$12.4 billion in federal funds approved for public education in Texas under the new stimulus law and the \$5.5 billion still unspent from the previous stimulus plan to increase public school budgets, not to help balance the next state budget.

Fifty-nine percent of voters in a recent bipartisan TSTA poll said public schools need more funding on top of what they received two years ago, and these voters said federal stimulus funding is the best way to provide that.