

Health, Safety, and Common Sense

10 Ways ATPE Is Advocating for You During COVID-19

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, ATPE has spoken out on your behalf, advocating for your health and safety and preservation of the most optimal learning environment possible:

- 1** ATPE, based on action taken July 9 by the ATPE House of Delegates, urges Gov. Greg Abbott to delay in-person instruction until the curve has flattened. ATPE developed and shared with state officials a comprehensive plan to resume in-person instruction only upon meeting certain state-approved, objective, health-related criteria. atpe.org/COVID-recs
- 2** ATPE urges the state to require school districts to include educators and parents in planning for a return to campus as outlined in our Recommendations on School Reopening for the 2020-21 Instructional Year. ATPE has also repeatedly urged the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to solicit the input of all school employees—not just superintendents—when developing state guidance on reopening. atpe.org/COVID-recs
- 3** ATPE urges the state and federal government to waive requirements for school districts to administer the 2020-21 STAAR and TELPAS. <https://bit.ly/HOD-COVID>
- 4** Since early March, our COVID-19 FAQs and Resources page has been a reliable source of information about educators' rights and responsibilities in this public health crisis, as well as a source of distance learning and self-care resources. atpe.org/coronavirus
- 5** Our Teach the Vote advocacy blog has reported on COVID-19 legislation, rules, policy initiatives, and waivers at the state and federal levels. ATPE's staff members have done a deep dive on all communications and guidance issued by the Texas Education Agency and the U.S. Department of Education since the crisis began. teachthevote.org
- 6** ATPE's staff has engaged in daily communications with our members affected by the pandemic, as well as elected officials, agency staff, school district leaders, and other stakeholder groups working to find solutions to the many challenges created by COVID-19. teachthevote.org
- 7** At the federal level, ATPE is lobbying Congress for funding and other resources to assist schools in meeting the needs of their students in these unusual times, as well as urging Congress to provide financial assistance and job security to educators affected by the pandemic. We have also fought efforts to divert federal emergency funds intended for public schools' use toward other purposes and private entities. teachthevote.org
- 8** ATPE surveyed the entire Texas education community on their top concerns related to returning to campus during the pandemic. This information has been published on our websites, shared with policymakers, and reported widely in the media. <https://bit.ly/ATPE-COVIDsurvey>
- 9** ATPE is advocating for the state and federal government to allocate emergency funds for substitutes in case of mandatory quarantine requirements for district personnel. <https://bit.ly/HOD-COVID>
- 10** In a June 2020 *Dallas Morning News* op-ed, ATPE brought to the forefront critical unexamined questions related to initial TEA recommendations for school calendar changes. <https://bit.ly/ATPE-DMN>

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