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**For Immediate Release**

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## **ATPE Urges Texas Governor to Allow Schools to Determine Their Own Mask Needs**

*State's largest educator association calls on Gov. Greg Abbott to revoke his prohibition on governmental subdivisions implementing mask rules*

**AUSTIN**—In light of increased COVID-19 cases stemming from the Delta variant and new health recommendations, **the Association of Texas Professional Educators** (ATPE)—the largest association for Texas educators—calls on Gov. **Greg Abbott** to revoke his executive order prohibiting local government entities from implementing their own mask mandates and give school districts the authority to decide what they deem to be right for their own schools.

On Tuesday, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shared **new recommendations** that everyone, even those who have been vaccinated, wear face masks in K-12 schools, where the vast majority of school age children ages 12 and under have not yet been granted approval for the COVID-19 vaccine.

"From the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, ATPE has called for state leaders to empower school districts and local health officials to do what is best for their communities," said **Shannon Holmes**, ATPE Executive Director. "In light of the CDC recommendations, ATPE is urging Gov. Abbott to give them the authority do what is right for them, whatever that may be."

According to the CDC, the Delta variant could be spread through "breakthrough" cases among vaccinated people. Masks are considered an important step to helping "... prevent people from getting and spreading COVID-19. They provide a barrier that keeps respiratory droplets from spreading."

"We all want to return to normal as soon as possible," said Holmes. "Giving local school leaders the ability to implement safety precautions that are suitable for their communities and local conditions will help prevent further spread of the disease and longer-term restrictions."

**Your Ally. Your Voice.**

[atpe.org](http://atpe.org)

[Visit ATPE's comprehensive Coronavirus FAQ and Resource webpage for Texas public educators.](#)

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**About the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)**

Founded in 1980, ATPE is the leading educators' association in Texas with approximately 100,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, and future, retired, and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for Texas' five million public school students. | [atpe.org](https://atpe.org)