



August 5, 2021

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor of Texas  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Dear Governor Abbott,

We share your administration's view that in-person school provides significant benefits for Texas children and families, particularly in early elementary grades. If health risks can be reduced, attending school in person is a better option for most students' education, social development, and mental health.

However, the rapid spread of the COVID-19 delta variant in Texas over the last month, and the continued spike in cases and hospitalization that is expected in the weeks ahead, threaten to deter many parents from allowing their children to attend school in person this fall. In addition to threatening in-person school, medical experts also report that the spread of the delta variant poses a greater health risk to children compared to prior COVID-19 variants.

To address the threat to in-person learning and children's health, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) recently recommended "universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status." The [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#) recently issued a nearly identical recommendation. It is particularly important to ensure that COVID-19 mitigation tools, including universal indoor masking, are available to campuses serving students who are not yet eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine.

**As the delta variant reshapes the facts on the ground, we urge you to support both in-person school and children's health by revising your executive order on masking in schools and giving school districts the option of requiring masks.**

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie Rubin".

Stephanie Rubin, CEO

cc: Mike Morath, Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency  
Dr. John Hellerstedt, Commissioner, Texas Department of State Health Services