

Texas Classroom Teachers Association



PO Box 1489 | Austin, Texas 78767
888-879-8282 | 512-477-9415 | Fax: 512-469-9527
tcta.org

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The Honorable Greg Abbott
Office of the Governor
Via email

Dear Governor Abbott,

The Texas Classroom Teachers Association appreciates the difficult decisions that state leaders are making on a daily basis to balance economic and health/safety concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As summer approaches and planning is underway for the 2020-21 school year, the teachers and other education professionals across the state that TCTA represents are concerned. Some of them are ready to return to class in August, but many are worried about the potential health risks. All are protective of their students and request that measures be taken to ensure the safety of all children and adults at school campuses, as well as their families.

While we understand that circumstances vary among communities across the state, we believe it is crucial that there be a straightforward and consistent statewide policy governing when and how teachers and students can safely return to campuses:

- Whether determined at the state level or left up to local school districts, decisions regarding opening dates for the coming school year must be based on recommendations of state and national health experts.
- If and when in-person instruction begins, districts must provide accommodations (such as remote instruction) for students and employees who are not comfortable returning to school or performing certain activities, particularly those individuals in high-risk categories or who live in a household with a high-risk individual.
- Districts should provide appropriate protective equipment for all employees and students based on guidance from state and national health experts.
- The state must make available a reporting and enforcement mechanism to ensure that appropriate health and safety protocols are being followed.

We understand the desire for a return to normalcy and our members are worried about the loss of learning that many students are likely to experience. But there are a number of specific concerns that must be considered and addressed before it should be deemed safe for millions of children and school employees to return to classrooms. TCTA would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further with you and your staff.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeri Stone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeri Stone
Executive Director

Cc: Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick
House Speaker Dennis Bonnen
Senate Education Committee Chair Larry Taylor
House Public Education Committee Chair Dan Huberty