



EL PASO COUNTY STATE OF TEXAS

RESOLUTION



***WHEREAS**, on August 2, 2021, El Paso’s three largest public-school districts join other area schools in resuming in-person learning; and,*

***WHEREAS**, children under the age of 12 remain ineligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine; and,*

***WHEREAS**, last week, the CDC said that schools are an area with high risk of transmission and recommends that everyone in K to 12 schools, including teachers, staff, students, and visitors, wear a mask indoors, regardless of their vaccination status; and,*

***WHEREAS**, on May 18, 2021, Governor Abbott issued Executive Order No. 36 (“GA-36”) which barred governmental entities, including a county, city, school district, public health authority, and governmental official from requiring any person to wear a face covering or to mandate that another person wear a face covering; and,*

***WHEREAS**, in addition to the CDC guidance for all individuals to wear masks indoors in schools, the Texas State Teachers Association is also calling on Governor Abbott to “withdraw his prohibition on mask mandates and allow individual school districts to require mask use in their facilities if local officials believe masks will help protect the health of their communities as schools reopen for the fall semester”; and,*

***WHEREAS**, local officials in El Paso have expressed their belief that masks will help protect the health of the El Paso community as schools reopen for the fall semester. The El Paso Department of Public Health, the Mayor of the City of El Paso, and I, among other local officials, have all issued orders strongly encouraging the use of face masks to protect the health of the El Paso community; and,*

***WHEREAS**, the statement from the Texas State Teachers Association also provides that “[e]ducators are eager to return to the classroom, but the pandemic is still dangerous. With COVID-19 cases increasing again and many people still unvaccinated, the American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended that everyone older than 2 wear a mask when they go back to school. Children younger than 12 have not yet been approved for the COVID vaccine”; and,*

***WHEREAS**, the Texas State Teachers Association statement concludes by saying “[i]f Gov. Abbott really cares about the health and safety of Texas students, educators, and their communities, he will give local school officials and health experts the option of requiring masks in their schools; and,*

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the El Paso County Judge and Commissioners Court that we stand in solidarity and support the urgent requests from the Texas State Teachers Association, local El Paso leaders, and the CDC to make a plea to Governor Abbott to revise his order to allow local school districts to have the option to require mask use in their facilities to protect vulnerable students, educators, staff, and the community.*

***SIGNED**, this 2nd day of August 2021*

Commissioner Carlos Leon, Pct. 1

Commissioner David C. Stout, Pct. 2

Commissioner Iliana Holguin, Pct. 3

Commissioner Carl L. Robinson, Pct. 4

County Judge Ricardo A. Samaniego