

Federal judge overturns Texas ban on school mask mandates

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A Texas ban on mask mandates in schools violates the rights of students

with disabilities, a federal judge ruled Wednesday.

The decision opens the door for [school districts](#) in the state to issue their own mask policies that could affect more than 5 million students, *The New York Times* reported.

The lawsuit against Gov. Greg Abbott's ban on mask mandates was filed on behalf of several families of students with [disabilities](#) and the organization Disability Rights Texas.

In his ruling, Judge Lee Yeakel said the governor's order violated the 1990 Americans With Disabilities Act because it put children with disabilities at risk, the *Times* reported.

"The spread of COVID-19 poses an even greater risk for children with special health needs," Yeakel said. "Children with certain underlying conditions who contract COVID-19 are more likely to experience severe acute biological effects and to require admission to a hospital and the hospital's intensive-care unit."

Yeakel also noted that Abbott's order excluded "disabled [children](#) from participating in and denies them the benefits of public schools' programs, services, and activities to which they are entitled."

Abbott's ban on school mask mandates has repeatedly been upheld by the state's supreme court, but the federal ruling could impact similar cases nationwide, the *Times* reported.

More information: Visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more on [masks](#).

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