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Salt Lake City Mayor Erin Mendenhall recommends extension of K-12 mask order to City Council

September 13, 2021

Salt Lake City Mayor Erin Mendenhall today sent a letter to the members of the Salt Lake City Council strongly recommending an extension of her emergency order requiring masks in the City's K-12 schools. The Council will vote on Tuesday evening whether or not to extend the Mayor's order.

"I am encouraged to report that our school children appear to be healthier, and better able to remain in in-person learning because of the precautions being taken," Mayor Mendenhall said. "What we're currently doing in Salt Lake City is working for our children and their families, and we need to continue ensuring that they are as healthy and protected from this virus as they can possibly be."

The Mayor cited as part of her recommendation data from the Salt Lake County Health Department showing Salt Lake City School District has the lowest rate of COVID-19 cases among county districts since the first day of school.

"Salt Lake City School District and its community are doing everything they can to help keep children learning safely in-person: As of August 31, 60% of Salt Lake City School District students over the age of 12 are vaccinated—the highest vaccination rate among Salt Lake County's five school districts; SLC School District is ensuring COVID-19 testing is readily available to its community; and students, teachers, and staff are wearing masks," Dr. Angela Dunn said. "This layered approach to prevention is paying off; at 57 new cases per 10,000 population, SLC School District has the lowest rate of COVID-19 cases since the first day of school among the county's five school districts."

The Mayor also noted her communication with school district officials and parents who have given positive feedback on how the mask requirement is working.

"I'm encouraged by the communication I've had with our school district that not only are they seeing nearly 100 percent compliance for wearing masks in class, they are also observing that the masks don't appear to be impacting students ability to engage in their learning, or prohibit their social activities," Mayor Mendenhall said. "I've also been heartened by the parents I've heard from in our district, who have told me about the peace of mind they have sending their children to Salt Lake City's schools knowing they'll have an extra layer of protection against this virus."

The Salt Lake City Council will vote on extending the Mayor's order during a limited formal meeting on Tuesday evening.

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