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Salt Lake City Council extends mayor's K-12 school mask mandate 30 days

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Jacob Klopfenstein
KSL contributor

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A view of the Salt Lake City-County Building on Jan. 22. Members of the Salt Lake City Council on Tuesday authorized extending the COVID-19 emergency proclamation that requires masks in K-12 schools.(Kristin Murphy, Deseret News)

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SALT LAKE CITY — Salt Lake City Council members on Tuesday authorized extending Mayor Erin Mendenhall's COVID-19 emergency proclamation that requires masks in K-12 schools.

The council approved the extension in a 6-1 vote, with Councilman James Rogers voting against the extension.

In a council [work session](#) Tuesday before the vote, Mendenhall reported that the Salt Lake City School District is seeing 99.8% compliance with [the mask order](#). The district also has the lowest [COVID-19](#) case rate of any public school district or charter school in the county over the last two weeks, with a rate of 42.1 cases per 10,000, Mendenhall said.

"The data for the Salt Lake City School District is showing really clearly the benefits of wearing masks, and it's what doctors and our health professionals have been saying all along, that until more people can get vaccinated, we need to wear masks," Mendenhall said.

The mayor clarified that the school district is responsible for the school's compliance with the mask order.

mask wearing, is maintaining families who aren't

The advertisement is for a game called "PICK'EM". It features a central blue circular platform with the "PICK'EM" logo. Above the platform is a large football icon. To the left and right of the platform are two panels showing football scores and statistics. The left panel shows "COUGARS" vs "COMBOS" with a score of 34-42. The right panel shows "SAINTS" vs "BENGALS" with a score of 30-30. Below the platform, it says "Sponsored by UtahRadon.org". At the bottom, there are two logos for "COLLEGE FOOTBALL PICK'EM" and "PRO FOOTBALL PICK'EM". The main text reads: "Know Football? WIN BIG. Each week, pick 5 scores and win up to \$100 plus a \$500 grand prize!*" The dollar amounts are in green.

Rogers cast the sole vote against extending Mendenhall's proclamation because he said that decision should lie with the school board.

"I don't think it's appropriate for us as a council to be doing this," he said. "It should be done by the Salt Lake City School Board. For me personally, I feel like they should be the ones stepping up to the plate for it; it shouldn't be us."

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Salt Lake students, teachers and employees largely adhered Tuesday to Salt Lake City Mayor Erin Mendenhall's executive order that requires mask-wearing in grades K-12 schools.

Additionally, extending the order would allow council members and city staffers to consult with health experts such as Salt Lake County Health Department Executive Director Dr. Angela Dunn to determine the best course of action moving forward, Fowler added. Council members can talk with Dunn to figure out when a mask mandate for schools could be lifted according to the latest data while another 30-day extension runs its course, she said.

Mendenhall pointed out that COVID-19 cases in Utah have become dominant. She said that the council should

Councilman Darin Mano agreed with extensions. He said he agreed with school districts, but legislation too make the call.

"I do think that Salt Lake City School Board," Mano said, "the authority was taken away from

State Legislature is became dominant. She

officials for future could lie with school and county elected bodies to

Rogers that this should be the school board — that

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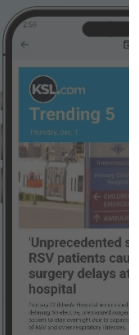
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