

TEXARKANA, Ark. -- Texarkana Arkansas School District Board of Trustees voted on Tuesday to suspend face covering guidelines for 30 days with plans to re-evaluate this decision next month.

TASD has experienced an overall downward trend in positive cases and quarantines with the highest numbers occurring during the second week of school, with 36 positive student cases and 76 student quarantines.

The state average also has decreased with the highest numbers since school started occurring on Aug. 19 with a daily increase of 3,549 positive cases to the lowest since school occurred last week on Oct. 11 with a daily increase of 217 positive cases.

Based on the current data, Superintendent Dr. Becky Kesler said the administration recommended suspending the requirement of face coverings but continuing to highly recommend that staff, students, parents and visitors continue to wear masks while indoors and when unable to socially distance.

"I was very torn about whether or not to continue to wear masks because I know that helps with our quarantine numbers," Kesler said. "However, I did make a commitment to parents that agreed to allow their students to wear masks at the beginning of school that if the numbers did go down, we would revisit it."

Kesler said that the district had no positive student cases last week, which was the first time since the first week of school that had occurred.