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State board rejects delay in reopening KS schools

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — Local school boards in Kansas are allowed to reopen elementary, middle and high schools in mid-August as they normally would, despite a surge in coronavirus cases in the state.

The Republican-controlled State Board of Education on Wednesday voted 5-5 and rejected Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly’s plan to postpone the start of fall classes for three weeks, until Sept. 9.

The board’s action leaves decisions about when to reopen to the state’s 286 local school boards.

Kelly argued that a resurgence in coronavirus cases has made it necessary to give public and private schools more time to prepare, but a Kansas law required her to get the state board’s approval.

The following statement is from Governor Laura Kelly regarding the State Board of Education’s vote to reject her executive order delaying the start of school:

“The cases of COVID-19 in Kansas are at an all-time high and continue to rise. Our decisions must be informed by public health experts not politics. This vote puts our students, faculty, their families and our economy at risk.

“I will continue to work with our school districts to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children and ask every school district to delay the start of school.”

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