

Senate Resolution 357

By: Senators Anderson of the 43rd, Davenport of the 44th, Jones II of the 22nd, Strickland of the 17th, Merritt of the 9th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Acknowledging the pandemic leadership of Superintendent Dr. Terry Oatts and Rockdale
2 County Public Schools; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Rockdale County Public Schools (RCPS) Superintendent Dr. Terry Oatts took
4 proactive measures in fall 2019 by establishing an epidemiology committee composed of
5 local school district and public health officials for the purposes of addressing a wide range
6 of potential epidemiological challenges to schools; and

7 WHEREAS, Superintendent Dr. Terry Oatts addressed the COVID-19 public health crisis
8 in a measured manner, guided by adherence to public health data and in consistent
9 collaboration and consultation with both local and state public health officials; and

10 WHEREAS, Superintendent Dr. Terry Oatts sought and acquired comprehensive telehealth
11 services in partnership with the nonprofit Kids'-Doc-On-Wheels (KDOW) to provide
12 school-based telehealth and mobile medical unit services for RCPS students; and

13 WHEREAS, these comprehensive pediatric services, which are available to all RCPS
14 families on a voluntary enrollment basis, supplement existing school-based clinic services

15 and can help reduce missed instructional time for students and missed work time for parents;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, school-based telehealth services are essentially remote medical services that are
18 conveniently provided to students utilizing remote technologies and do not require students
19 to visit traditional brick-and-mortar medical facilities; and

20 WHEREAS, Superintendent Dr. Terry Oatts negotiated the inclusion of free district-wide
21 COVID-19 testing as part of the telehealth services agreement for RCPS students and staff
22 and their families as a means of facilitating the safe resumption of in-person teaching and
23 learning, beginning in the second semester of the 2020-2021 school year; and

24 WHEREAS, Rockdale County Public Schools became the first district in the State of Georgia
25 to offer such free COVID-19 testing as part of comprehensive district-wide telehealth
26 services; and

27 WHEREAS, to date, more than 1,500 COVID-19 tests have been administered to students,
28 staff, and their families, which has enabled Rockdale County Public Schools to proactively
29 identify cases and take appropriate action to effectively thwart COVID-19 transmission at
30 its district's schools and facilities; and

31 WHEREAS, the Human Resources Division of Rockdale County Public Schools proactively
32 planned with the Gwinnett Newton Rockdale Regional Health Department to provide
33 seamless access to the COVID-19 vaccine beginning on March 8, 2021, which was the first
34 day that the vaccine was available to educators; and

35 WHEREAS, Superintendent Dr. Terry Oatts publicly received his first dose of the vaccine
36 at Springfield Baptist Church in Conyers, Georgia, on March 8, 2021, as a means of
37 modeling and encouraging all RCPS employees to follow suit and get vaccinated; and

38 WHEREAS, Superintendent Dr. Terry Oatts has consistently commended the Rockdale
39 County Board of Education for their steadfast support during this unprecedented public
40 health crisis.

41 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
42 acknowledge the pandemic leadership of Superintendent Dr. Terry Oatts and Rockdale
43 County Public Schools and thank them for their efforts to keep the citizens of Rockdale
44 County safe during these unprecedented times.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
46 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Superintendent
47 Dr. Terry Oatts.