

NC DHHS K-12 COVID-19 Response Updates

DPI/NC DHHS Monthly Meeting
October 5, 2021

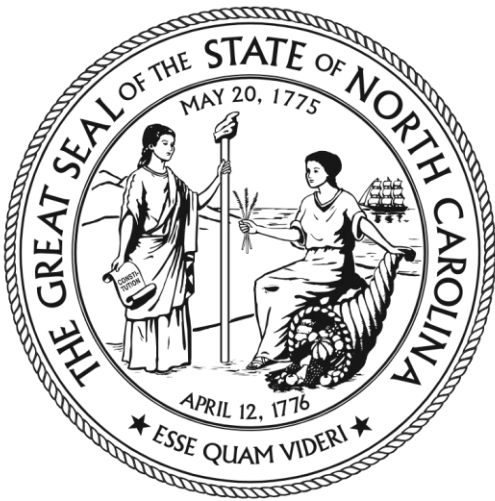


NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**



Agenda

- **Statewide COVID-19 Updates and Data Trends**
- **Immunization and Health Assessment Extension**
- **Contact Tracing in Schools**
- **K-12 Covid Testing Updates**
- **StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit Updates**



NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Statewide COVID-19 Updates & Data Trends

Dr. Betsey Tilson

State Health Director & Chief Medical Officer
NCDHHS

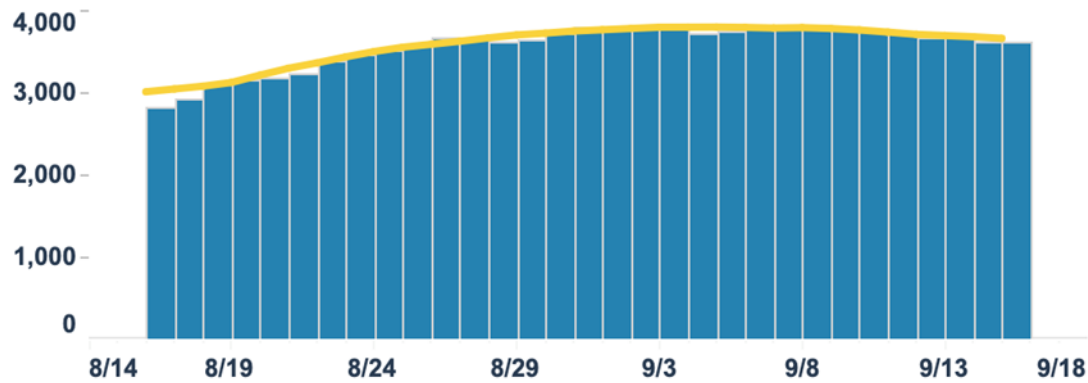
NC DHHS- DPI Monthly Webinar

October 5, 2021

Four Key Metrics- Signs of Leveling Off

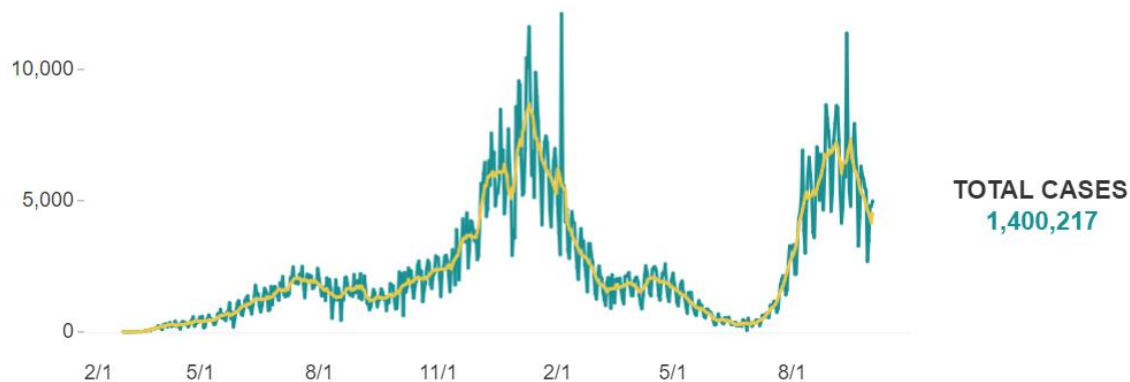
Daily Number of People Currently Hospitalized

Currently hospitalized: 2,882



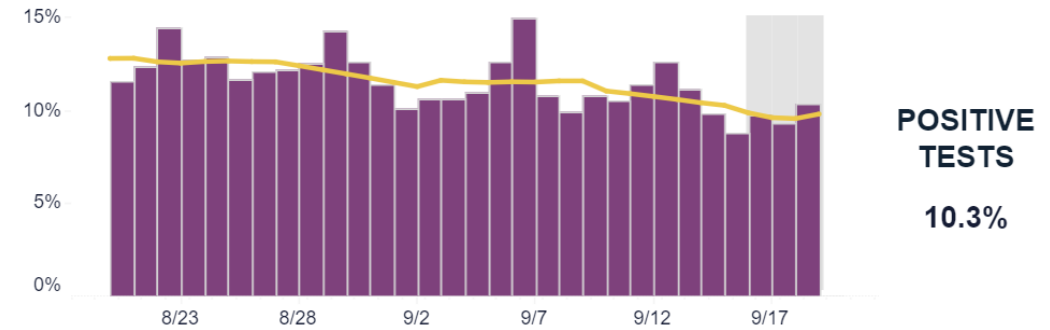
Daily Cases by Date Reported

Is North Carolina seeing a downward trajectory over 14 days, or sustained leveling in new cases?



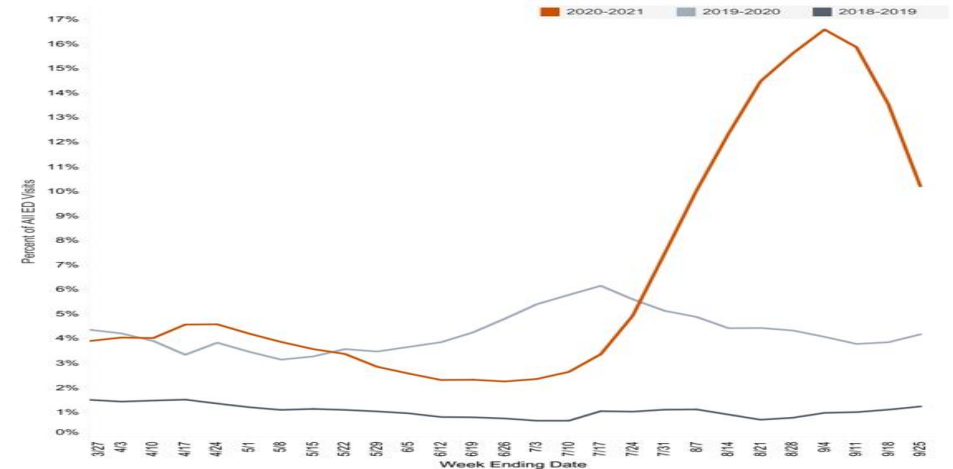
TOTAL CASES
1,400,217

Positive Tests as a Percent of Total Tests



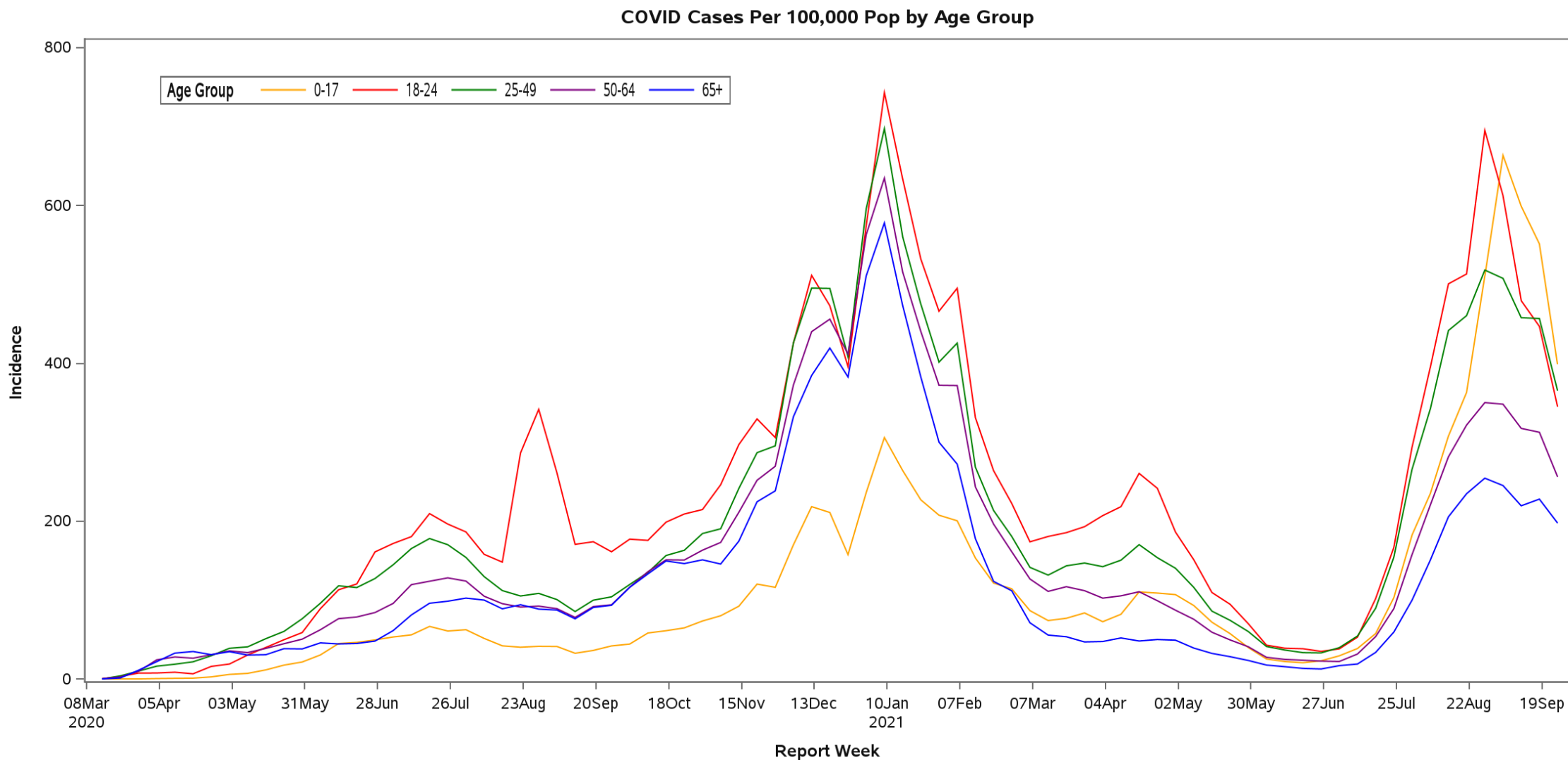
POSITIVE TESTS
10.3%

What Percentage of ED Visits this Season are for COVID-like Illness Compared to Previous Seasons?



Case Rates Decrease Across All Age Groups

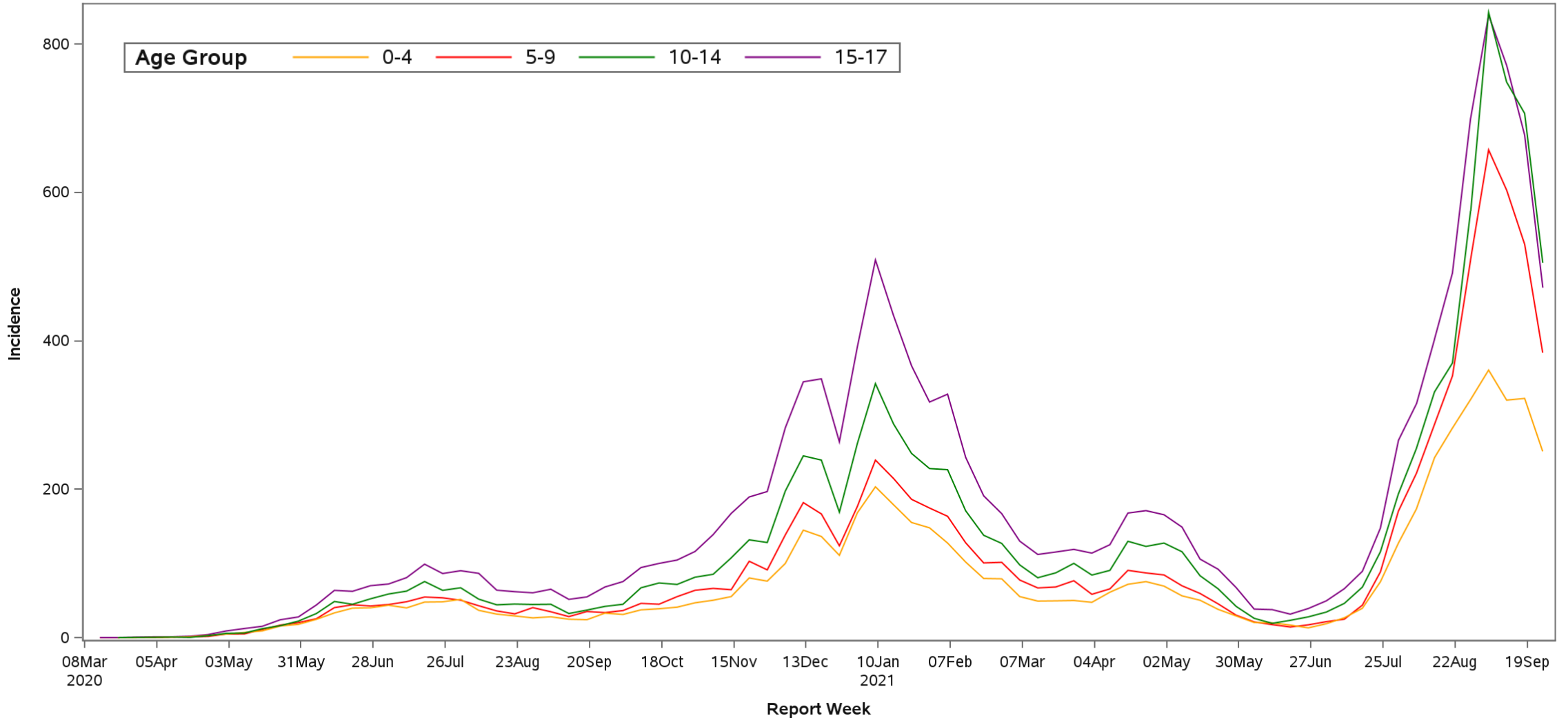
Case rates have fallen most rapidly for individuals ages 0-17 and 18-24 since the summer peak. Case rates for children continue to be higher than January peak levels.



Case Rates Declining Among Children

Highest rates in middle and high school-aged children.

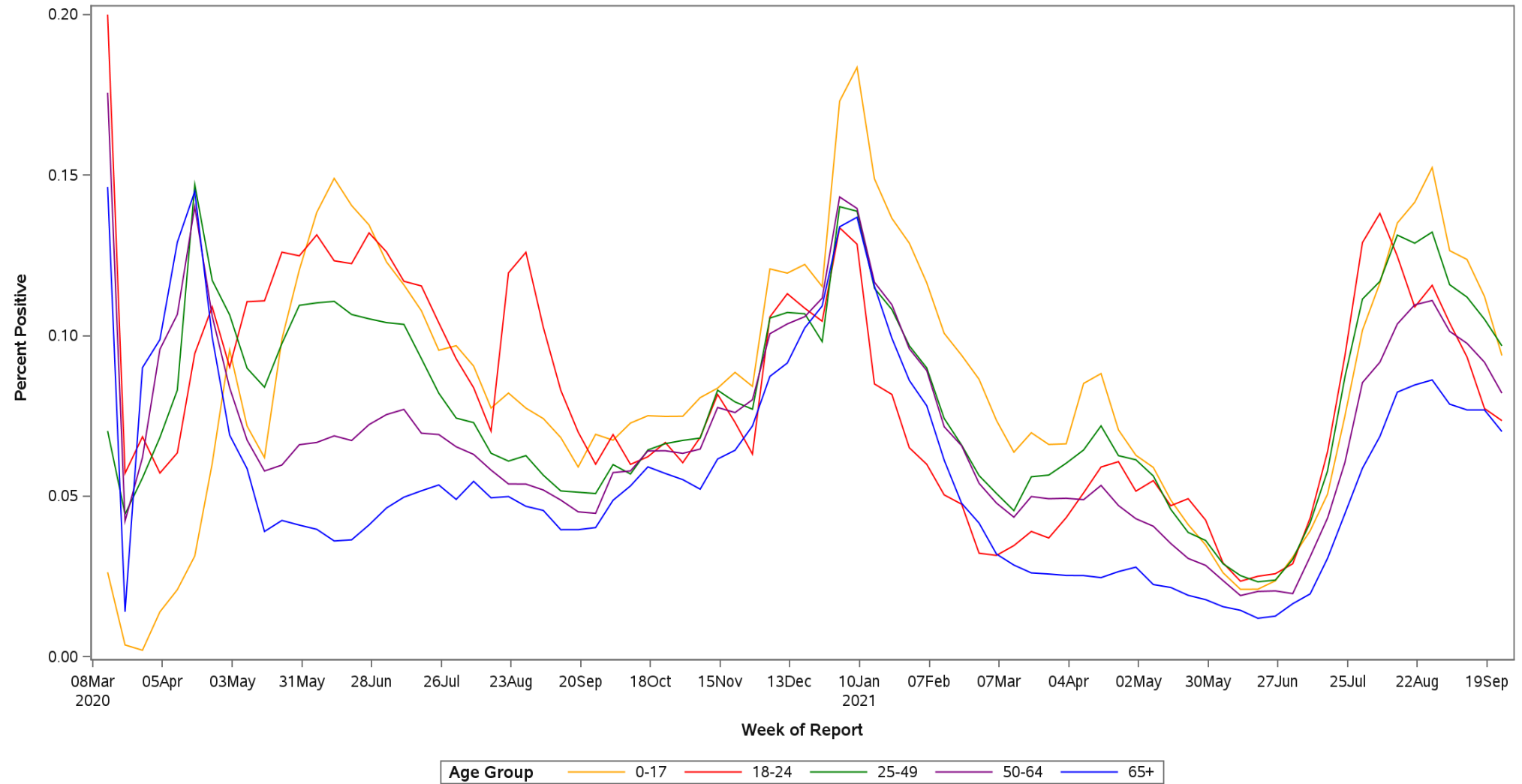
COVID Cases Per 100,000 Pop by Age Group, 0 - 17



ELR Percent Positivity Declining Among All Age Groups

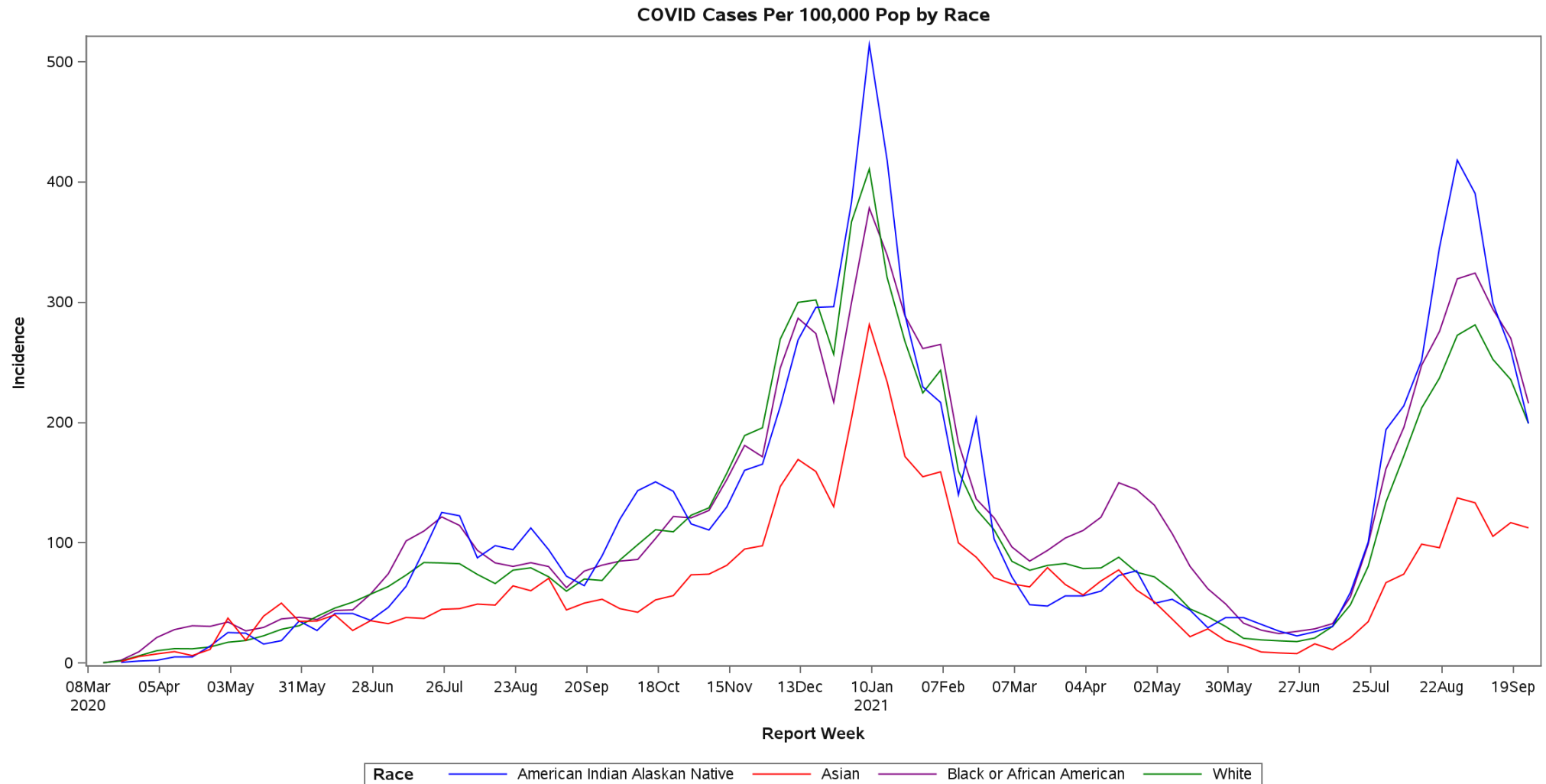
Percent of tests that are positive are higher in children as compared to older age groups

ELR Percent Positivity by Age Group and Report Date

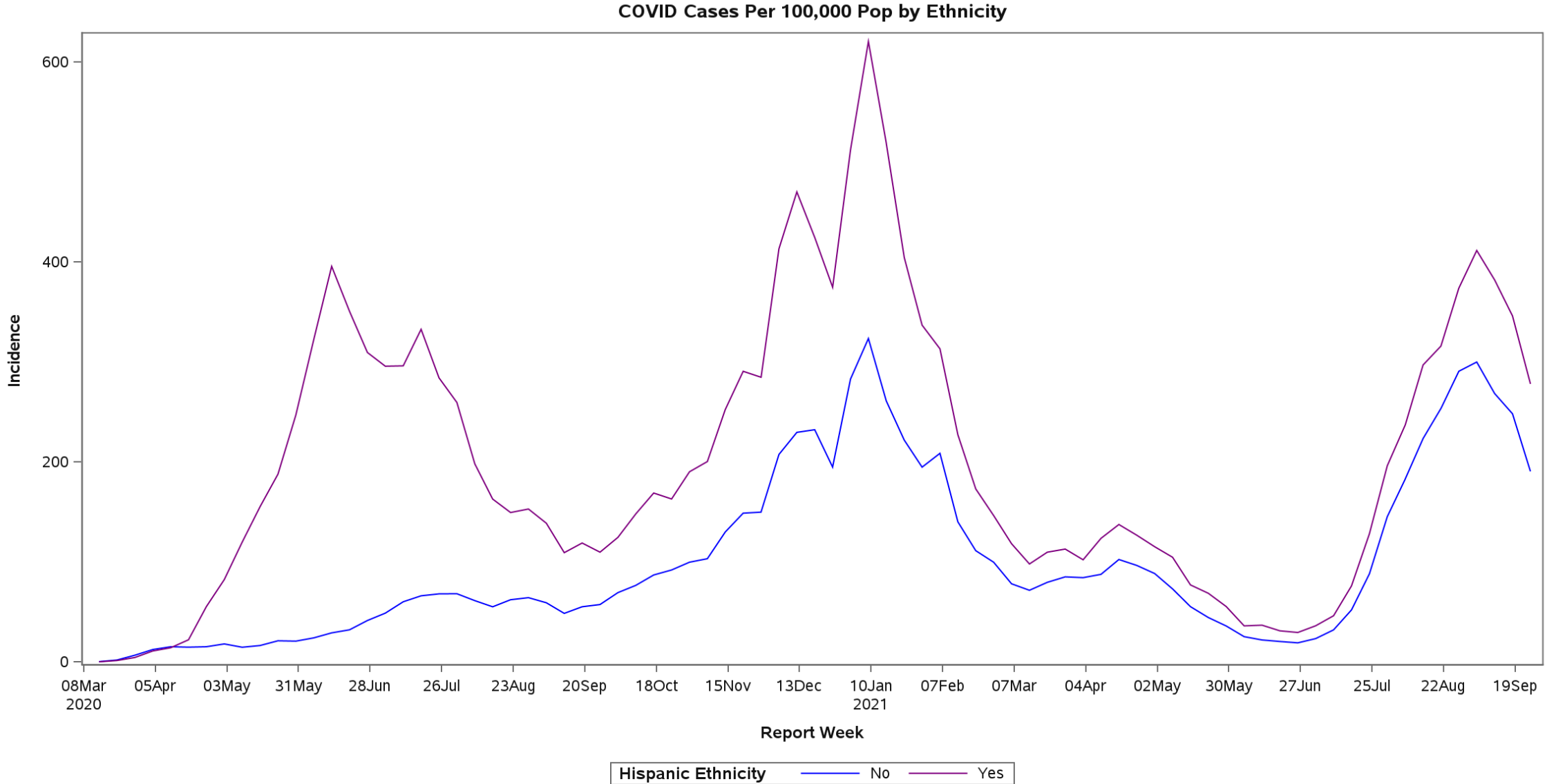


Racial Disparities in Case Rates Widen

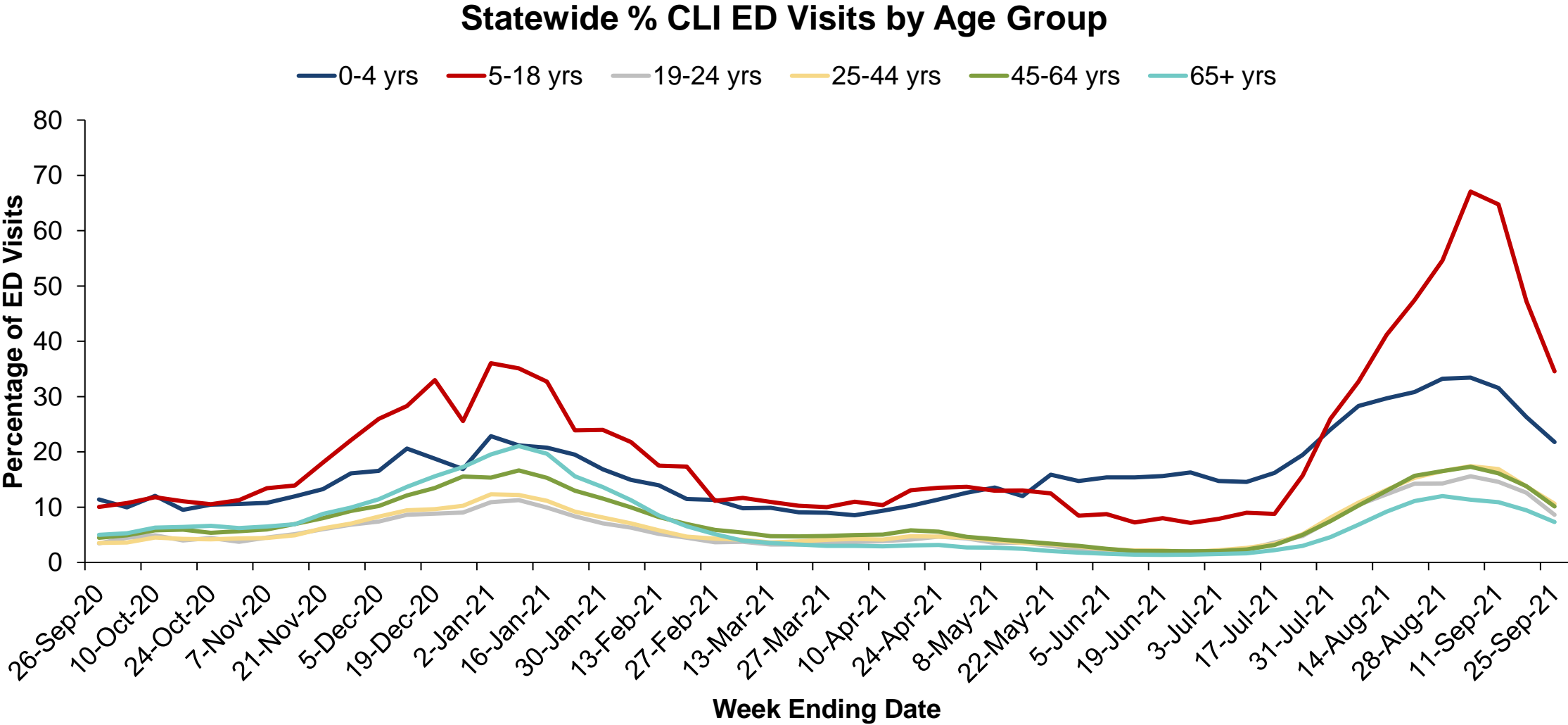
Racial disparities are narrowing as cases decrease



Gap Narrowing Between Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Population as Cases Decrease



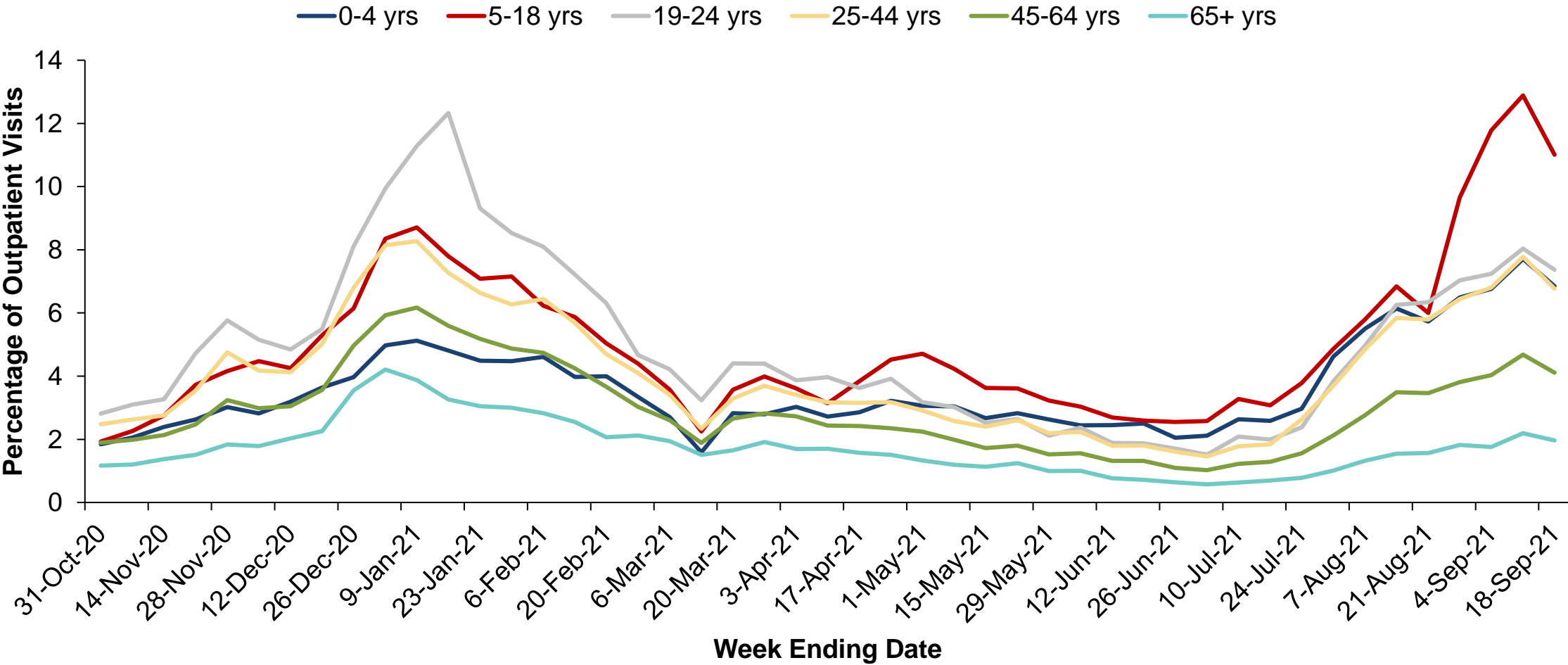
CLI ED Visits Decreasing Across All Age Groups



Source: NC DETECT

CLI Outpatient Visits Declining Across All Age Groups

Statewide % CLI Outpatient Visits by Age Group



Source: NC DETECT

Pediatric COVID-19 Hospitalizations in Southeastern United States

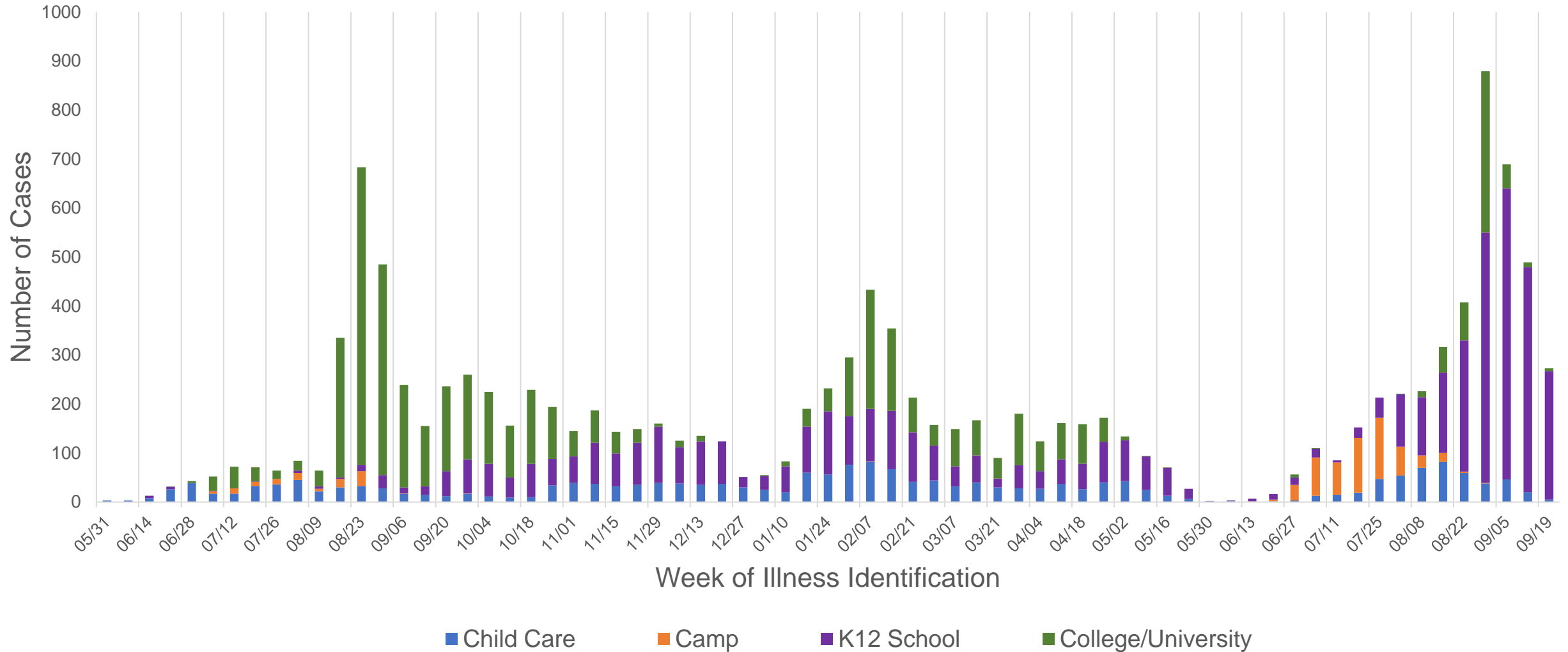


<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#new-hospital-admissions>

K-12 Reported Clusters – as of 9/27/21

- 258 currently active clusters (246 at public schools, 12 at private schools)

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/outbreaks-and-clusters/>



Mask Mandate Comparison: *August 26 –September 26, 2021*

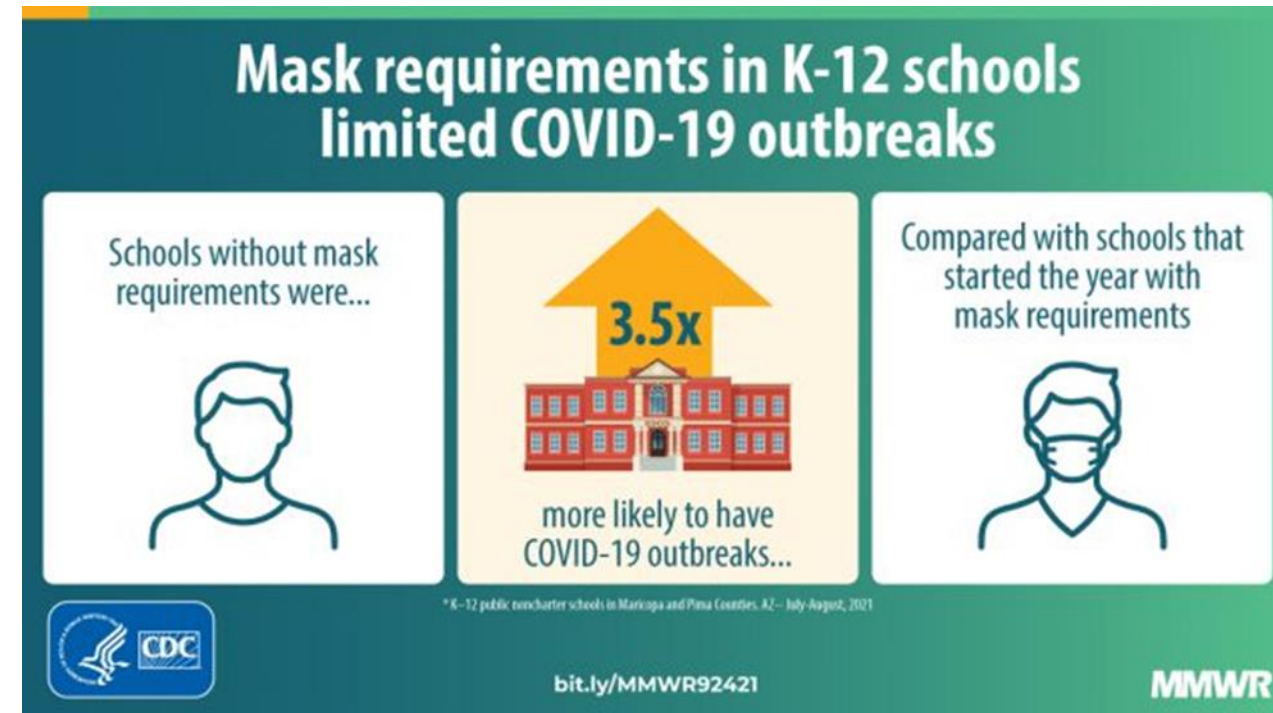
- **3 counties without mask mandates in schools**
 - There was an average of **17.2** clusters per 100 schools in those three counties.
- **89 counties with consistent mask mandates**
 - 35 counties did not report a school cluster.
 - 54 counties reported at least one school cluster.
 - Of those, there was an average of **6.9** clusters per 100 schools
- **Eight counties that reported clusters and changed school mask mandates in the time period were excluded.**

Association Between K–12 School Mask Policies and School-Associated COVID-19 Outbreaks — Maricopa and Pima Counties, Arizona, July–August 2021

Early Release / September 24, 2021 / 70

Megan Jehn, PhD^{1,*}; J. Mac McCullough, PhD^{2,*}; Ariella P. Dale, PhD^{3,4}; Matthew Gue¹; Brian Eller⁵; Theresa Cullen, MD⁵; Sarah E. Scott, MD⁴

Summary: In the two largest Arizona counties, with variable K–12 school masking policies at the onset of the 2021–22 academic year, the odds of a school-associated COVID-19 outbreak were 3.5 times higher in schools with no mask requirement than in those with a mask requirement implemented at the time school started.



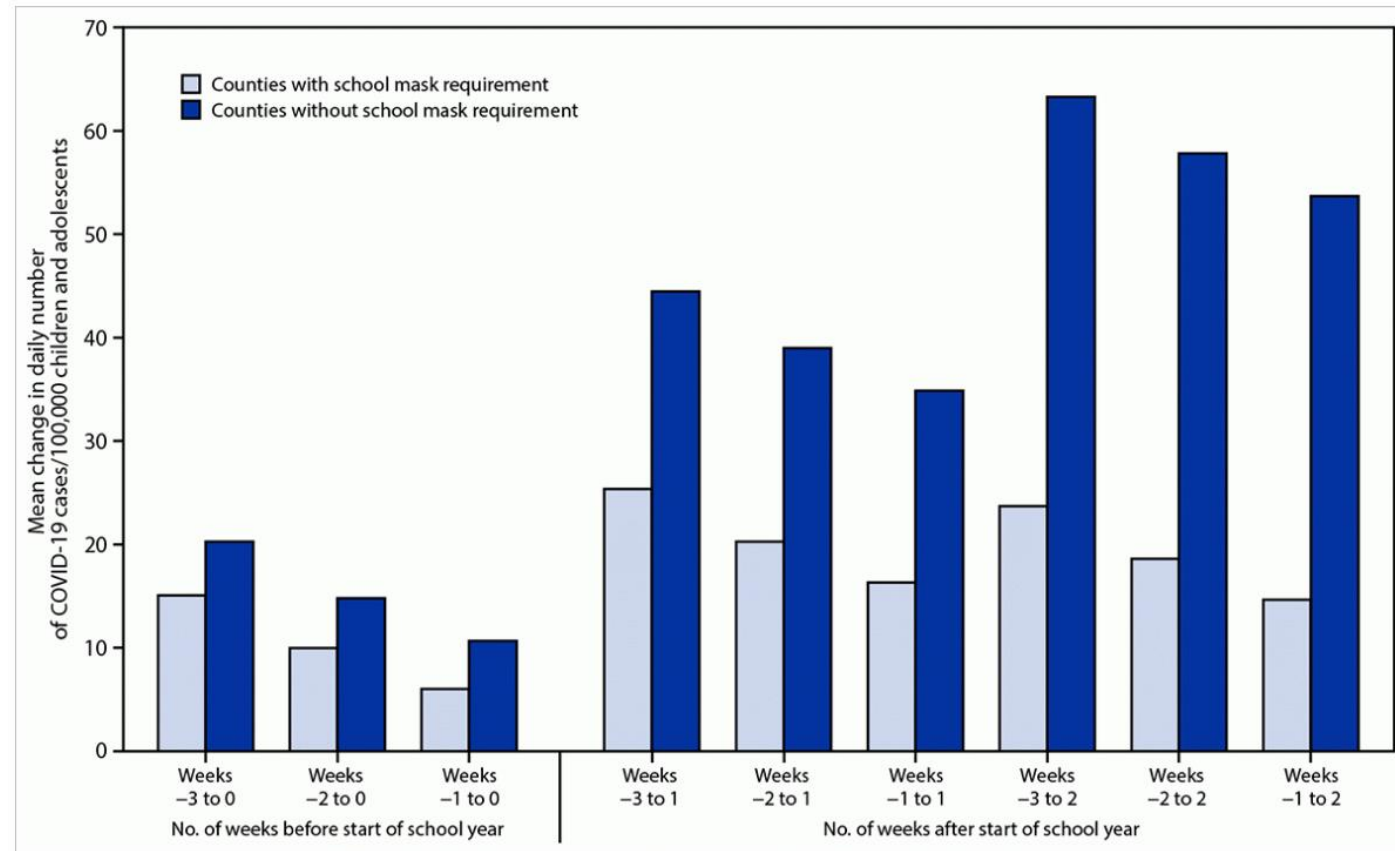
https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7039e1.htm?s_cid=mm7039e1_w

Pediatric COVID-19 Cases in Counties With and Without School Mask Requirements — United States, July 1–September 4, 2021

Early Release / September 24, 2021 / 70

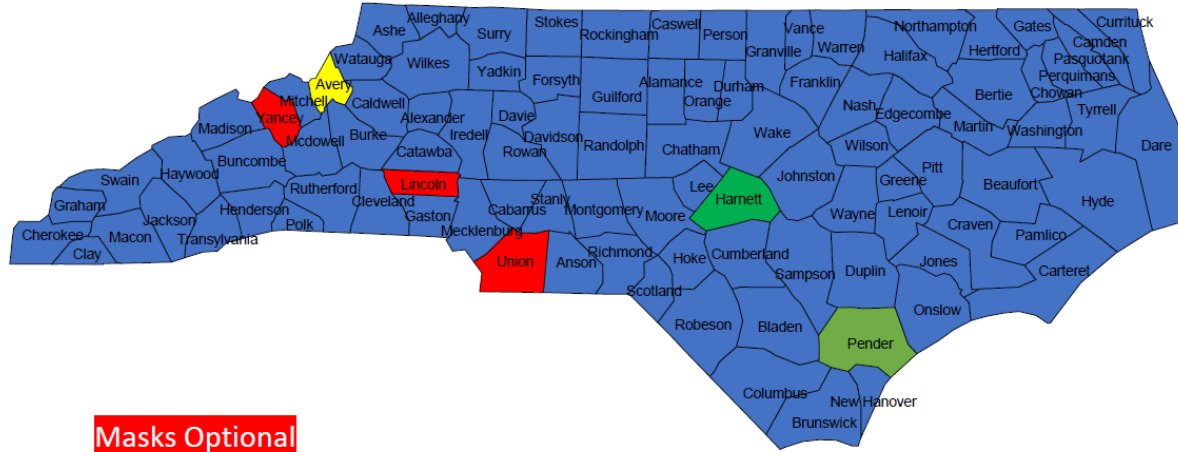
Samantha E. Budzyn, MPH^{1,2}; Mark J. Panaggio, PhD³; Sharyn E. Parks, PhD¹; Marc Papazian⁴; Jake Magid; M Eng⁴; Lisa C. Barrios, DrPH¹

Counties without school mask requirements experienced larger increases in pediatric COVID-19 case rates after the start of school compared with counties that had school mask requirements



* Among 520 counties, 198 (38%) had a school mask requirement and 322 (62%) did not have a school mask requirement.

NORTH CAROLINA LEA FACE MASK POLICIES (as of 9/29/21)



Masks Optional

Masks Optional (Pending)

Masks Required



Masking Mandates

	Number of Districts	Percentage of Districts	Number of Students ¹	Percentage of Students
Districts requiring universal face coverings	108	93.91%	1,280,361	95.48%
Districts making face coverings optional	3	2.61%	52,549	3.92%
Districts requiring face coverings (partial)	4	3.48%	8,062	0.60%
Waiting on decision from districts	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Totals	115	100.00%	1,340,972	100.00%

VACCINATION STATUS BY AGE

0-12 years – 0%
Not currently eligible for vaccination

Percent of Population Vaccinated with at Least One Dose

Percent of Population Fully Vaccinated

Total Population



Total Population



12+ Years of Age



12+ Years of Age



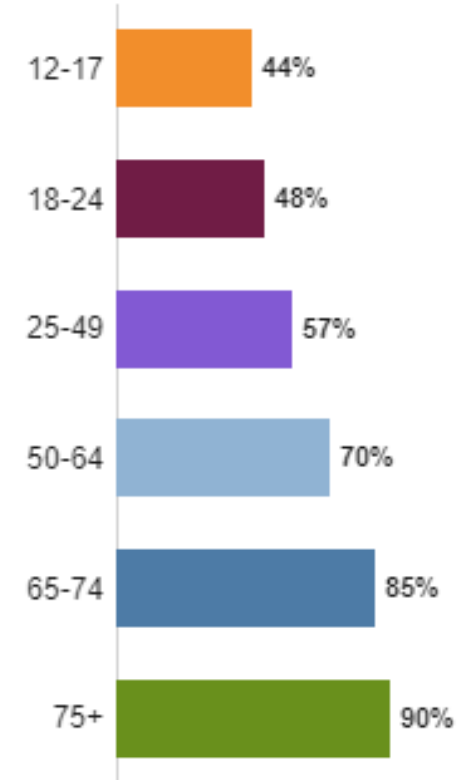
18+ Years of Age






18+ Years of Age



Cumulative Total



STATUS OF COVID-19 VACCINE AUTHORIZATION IN US: 9/30/2021

	Adults 18 +	Pediatrics				Additional (Immunocompromised)	Booster
		16-17	12-15	5-11	6 months - 5 years		
	Approval (August)	Approval (August)	EUA (May)	Under Review FDA Advisory Committee meeting Oct 26th	Submit (Nov/Dec?)	EUA (August)	EUA (September)
	EUA (Dec) Approval Under Review (June)	Under Review (June)	Under Review (June)	Submit (Oct?)	Submit- (Dec/Jan?)	EUA (August)	Under Review FDA advisory meeting Oct 14 50 ug
	EUA (Feb)	Trials	Trials	Trials	Trials	N/A	<u>Under Review</u> FDA advisory meeting Oct 15

Boosters – Only Pfizer Currently

You can get a booster if it has been at least 6 months since your second **Pfizer** shot, and one of the following is true:

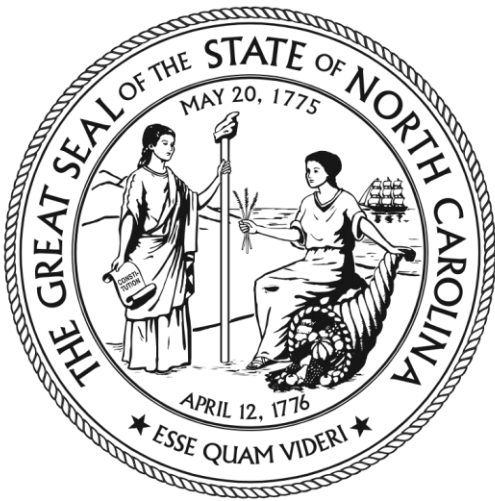
- You are 65 or older.
- You are 18 and older and:
 - You live or work in a nursing home or other long-term care residential facility.
 - You have a [medical condition](#) that puts you at high risk for severe illness,
 - **For example**, obesity, asthma, heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes..
 - You work in a high-risk profession, meaning you come into contact with a lot of people, and you don't know their vaccination status
 - **For example**, health care workers, first responders, teachers, school personnel, child-care workers, food processing workers, retail and restaurant workers, and public transportation workers.
 - You live or work in a place where many people live together
 - **For example**, homeless shelters, correctional facilities, migrant farm housing, dormitories or other group living settings in colleges or universities.
- People can self-attest that they are in one of these groups. Proof is not needed.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>

EXTENSION OF SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

- To ensure that children are not excluded from school because of increased demands on health care providers amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic
- [Executive Order](#) and a [State Health Director Memo](#) suspends, but does not waive documentation deadlines for proof-of-immunization and health assessment requirements for school and child-care facilities.
- This year, the 30-day "grace period" for all students will begin on November 1, 2021 and families will need to provide documentation of immunization and health assessment by 30 days after.
- Families are required to provide the school or child care facility proof of an upcoming appointment (which could include a written statement from a parent or guardian) by October 8, 2021
- The Executive Order and State Health Director Memo will apply to students enrolled in public, private, or religious educational institutions, including child care facilities and K-12 schools and include home-schooled, in-person or remote learning



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Contact Tracing in Schools

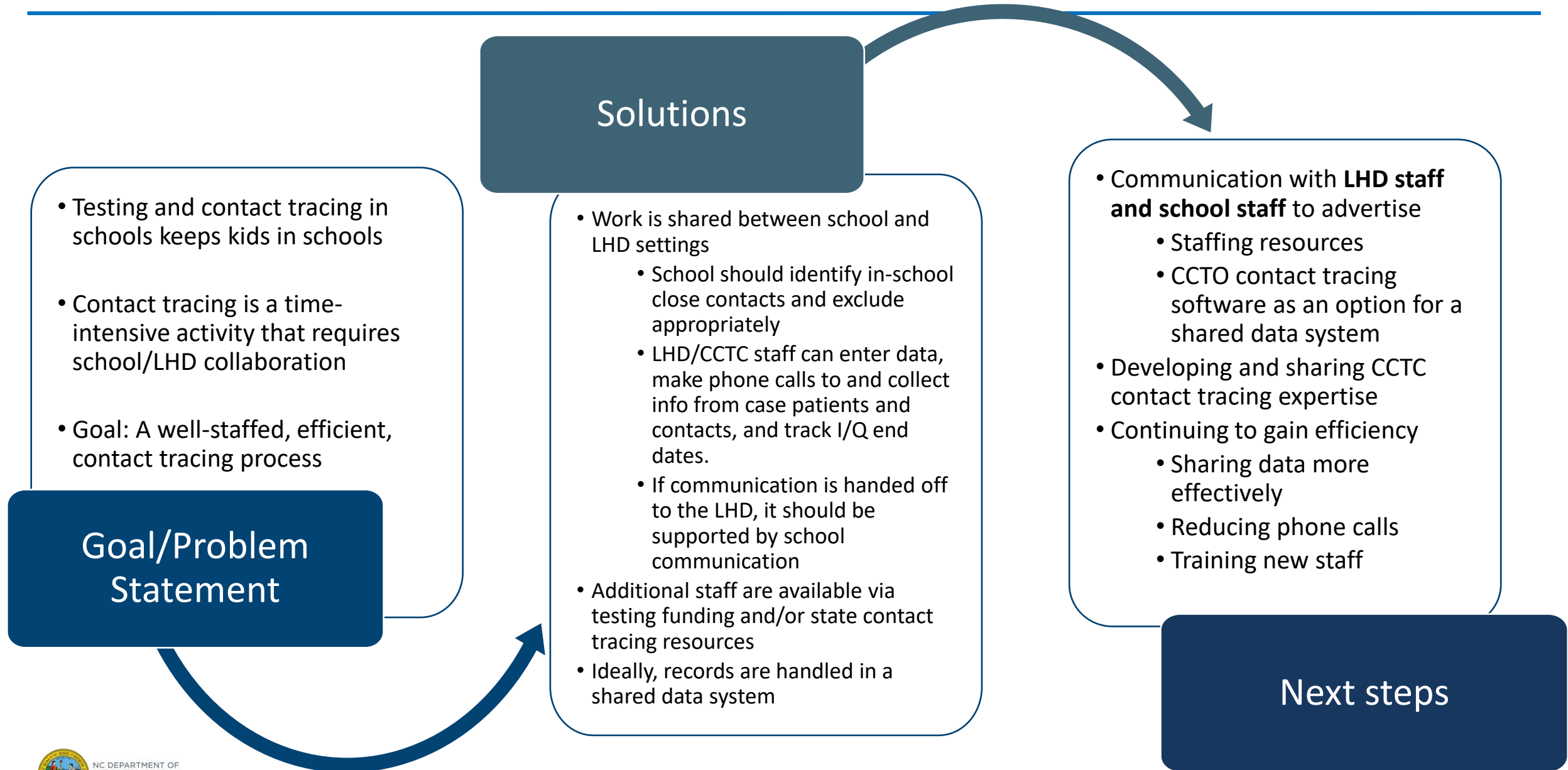
Erika Samoff

COVID-19 Contact Tracing

NCDHHS

NC DHHS- DPI Monthly Webinar

October 5, 2021





Share staff – work with LHD to:

- Request contact tracing staff from CCTC (LHD requests at https://ncgov.servicenowservices.com/sp_tracing)
 - Can request staff to do contact tracing, data entry, and provide isolation/quarantine letters
 - Can request a school coordinator if the current coordinator is overwhelmed
 - Parents are more likely to respond to school calls; if LHD contact tracers are making calls, support by communication from school about LHD outreach
 - *Is there a way to call people once, or do both school and LHD need to call?*
- Increase staff efficacy by identifying more efficient data sharing or other practices
 - Provide access to CCTO for school nurses

CCTO Contact Tracing software can facilitate contact tracing in schools



Use CCTO contact tracing software to share records (through coordination w/ LHD)

- School nurses can see records of all contacts and cases in county to identify students and link them to school
- A "view" can be created to allow school to see a list of students isolated or quarantined including custom filtering (For example: all students ending quarantine that day, or all students currently in isolation)
- School can enter students into CCTO to allow for easily sharing case and info with LHD
- With school variable completed, system can provide dashboard data for LHD and school

The screenshot shows the CCTO software interface for a monitoring event. The patient is identified as Teddy Johnson (C-000996428). The interface includes sections for Record Information, Basic Info, Monitoring Details, and Source Case Information. The Monitoring Details section shows that monitoring has begun, the status is 'Monitoring', and the end date is 10/11/2021. The Source Case Information section shows that the patient is currently in isolation (Ongoing Exposure: Yes).

This close-up view of the Monitoring Details section shows the following information:

Begin Monitoring?	Yes
Monitoring Status	Monitoring
Monitoring End Date	10/11/2021
Final Monitoring Outcome	---
Symptom Onset Date	9/25/2021

This close-up view of the Personal Info section shows the following information:

Employer	---
Job Title	---
Is Student	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
School Name	West Elementary

Ways to use NC DHHS contact tracing resources for school settings



Use CCTO contact tracing software to share records

-Example of "views" that can be created (with support of LHD) to see list of students in quarantine or isolation (or both) - *views can be customized*

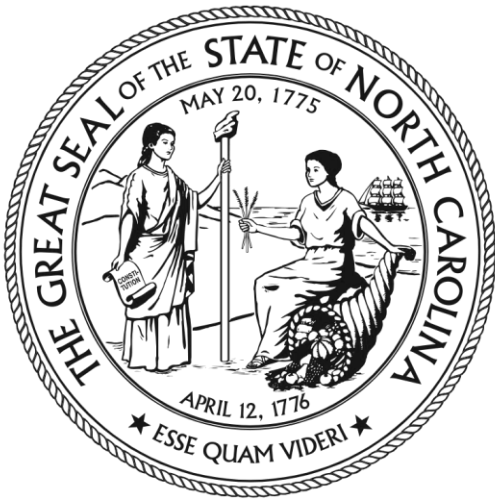
Current Students in Quarantine (West Elementary)

School Name	First Name	Last Name	Date of Birth	Primary Phone
West Elementary	Susan	Farnel	10/3/2015	1-108
West Elementary	John	Mayor	1/1/2015	1-124
West Elementary	Tanya	Lapland	1/1/2015	1-124
West Elementary	Stephan	Mattingly	4/5/2015	1-134
West Elementary	Matthew	Black	3/4/2014	1-132
West Elementary	Luke	Lopez	4/5/2015	1-156
West Elementary	Chris	Blankenship	3/4/2014	1-132
West Elementary	Robert	Davis	2/3/2014	1-198
West Elementary	Suzzie	Smith	1/1/2015	1-134
West Elementary	Teddy	Johnson	5/1/2015	1-144
West Elementary	Sarah	Williams	9/14/2014	1-133
West Elementary	Erin	Wilson	5/1/2015	1-187
West Elementary	Jake	Smith	1/1/2015	1-134
West Elementary	Sue	Red	5/1/2015	1-144
West Elementary	Marissa	Rodchester	9/14/2014	1-113
West Elementary	Anne	Matthews	5/1/2015	1-187

Current Students in Quarantine and Isolation (S...)

School Name	Contact or Case	First Name	Last Name	Date of Birth	Primary Phone	Last Date of ...	Monitoring End Date	Ongoing Exp...	Source Patie...	NC COVID DL...	NC-COVID Ev...	Notes	County
West Elementary	Case	Susan	Farnel	10/3/2015	1-108-567-4563	9/23/2021	10/7/2021	No	---	9/28/2021	---	---	Swain
West Elementary	Contact	John	Mayor	1/1/2015	1-124-123-1234	9/24/2021	10/8/2021	No	Kelly Brown	---	234567890	---	Swain
West Elementary	Contact	Erin	Wilson	5/1/2015	1-187-456-3332	9/27/2021	10/8/2021	Yes	Kelly Brown	---	234567890	Brother also...	Swain
East High School	Contact	John	Miller	7/7/2005	1-124-123-1234	9/24/2021	10/8/2021	No	Kelly Brown	---	234567890	---	Swain
West Elementary	Case	Tanya	Lapland	1/1/2015	1-124-123-1234	9/24/2021	10/8/2021	No	---	9/28/2021	---	---	Swain
East High School	Contact	Rupert	Stine	12/1/2004	1-134-667-4523	9/25/2021	10/9/2021	No	Kelly Brown	---	234567890	---	Swain
West Elementary	Contact	Matthew	Black	3/4/2014	1-132-435-7656	9/26/2021	10/10/2021	No	Johnny Smith	---	123456789	---	Swain
East High School	Contact	Rebecca	Davis	8/15/2005	1-198-097-3453	9/26/2021	10/10/2021	No	Kelly Brown	---	234567890	---	Swain
West Elementary	Case	Luke	Lopez	4/5/2015	1-156-543-9834	9/26/2021	10/10/2021	No	---	---	---	---	Swain
West Elementary	Case	Chris	Blankenship	3/4/2014	1-132-435-7656	9/26/2021	10/10/2021	No	---	9/28/2021	---	---	Swain
West Elementary	Case	Robert	Davis	2/3/2014	1-198-097-3453	9/26/2021	10/10/2021	No	---	---	---	---	Swain
West Elementary	Contact	Suzzie	Smithfield	1/1/2015	1-134-567-8901	9/27/2021	10/11/2021	No	Johnny Smith	---	123456789	Plays on soc...	Swain
West Elementary	Contact	Teddy	Johnson	5/1/2015	1-144-234-5674	9/27/2021	10/11/2021	Yes	Johnny Smith	---	123456789	---	Swain
West Elementary	Contact	Sarah	Williams	9/14/2014	1-133-4455-5671	9/27/2021	10/11/2021	No	Johnny Smith	---	123456789	---	Swain
East High School	Contact	Elizabeth	Watson	11/20/2015	1-187-456-3332	9/27/2021	10/11/2021	No	Kelly Brown	---	234567890	---	Swain
West Elementary	Case	Jake	Smith	1/1/2015	1-134-567-8901	9/27/2021	10/11/2021	No	---	9/28/2021	---	---	Swain
West Elementary	Case	Sue	Red	5/1/2015	1-144-234-5674	9/27/2021	10/11/2021	No	---	9/28/2021	---	---	Swain
West Elementary	Case	Marissa	Rodchester	9/14/2014	1-113-344-5556	9/27/2021	10/11/2021	No	---	9/21/2021	---	---	Swain
West Elementary	Case	Anne	Matthews	5/1/2015	1-187-456-3332	9/27/2021	10/11/2021	No	---	9/28/2021	---	---	Swain





NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

K-12 COVID-19 Testing Updates

Chris Kippes- K12 Testing Lead, Program
Manager, CDC Foundation COVID

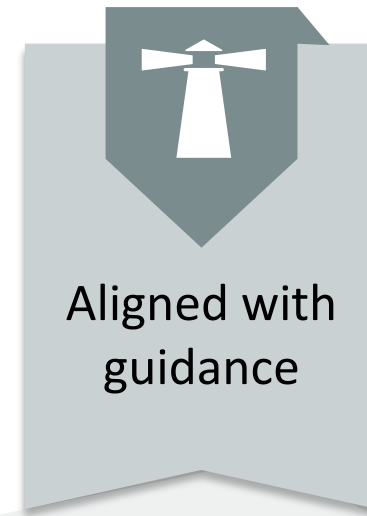
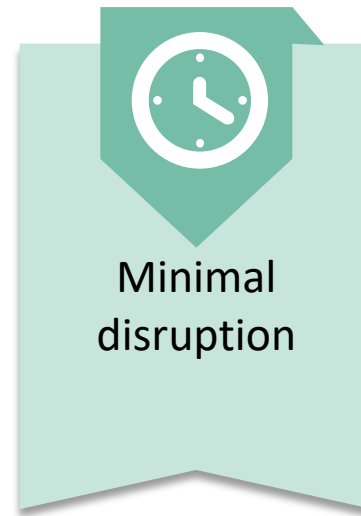
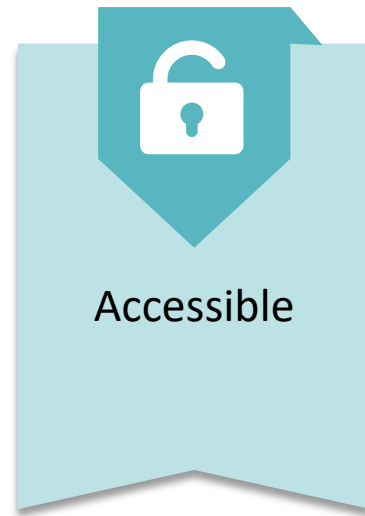
Response Corp

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STRONGSCHOOLSNC K-12 TESTING PROGRAM GOALS



	Low ¹ Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Students	Do not need to screen	Offer screening testing for students who are not fully vaccinated at least once per week.		
Teachers and staff	Offer screening testing for teachers and staff who are not fully vaccinated at least once per week.			
High risk sports and activities	Recommend screening testing for high-risk sports and extracurricular activities ² at least once per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.		Recommend screening 2x per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.	Cancel or hold virtually to protect in-person learning, unless all participants are fully vaccinated.
Low-and intermediate-risk sports	Do not need to screen	Recommend screening testing at least 1x per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.		

STRONGSCHOOLSNC K-12 COVID-19 TESTING: **VENDOR TESTING RECOMMENDATIONS**

	Screening	Diagnostic
Populations in Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Staff • Teachers • Athletics and Special Populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Staff • Teachers • Athletics and Special Populations
Frequency	<p>Students and Teachers: 1x week</p> <p>Athletics and other special pops: 1x week*</p>	As needed with presentation of symptoms or known exposure (i.e. close contact)
Modality	Pooled PCR testing with Abbott BinaxNOW as the reflex test**	<p>Lab-run PCR</p> <p>Abbott BinaxNOW Antigen tests <i>for schools with CLIA waiver and full-time RN oversight</i></p>

Benefits of Routine screening: it is a proactive approach to identify asymptomatic cases; it minimizes disruption, and it can be scheduled. Routine screening, with *supplemental* diagnostic testing, helps **get ahead of transmission** and **be responsive** to daily needs. **Providing diagnostic tests in-school is a key part of any plan because it helps keep students in school through quick testing results.**

*Frequency will vary based on current CDC guidance and the level of community spread. As a baseline, NC DHHS recommends the following, though this can be adjusted over time

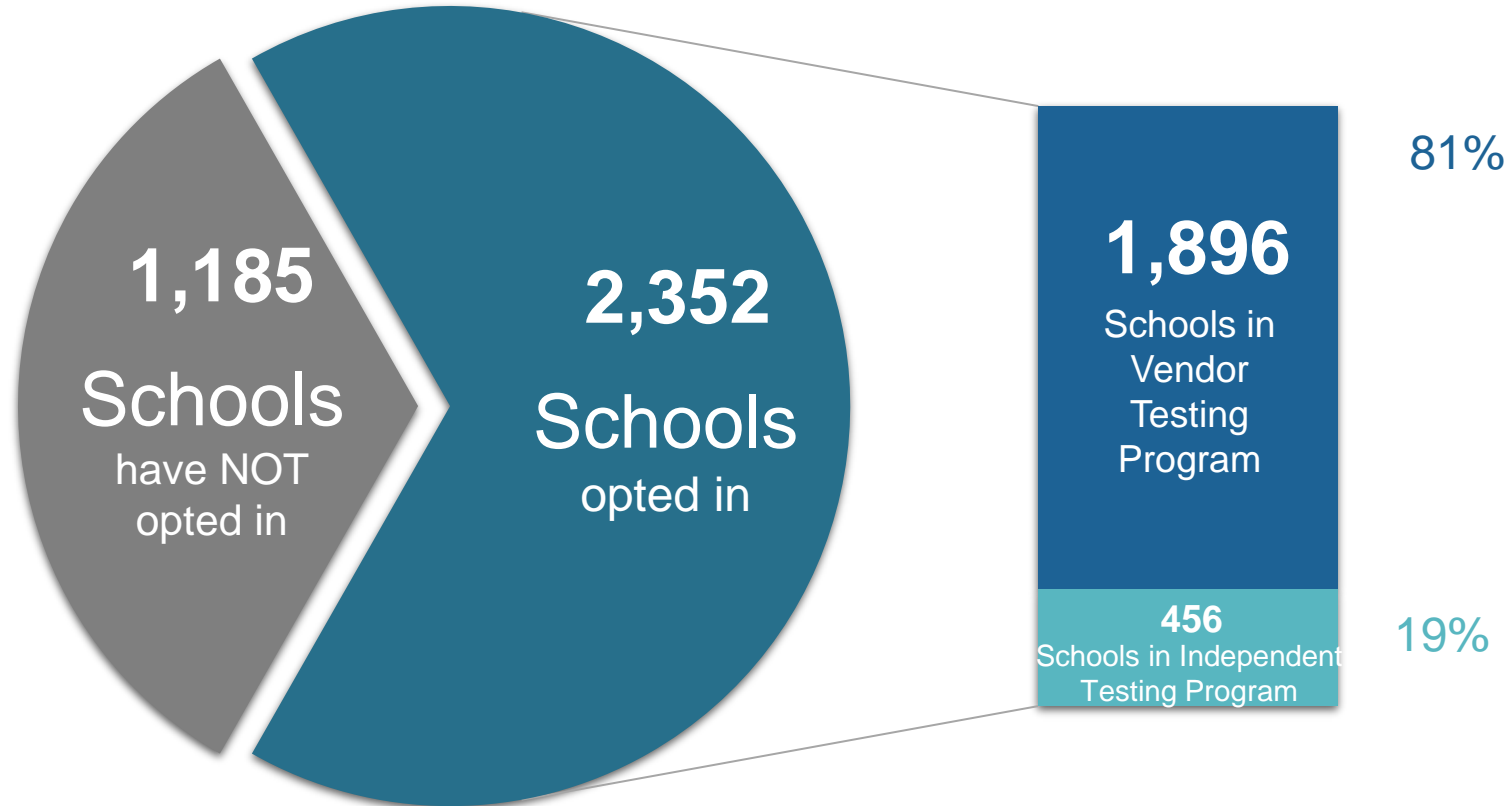
**Modality will be based on size of population being tested per school per day



Both types of testing are important and require parental/guardian consent.

StrongSchoolsNC K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program: **School Summary View**

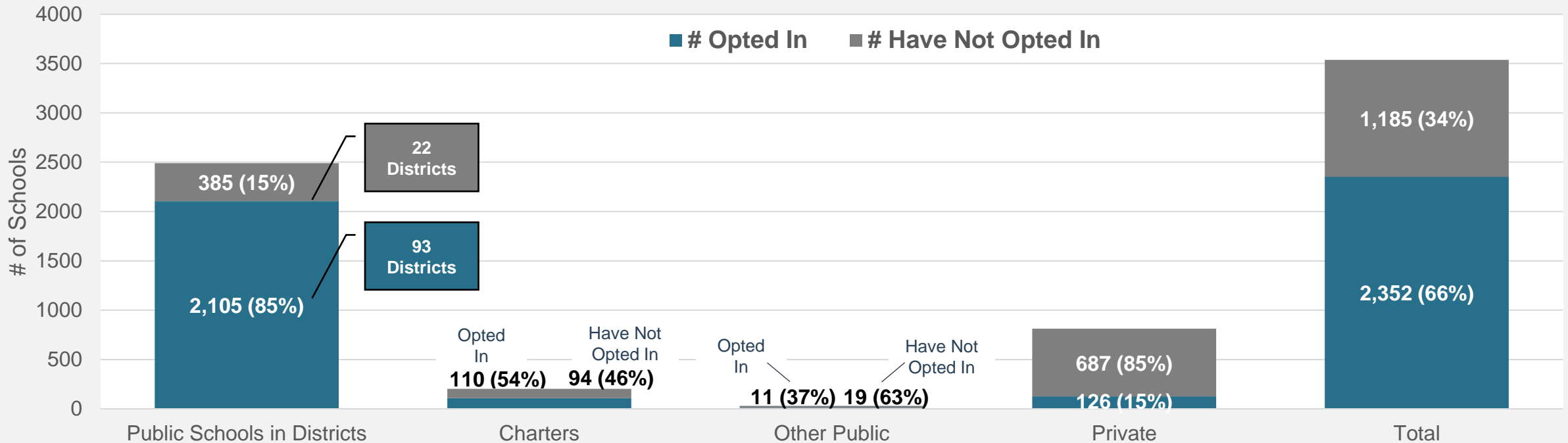
As of 9/28, 66% of all schools, public, charter and private (2,352 of 3,537), and 85% of schools in public school districts (2,105 of 2,490) are participating in the StrongSchoolsNC K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program.



30 new schools – including 2 districts encompassing 21 of 30 schools – have opted in to the StrongSchoolsNC: K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program since the opt-in period closed on September 13.

StrongSchoolsNC K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program: 2021-22 Participation

NC K-12 School Totals (as of 9/28)



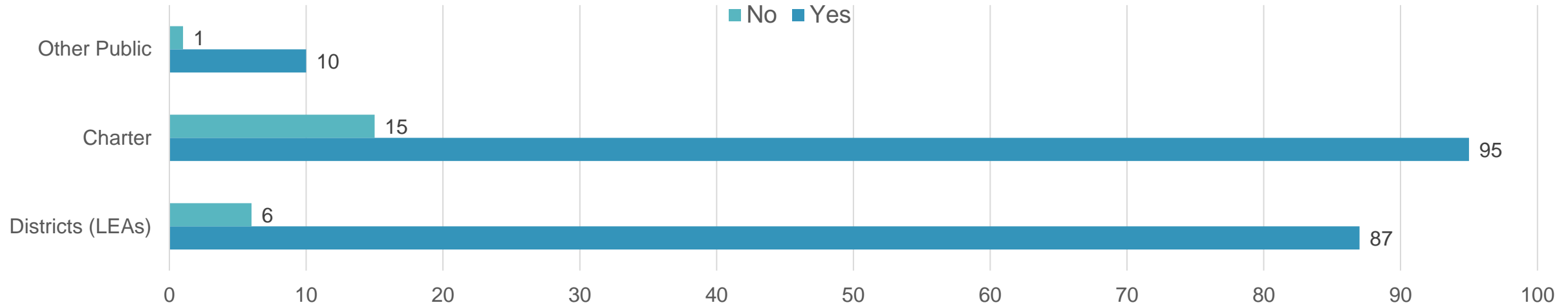
As of September 28, 87% of public school students are in a district, charter, or other public school participating in the Program^{1, 2}.



¹Other public schools include lab schools, lab schools, federal schools (e.g., Cherokee Central) and specialized schools (i.e., deaf, blind, juvenile detention)
²This is a proxy based on 2020/2021 data; actual figure for 2021/2022 school year not yet available, enrollment data for some other public schools not available (i.e., deaf, blind, juvenile detention).

STRONGSCHOOLSNC K-12 COVID-19 TESTING: STAFF FUNDING

District/school election to receive staff funding *as of September 28th, 2021*



Fund Distribution Process

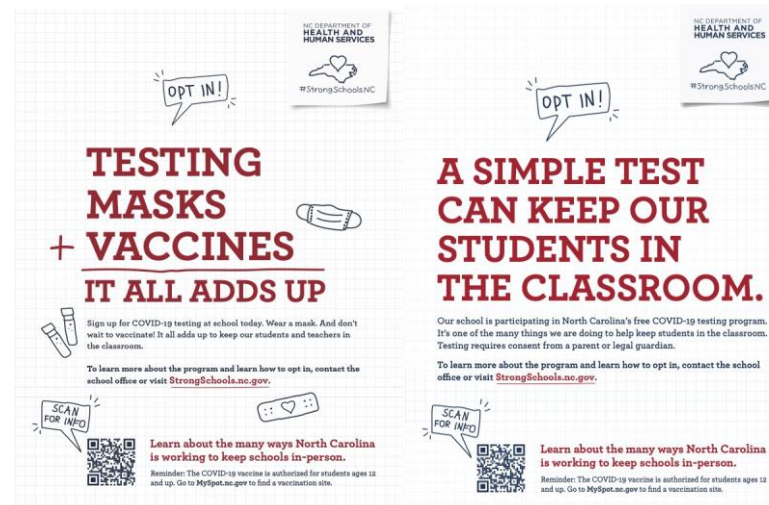
Contracts and Agreements for those who opt-in to the public school staffing funds option are in budgetary development. For planning purposes, LEAs and other public school units that select this add-on option may request allocation information from K12COVIDtesting@dhhs.nc.gov

Those who are health department employers have access to funds now, others will be completed in October.
Reminder: Please complete and submit budget template if have not already done so. It is required to gain access to the funds.

STRONGSCHOOLSNC K-12 COVID-19 TESTING: COMMS TOOLKIT AND WEBPAGE

- [Toolkit linked from strongschools.nc.gov](#)
- All materials are available in English and Spanish.
- Toolkit materials direct to [StrongSchools.nc.gov](#) (and [EscuelasFuerates.nc.gov](#)), which includes:
 - parent FAQs,
 - list of participating schools, and
 - other COVID-19 resources.
- Includes tips for schools to testing communications.
- Design and content informed by parent focus groups.

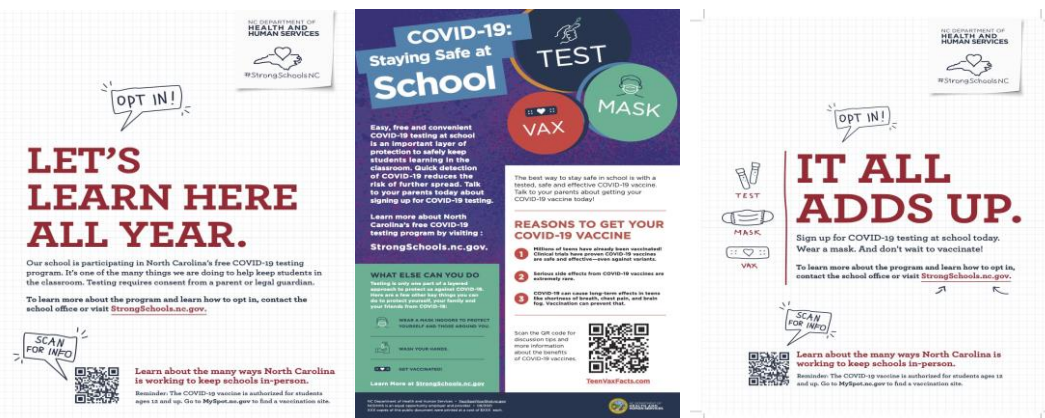
Flyers to Send Home To Parents



Social Media



Posters



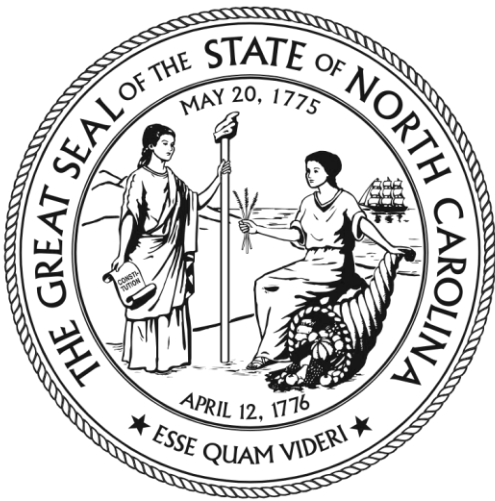
Q/A Social Media GIFs



Toolkit will regularly be updated and expanded to include new resources.

STRONGSCHOOLSNC K-12 COVID-19 TESTING: **UPCOMING COMMUNICATIONS**

- Schools are continuing to opt-in to the testing program using registration link sent in mid-July
- Will be reaching out to schools that did not opt in to the testing program to learn more
- **StrongSchools.nc.gov** live as a COVID-19 resource for parents
 - Sending stakeholder emails/announcements about the page and pushing on social media (Oct. 6 – Oct. 15)
 - Includes communications toolkit for schools
 - List of participating schools regularly updated and is being expanded to include more info for parents
- K-12 school testing office hours on Friday, Oct. 8
- Received comms survey responses last week from participating schools regarding request for printed flyers/posters to be shipped to each elementary, middle, and high school.



NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit

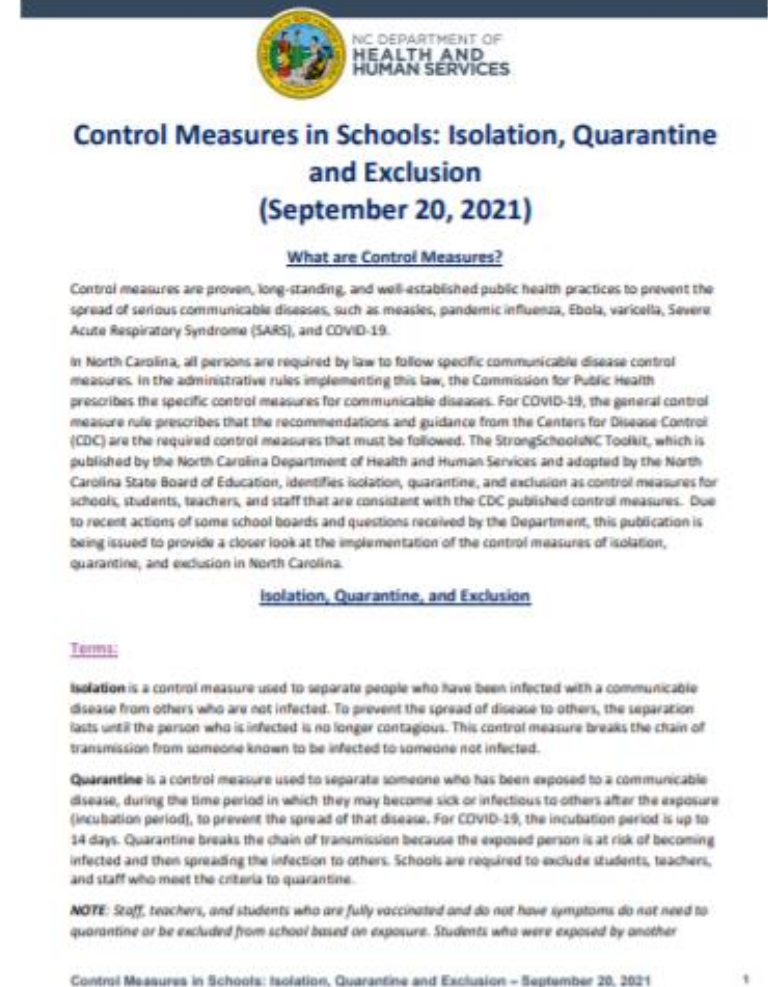
Karen Wade, Senior Policy Advisor

NC DHHS- DPI Monthly Webinar

October 5, 2021

New Materials in StrongSchools Toolkit

- New resource on control measures for schools, includes:
 - Summary of key terminology
 - Guidance on when to begin and discontinue quarantine and isolation periods
 - The schools' role in implementing control measures



COVID-19 Control Measures in Schools

Quarantine Changes

- Existing flexibilities and quarantine exemptions unchanged
- **Extended** quarantine exemption to include adults in K-12 settings after exposure, if both persons were consistently masked; recent scientific and public health information shows low rates of transmission with universal masking

• **Individuals** who are not fully vaccinated after a close contact in a classroom or other school setting if masks were being worn appropriately and consistently by both the person with COVID-19 and the potentially exposed person do NOT need to quarantine. This is based on updated studies that have shown low risk of COVID-19 transmission in classroom settings when face masks were being used appropriately by both the person with COVID-19 and the potentially exposed person, as well as multiple layers of prevention measures in place to prevent transmission in school settings. This applies to exposures in classrooms, other in-school settings, and school transportation but does not apply to exposures during extracurricular, including athletic activities.

- DHHS approved protocol for an ABC Science Collaborative research study
 - Test and Stay alternative to quarantine after unmasked exposure in districts with mask mandates
 - ABC identifying districts – approximately 9; submitting data to ABC, mix of size, geography, agree to participate with logistics

