
PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE

Advisory Panel 4:
Public Health, Safety, & Logistics

Meeting Slides

July 23, 2021

Community Benchmarks - Status

Note: column interval changed to 2-week increments

Benchmark (each measured over prior 14 days)	Status 6/9/21	Status 6/23/21	Status 7/7/21	Status 7/21/21
Avg. daily new case count in Brookline = <10 per 100k people	0.9	0.4	0.6	2.6
Avg. daily new case count in Mass. = <10 per 100k people	2.4	1.2	1.0	2.6
Avg. test positivity rate in Brookline = <5.0%	0.30%	0.10%	0.11%	0.60%
Avg. test positivity rate in Massachusetts = <5.0%	0.63%	0.39%	0.36%	0.88%

Panel 4 selected these four community transmission benchmarks in August 2020 as triggers for focused evaluation and discussion of whether changes in operations are warranted, not as definitive indicators of in-school risk or thresholds for automatic action. Research and PSB-specific data since that time have convincingly shown that in-school transmission risk can be kept very low even at high levels of community case incidence.

MA DPH Color Scale



Incidence Rate Color Table
 Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard - Thursday, November 12, 2020
Average Daily Incidence Rate per 100,000 Color Calculations

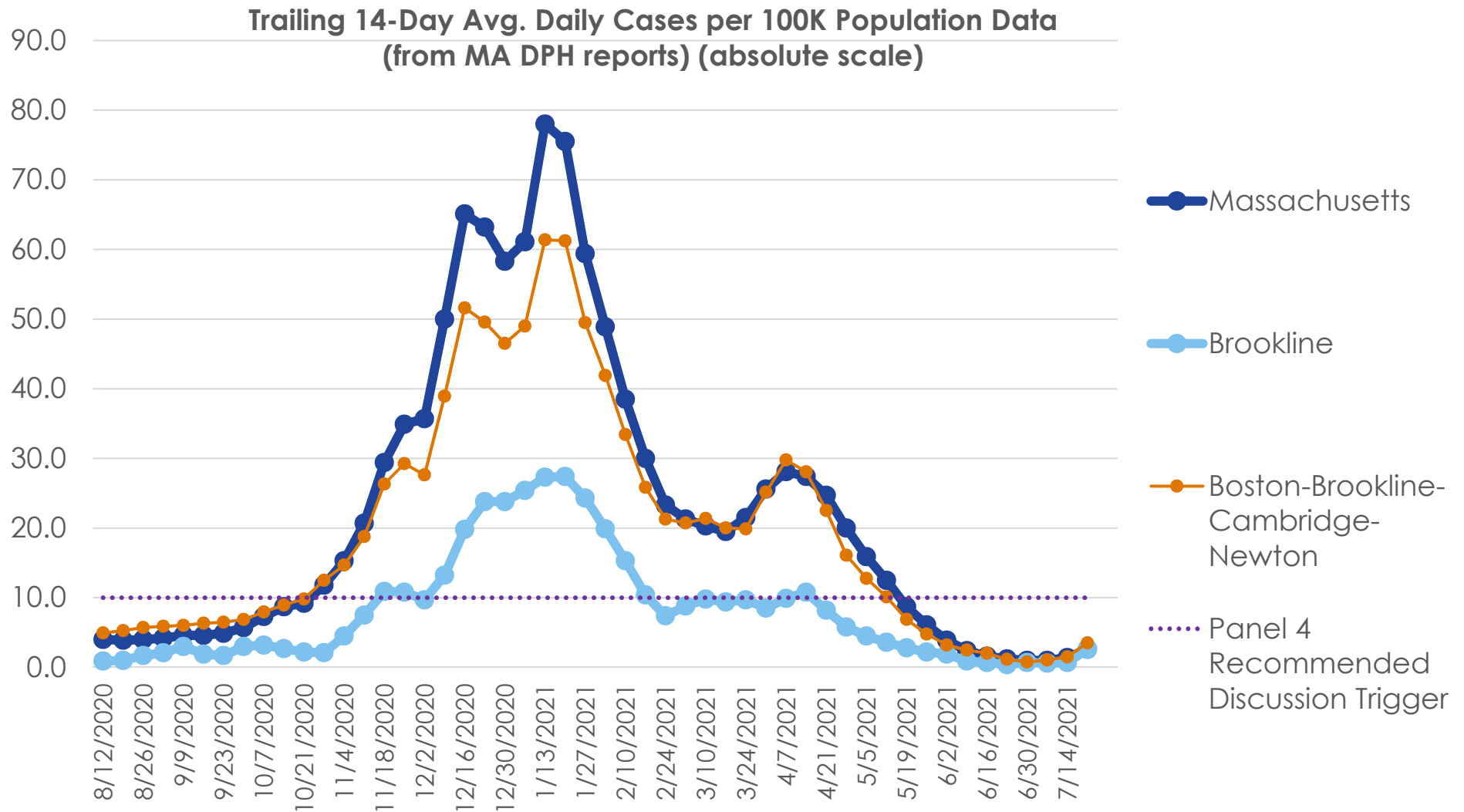
Group	Population		
	Under 10K	10K-50K	Over 50K
Grey	Less than or equal to 10 total cases	Less than or equal to 10 total cases	Less than or equal to 15 total cases
Green	Less than or equal to 15 total cases	<10 avg cases/100k AND >10 total cases	<10 avg cases/100k AND >15 total cases
Yellow	Less than or equal to 25 total cases	≥10 avg cases/100k OR ≥5% pos rate	≥10 avg cases/100k OR ≥ 4% pos rate
Red	More than 25 total cases	≥10 avg cases/100k AND ≥5% pos rate	≥10 avg cases/100k AND ≥4% pos rate

Brookline is here as of 7/21/2021 (green)

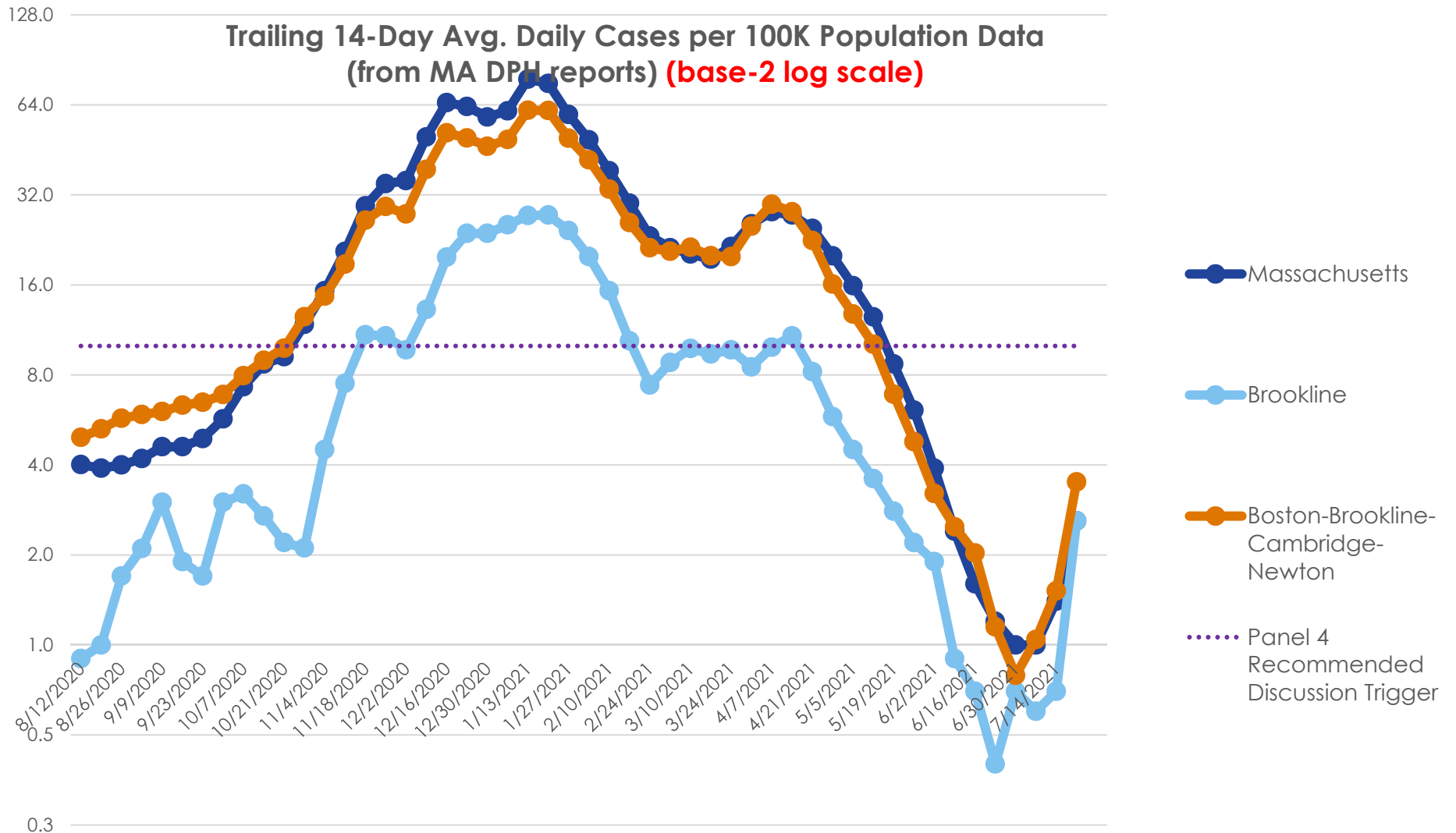
Brookline's population is ~60,000

As of 11/5, DPH is using 2019 population estimates derived from a method developed by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. The 2019 estimates are the most currently available data.

Trends: Avg. Daily New Cases per 100k

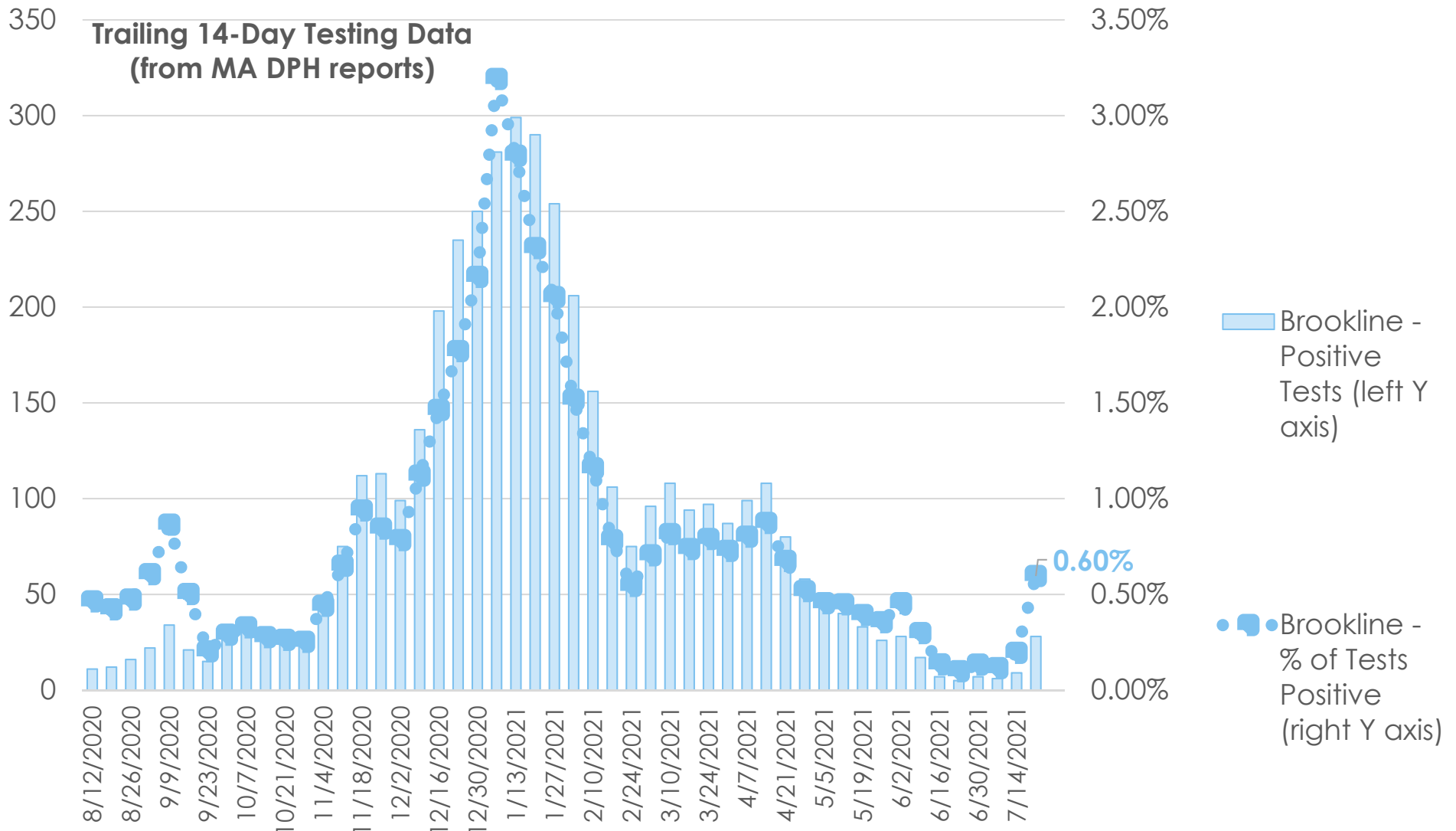


Trends: Avg. Daily New Cases per 100k



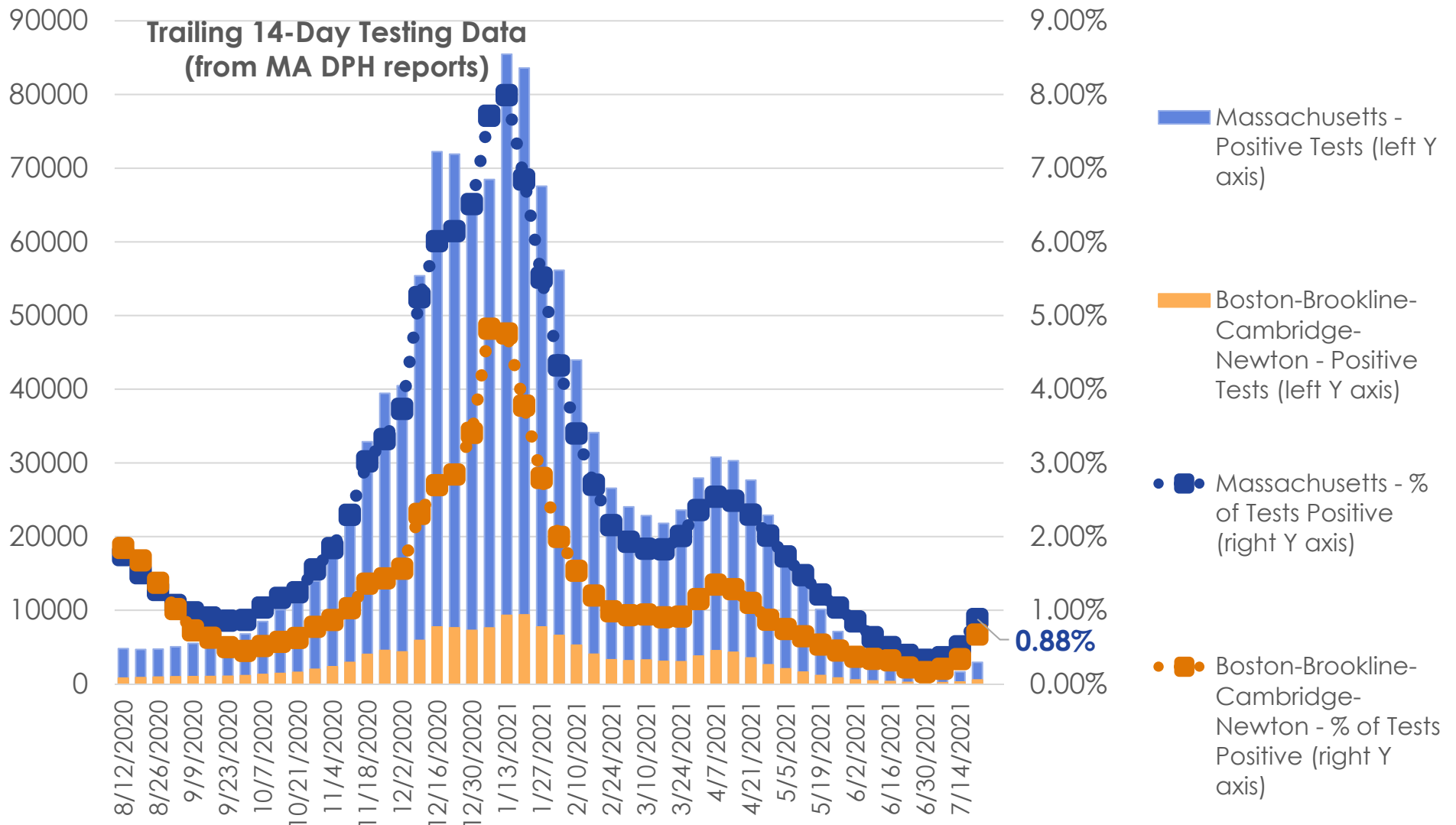
Data source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting>

Trends: Test Positivity (Brookline)



Data source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting>

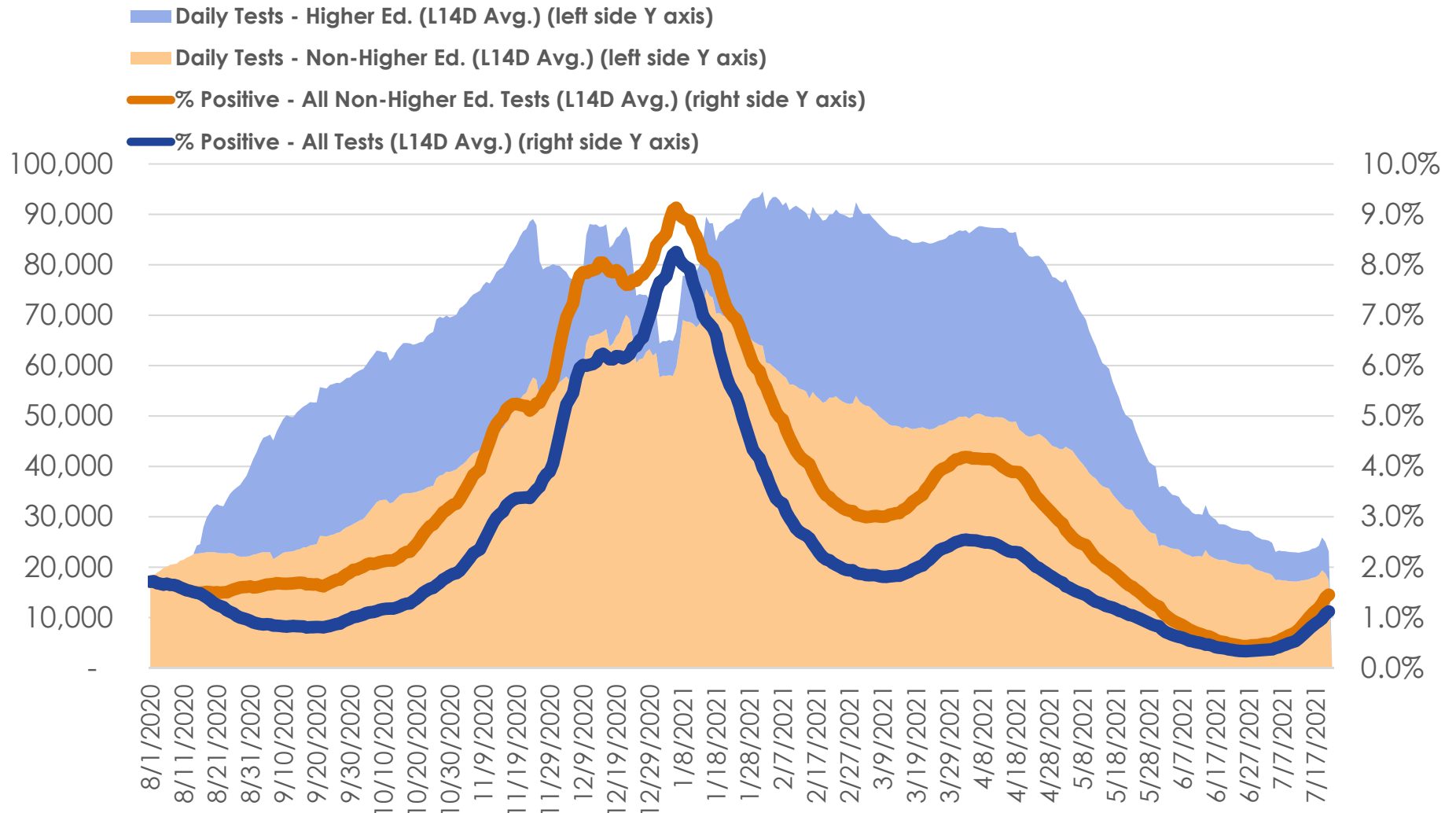
Trends: Test Positivity (Statewide)



Data source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting>

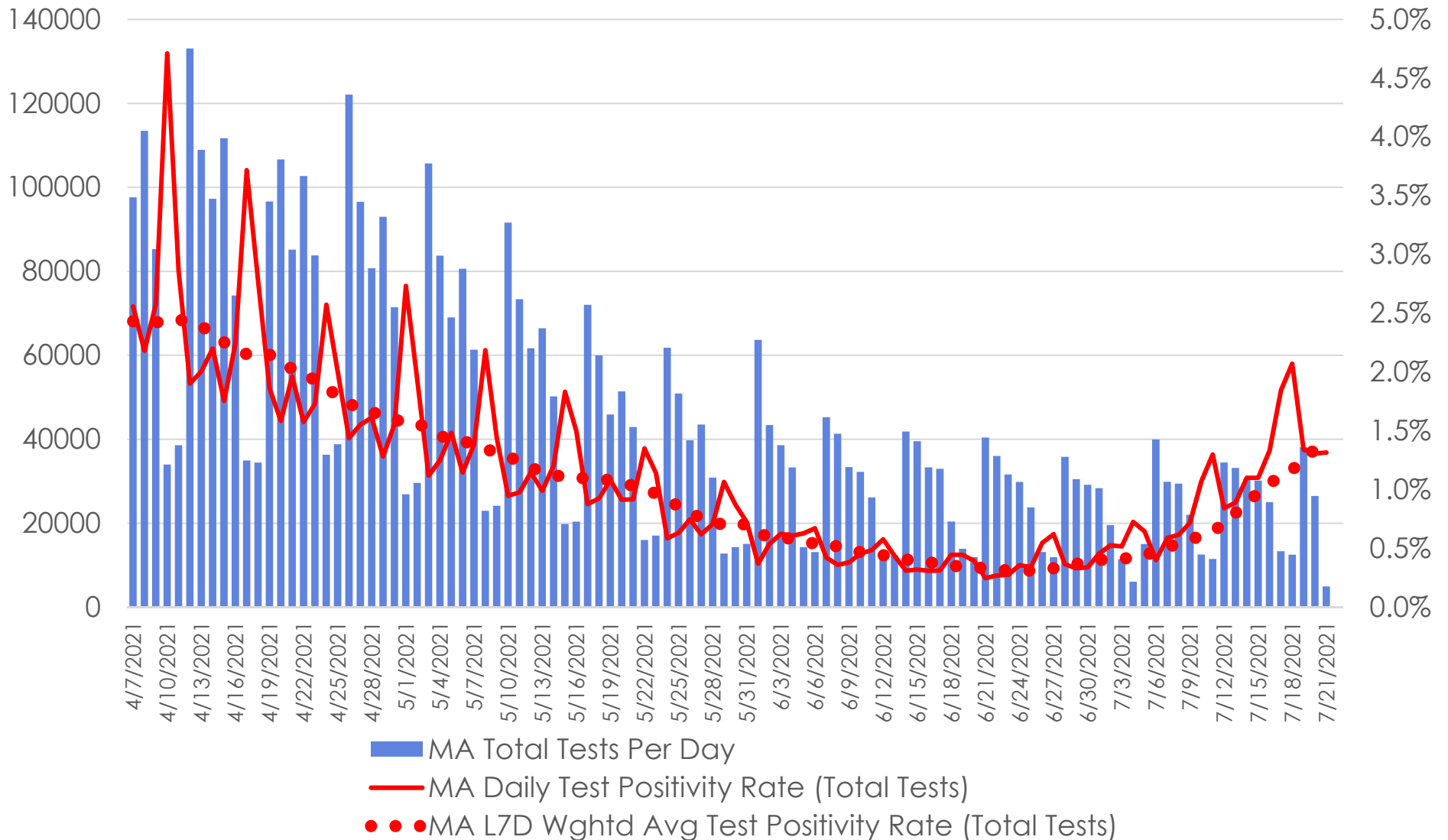
Trends: Test Positivity and Testing Volume (Statewide)

MA Statewide Test Positivity and Volume



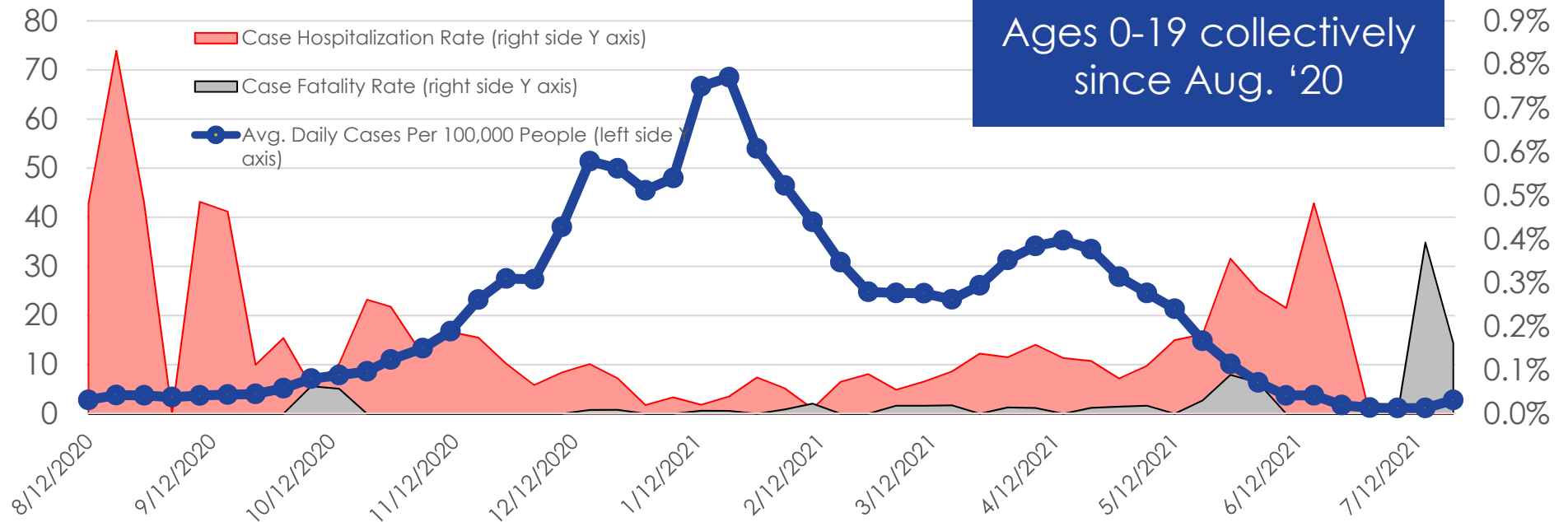
Data source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting>

Trends: Daily Test Volumes and Positivity (Statewide)



Data source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting>

Trends: 0-19 Year-Old Age Cohort (MA Statewide)

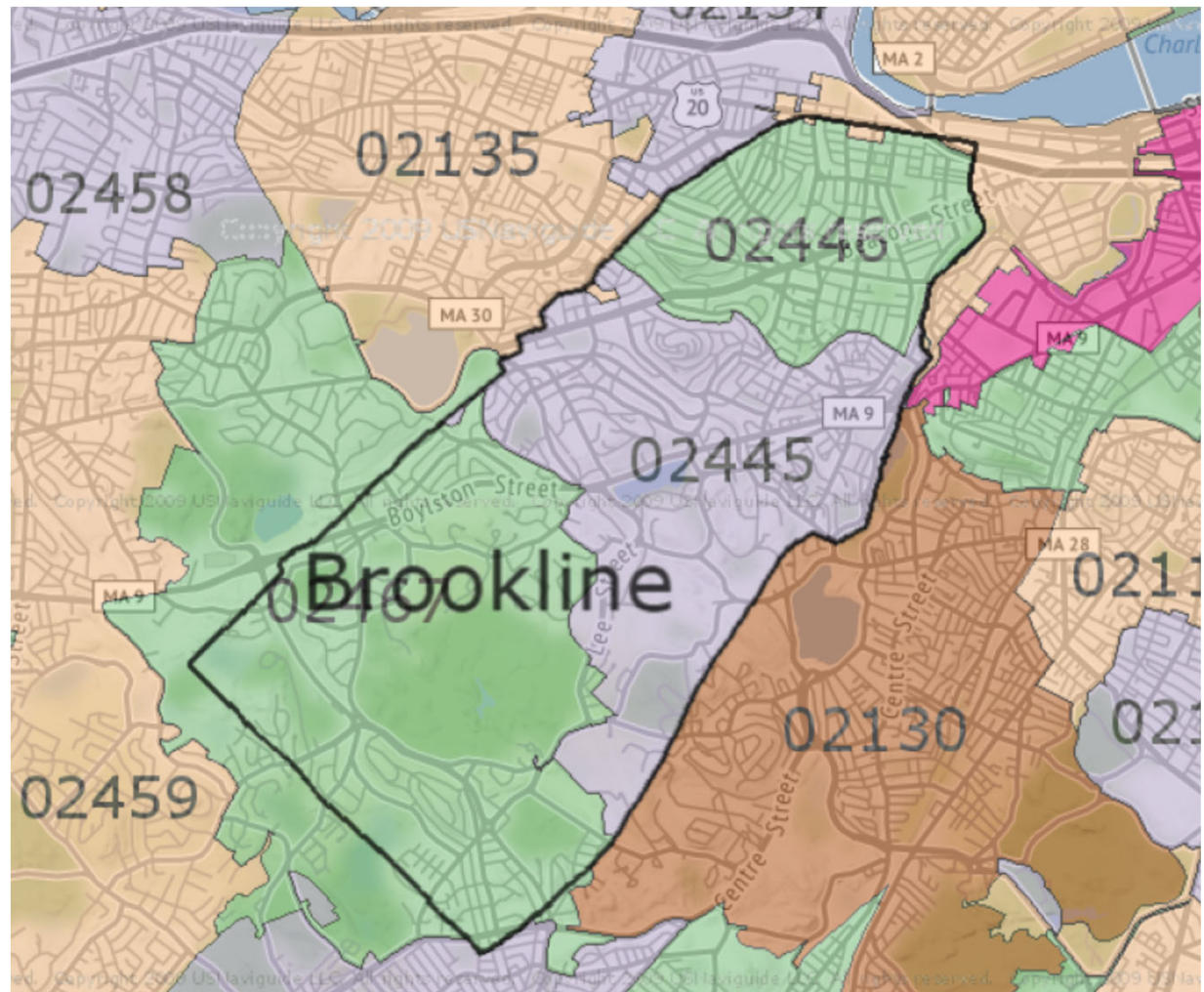


Total Cases (Avg. Daily per 100k Pop.)	6/6 – 6/19/2021	6/20 – 7/3/2021	7/4 – 7/17/2021
<5 yo (unvaxxed)	74 (1.5)	66 (1.3)	122 (2.4)
5-9 yo (unvaxxed)	81 (1.6)	53 (1.0)	133 (2.6)
10-14 yo (some vaxxed)	103 (1.8)	66 (1.2)	185 (3.3)
15-19 yo (largely vaxxed)	129 (2.0)	70 (1.1)	179 (2.8)
All ages (largely vaxxed)	1,433 (1.5)	1,194 (1.2)	3,010 (3.1)

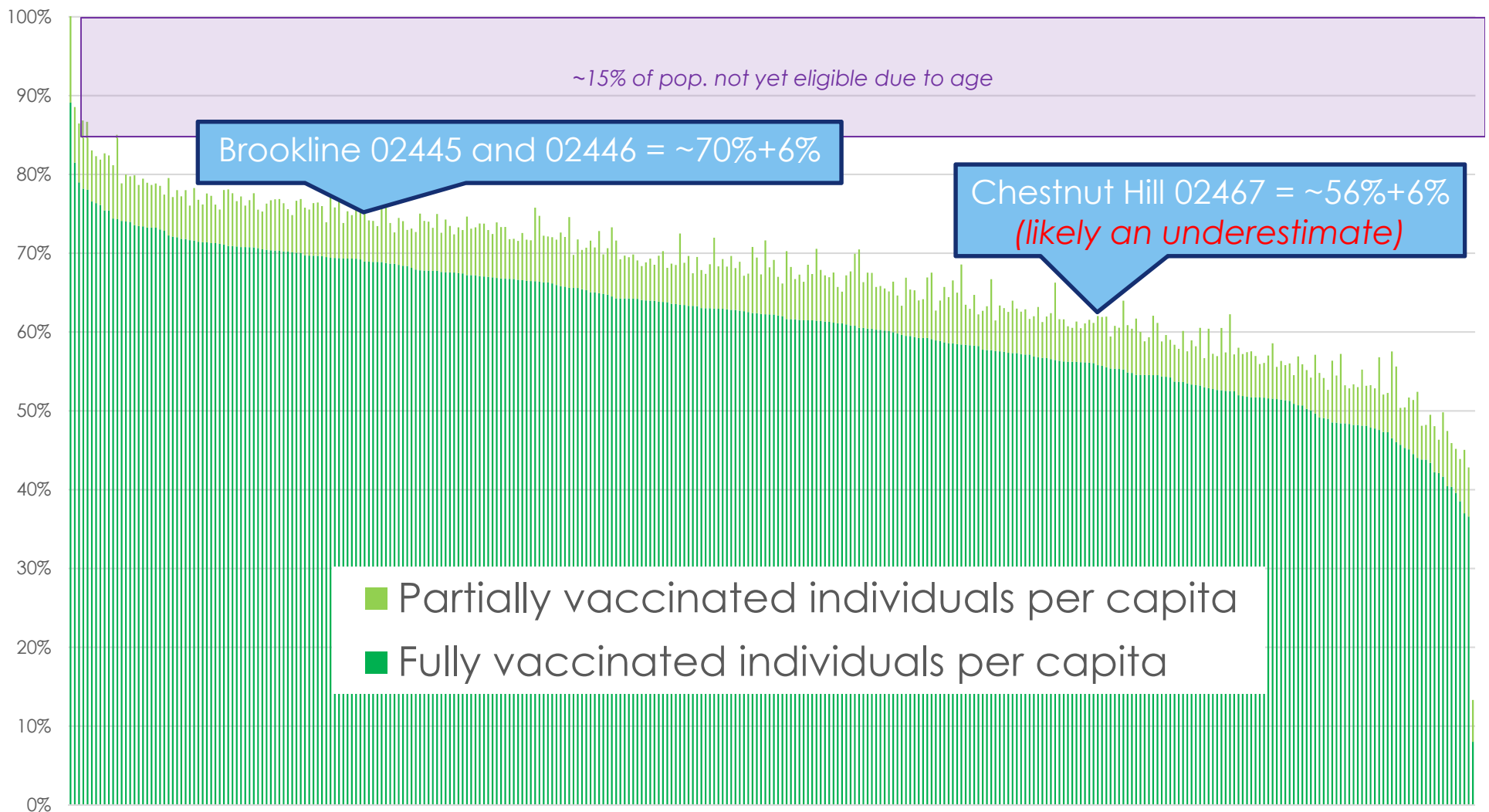
Data source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting>

Brookline Vaccination Data

- Brookline consists of zip codes 02445 and 02446 plus much but not all of 02467 (shared with Newton and a bit with Boston)
- Very small portions of 02135 and 02139 also extend into Brookline
- DPH's "Brookline" vaccination data only counts 02445 and 02446 so rates not accurate



MA DPH Vaccination Rate Data By ZIP Code: 7/20/2021 (all ages; all MA ZIP codes with pop. ≥ 5,000)



Data sources: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccination-data-and-updates>;
https://www.massachusetts-demographics.com/zip_codes_by_population

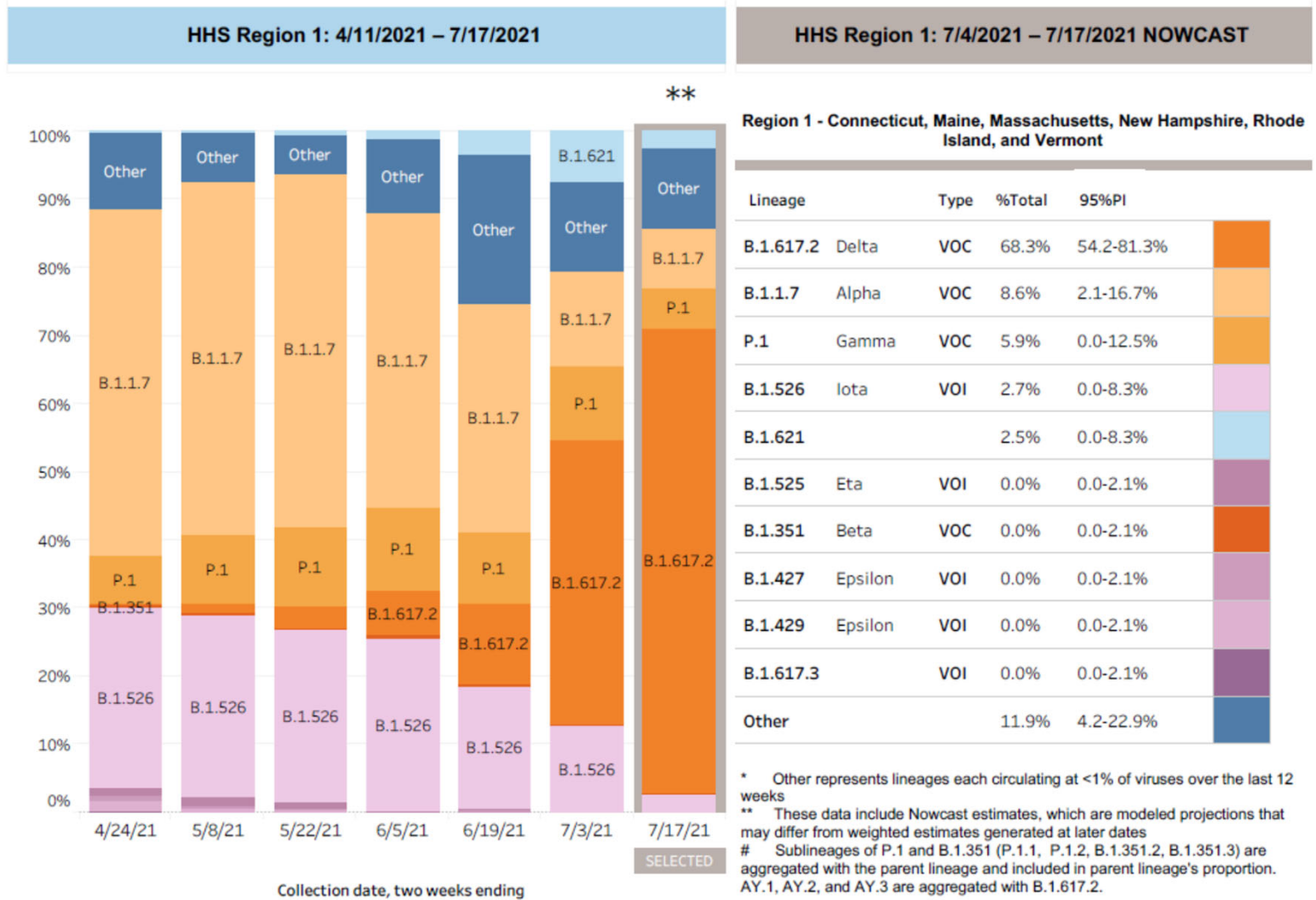
MA DPH Vaccination Rate Data: 7/6/2021

	(fully + partially vaccinated individuals by age)	
ZIP	12-15 Years Old	16-19 Years Old
Brookline 02445	863 + 155	769 + 78
Brookline 02446	733 + 134	716 + 84
Chestnut Hill 02467	694 + 128	980 + 231
Est. Brookline Total	<i>~500 + 90 per age year/grade</i>	<i>~500 + 70 per age year/grade</i>

SARS-CoV-2 Variants of Concern Update

Delta (B.1.617.2)

- Now predominant variant in US and northeast
- More transmissible than other strains
- Unclear whether any increased virulence vs. other strains
- 2-dose vaccines remain highly effective



Source: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#variant-proportions>; <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/variant-info.html>; <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2108891>

CDC Guidance Updates – July 9, 2021

“Key Takeaways”

- Prioritize in-person learning
- Promote vaccination as leading prevention strategy
- Masks:
 - Indoors - all unvaccinated people (2+ yo) should wear
 - Outdoors - generally not needed, but consider in crowded, non-distanced settings when community transmission is elevated
- ≥ 3 ft physical distancing in classrooms where feasible
- All should stay home with symptoms
- Multi-layered mitigation strategy—especially where many students/staff are not fully vaccinated, community transmission is elevated, etc.

CDC Guidance Updates – July 9, 2021

Screening Testing Recommendations

	Low Transmission ¹ Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Students	Do not need to screen students.	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 ² and extracurricular activities ³ at least once per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.	Recommend screening testing for high-risk sports and extracurricular activities twice per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.	Cancel or hold high-risk sports and extracurricular activities virtually to protect in-person learning, unless all participants are fully vaccinated.	
Low- and intermediate-risk sports	Do not need to screen students participating in low- and intermediate-risk sports. ²	Recommend screening testing for low- and intermediate-risk sports at least once per week for participants who are not fully vaccinated.		

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

CDC Guidance Updates – July 9, 2021

Food Service Operations

Food Service and School Meals

- Maximize physical distance as much as possible when moving through the food service line and while eating (especially indoors). Using additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating such as the gymnasium or outdoor seating can help facilitate distancing. Note: students, teachers, and staff who are fully vaccinated do not need to distance while eating.
- Given very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals.
- Promote hand washing before, after, and during shifts, before and after eating, after using the toilet, and after handling garbage, dirty dishes, or removing gloves.
- Improve ventilation in food preparation, service, and seating areas.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued several Child Nutrition COVID-19 Waivers. Learn more here [🔗](#) .

Updated American Academy of Pediatrics Guidance

- Prioritize in-person learning: “Everything possible must be done to keep students in schools in-person.”
- Promote vaccination as leading prevention strategy
- Universal masking “at school” for all students/staff above 2 years old, regardless of vaccination status
- Otherwise, maintain multi-layered mitigation strategy (pointing to CDC guidance on vaccination, universal mask use, ventilation, testing, quarantining, and cleaning and disinfecting)

Panel 4 Recommendations

(current; subject to ongoing reassessment and revision)

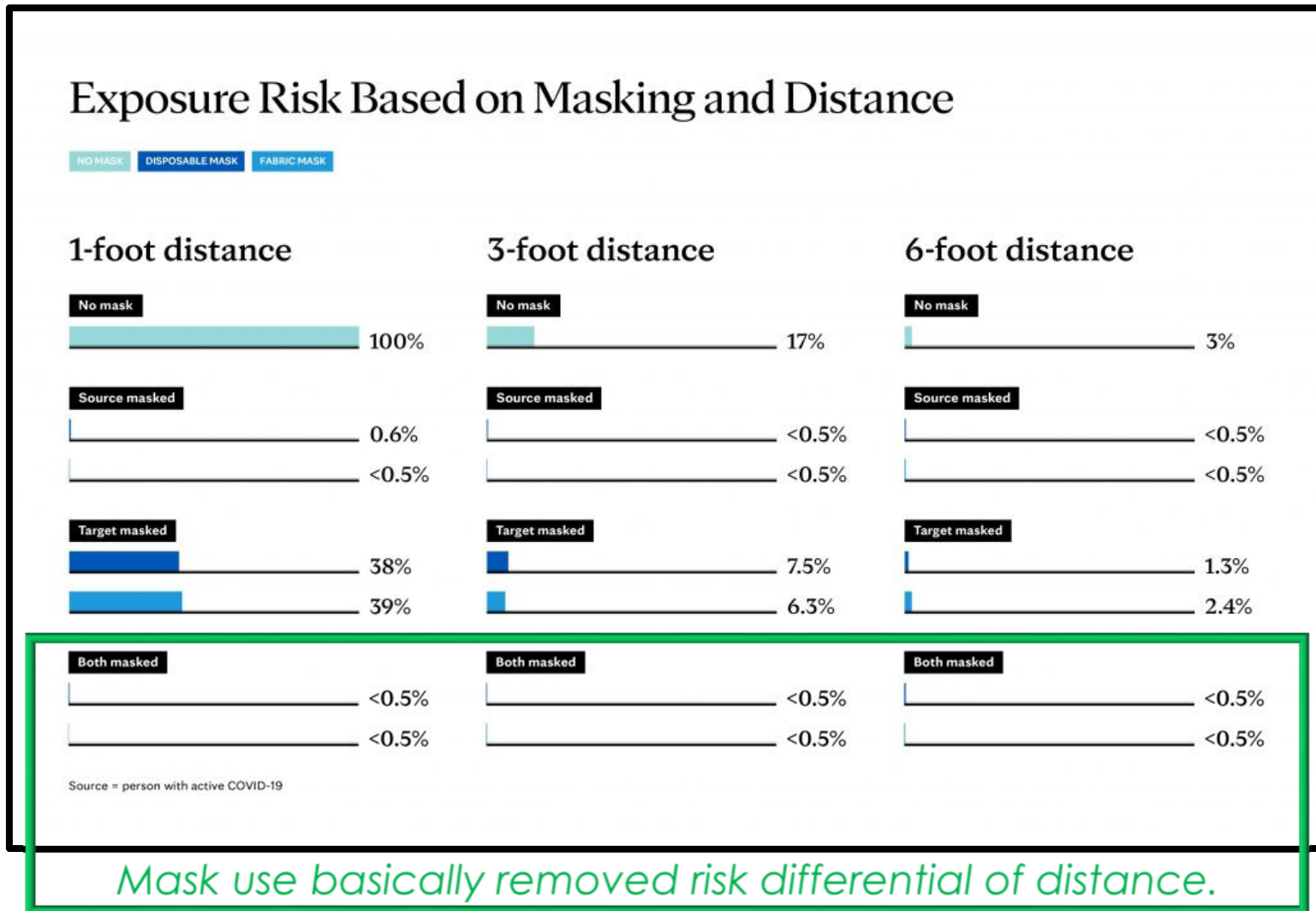
- **Vaccination** - continue to promote as much as possible (discuss mandate as option)
- **Masks**
 - Outdoors: not required, but encouraged when (esp. unvaccinated) students/staff spend extended time in close quarters
 - Indoors:
 - Not feasible to enforce policy by individual vaccination status
 - Universal masking required for PK-6 students (need further discussion on staff and 7-12 students)
- **Ventilation** – continue enhanced ventilation strategy in place at year-end
- **Distancing**
 - In a fully-masked classroom, give educators freedom to organize seating as desired without regard to minimum distancing/direction of facing (group tables OK)

Panel 4 Recommendations

(current; subject to ongoing reassessment and revision)

- **Lunch**
 - Outside as much as feasible; maximize distance when eating (esp. indoors) to the extent possible
 - For all masked cohorts, limit unmasked indoor time as reasonably possible to allow for healthy eating
 - OK to use full cafeteria capacity if needed, with assigned class tables for contact tracing purposes
- **Testing**
 - Not necessary to maintain safety; primary goal would remain reassurance
 - Highest priority = symptomatic individuals (with rapid antigen testing available)
- **Symptom screening/stay home when sick** – continue from year-end
- **Contact tracing/quarantine** – to be discussed at next Panel 4 meeting

Mitigation Impact of Distancing vs. Masks (unpublished Mayo Clinic data)



Source: <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/mayo-clinic-research-confirms-critical-role-of-masks-in-preventing-covid-19-infection/>