

INTERAGENCY COUNCIL FOR ENDING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

March 7, 2023
Virtual Meeting
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.



OPENING REMARKS & ROLL CALL

The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz, Lieutenant Governor
State of Connecticut

Member Agencies

Roll Call – Kari Sullivan, State Department of Education

- Connecticut State Colleges and Universities
- Department of Administrative Services
- Department of Children and Families
- Department of Economic and Community Development
- Department of Housing
- Department of Public Health
- Department of Social Services
- Judicial Branch
- Office of Early Childhood
- Office of Policy and Management
- State Department of Education

Agenda

I. Opening Remarks & Roll Call

The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz
Lieutenant Governor, State of Connecticut

II. Acceptance of Minutes and Follow-up from Last Meeting Discussion

III. Health & Respiratory Preventative Measures

Lynn Sosa, MD, Acting State Epidemiologist and Acting Director of Infectious Diseases
Connecticut Department of Public Health

IV. Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education
Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer
John D. Frassinelli, Division Director, Bureau of Health, Nutrition and Family Services

IV. Legislative Roundtable

V. Next Steps

VI. Closing/Meeting Adjourned

Acceptance of Minutes and Follow Up from Last Meeting

Topic	Notes
Minutes from December 13, 2022, Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1462 534 1658 562">• Questions



THE
CHARTIS
GROUP

Respiratory Viral Disease Trends Report

March 07, 2023

Interagency Council for Ending the Achievement Gap Meeting



RSV SUMMARY

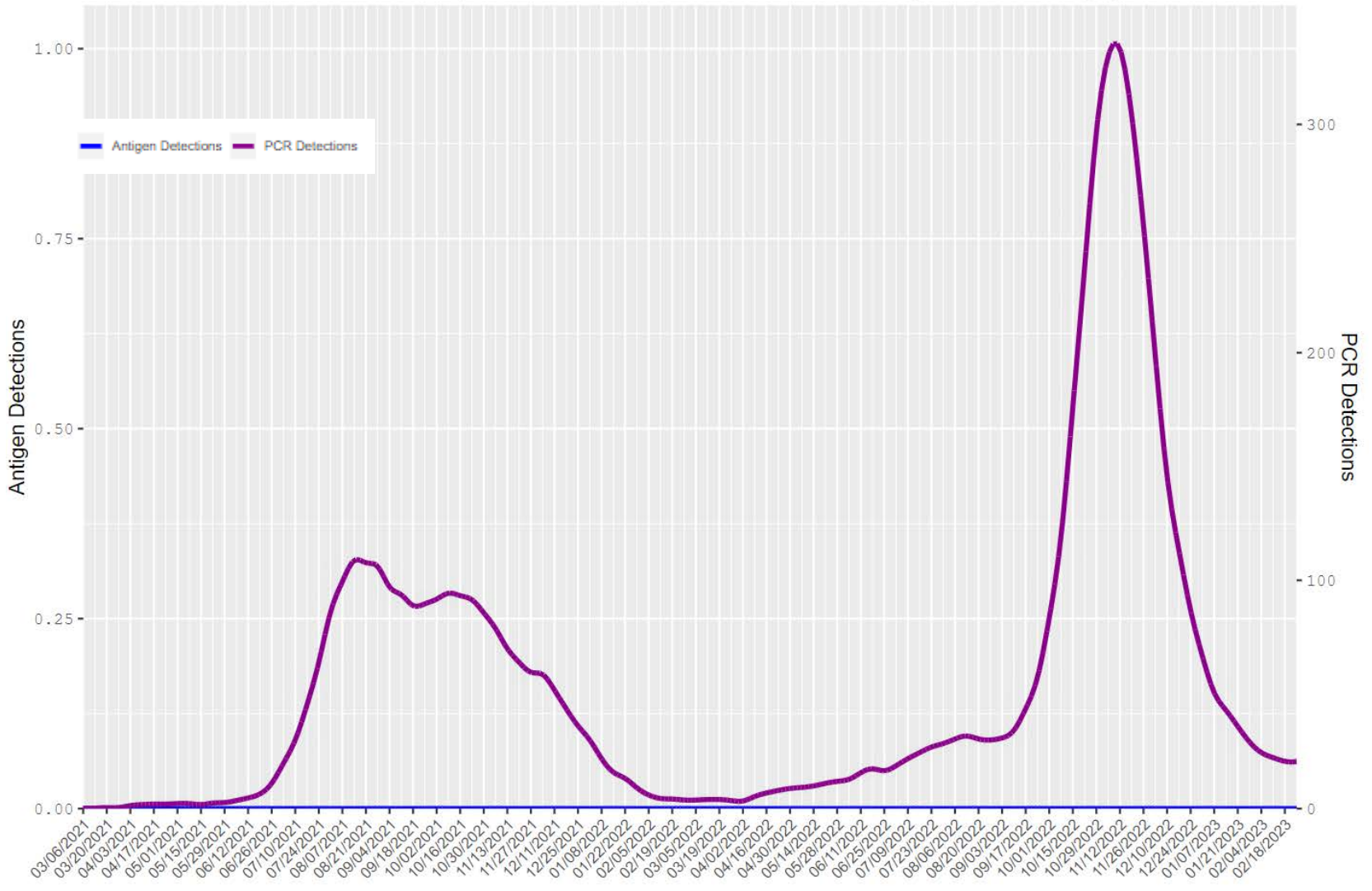
What is RSV?

- Signs and Symptoms
 - Typically mild, cold-like symptoms
 - May cause bronchiolitis or pneumonia in infants, older adults, or those with underlying conditions
- Testing
 - Most people with mild illness will not be tested
- School exclusion
 - No RSV-specific guidance
 - May return to school if fever free and feeling well enough
 - Masks are recommended as part of test-mask-go for staff and students with mild symptoms

National Respiratory and Viral Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS)



Insufficient Antigen Data: RSV Numerator Data for CT (5 week Average)

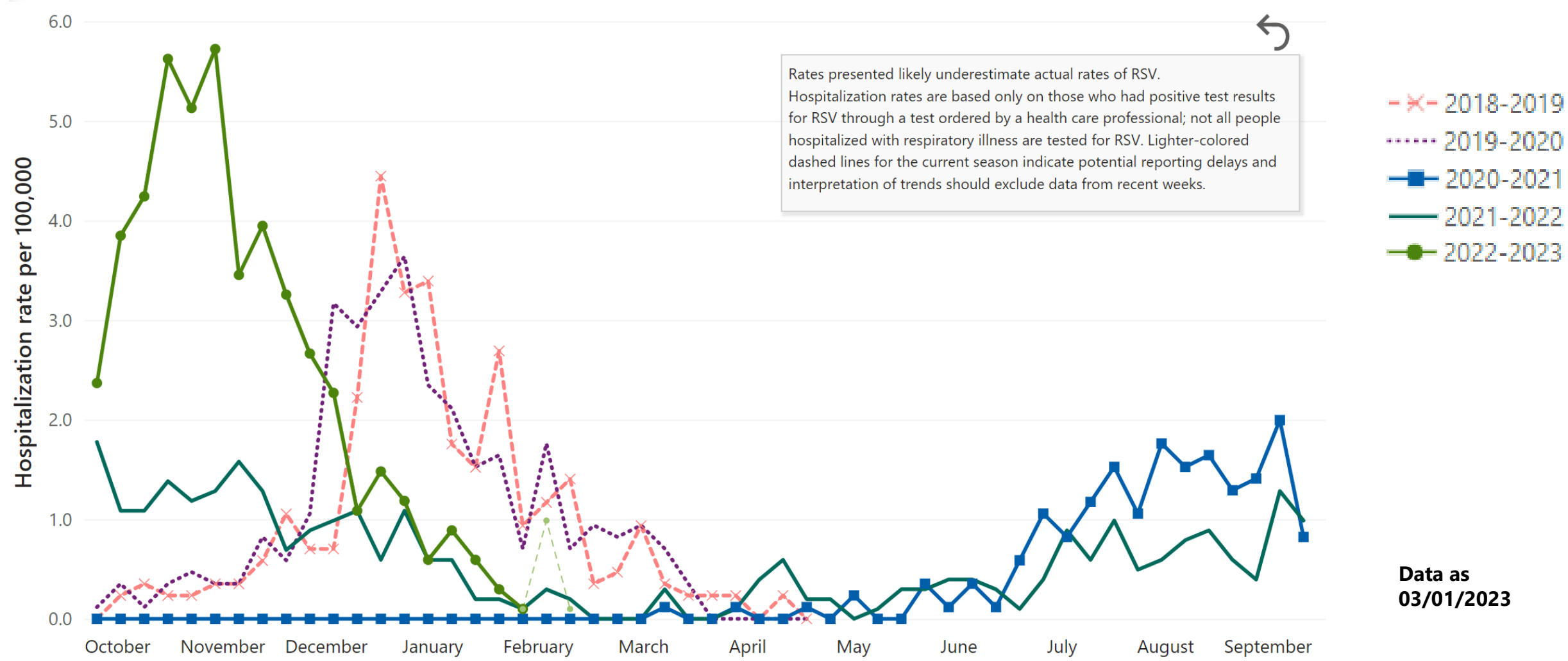


Data as of 02/28/2023



RSV-Net Hospitalizations by Season

Rates of RSV-Associated Hospitalization, all seasons



Data as 03/01/2023

INFLUENZA SUMMARY

What is Influenza?

- Signs and Symptoms
 - Fever with cough and/or sore throat
 - Infants, older adults, and persons with underlying conditions at increased risk of severe disease
- Testing
 - Testing is recommended as antiviral therapies are effective and readily available
- School exclusion
 - No influenza-specific guidance
 - May return to school if fever free and feeling well enough

Big Picture: Influenza Statewide Snapshot

2022-2023 Flu Season



Statistics at a glance

Season: 10/01 – 04/30
Current Week: 02/26 – 03/04

Cases

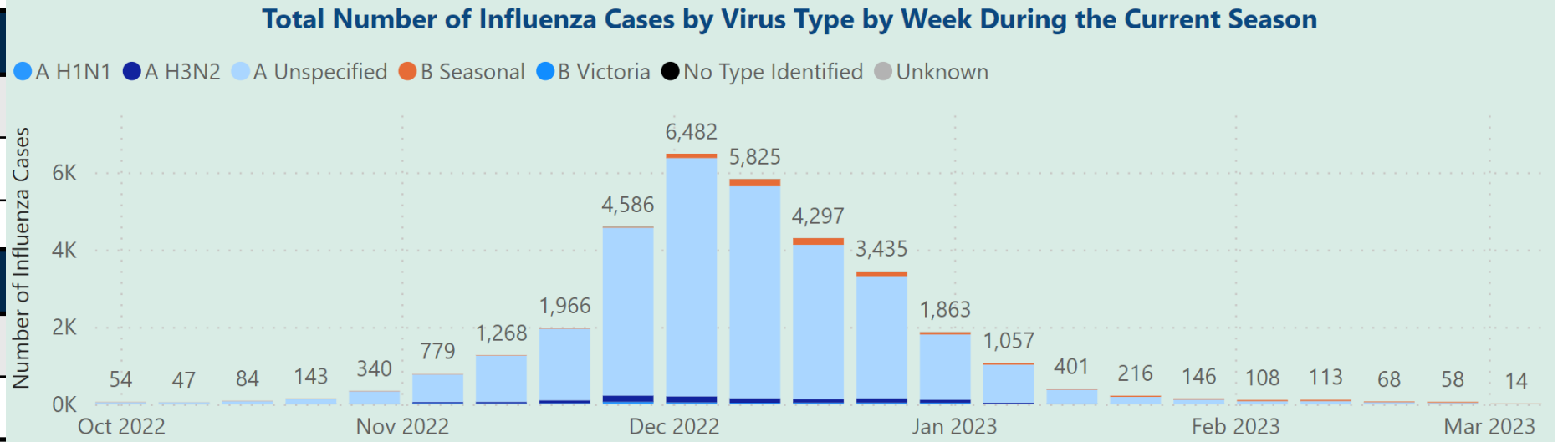
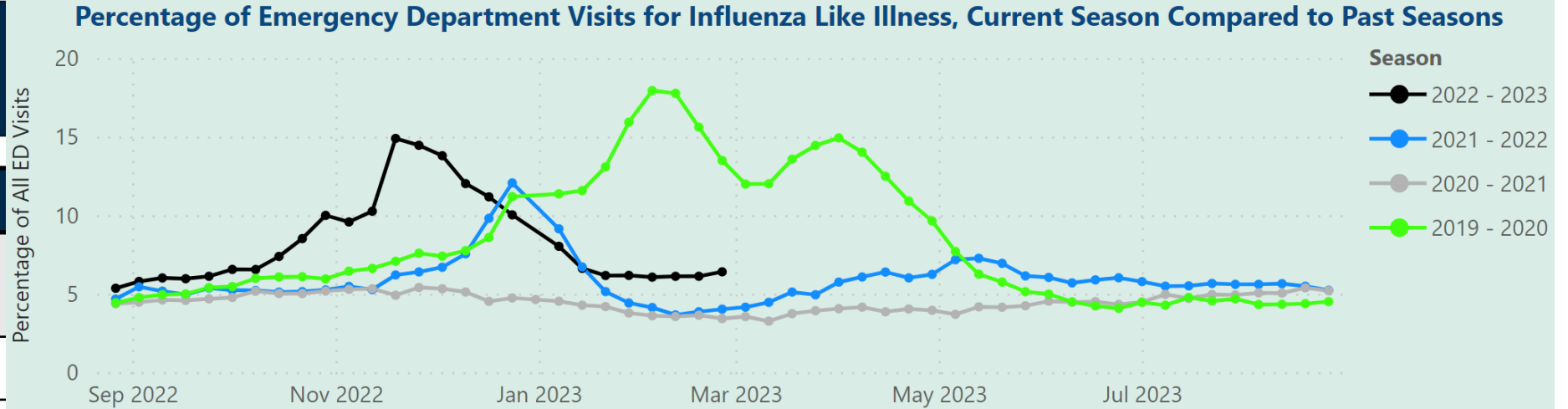
Season TD	Previous Week	Current Week (Incomplete)
33,350	58	14

Hospitalizations

Season TD	Current Week
1,790	1

Deaths

Season TD	Current Week
66	2



Influenza-related Hospitalizations

2022-2023 Flu Season



Statistics at a glance

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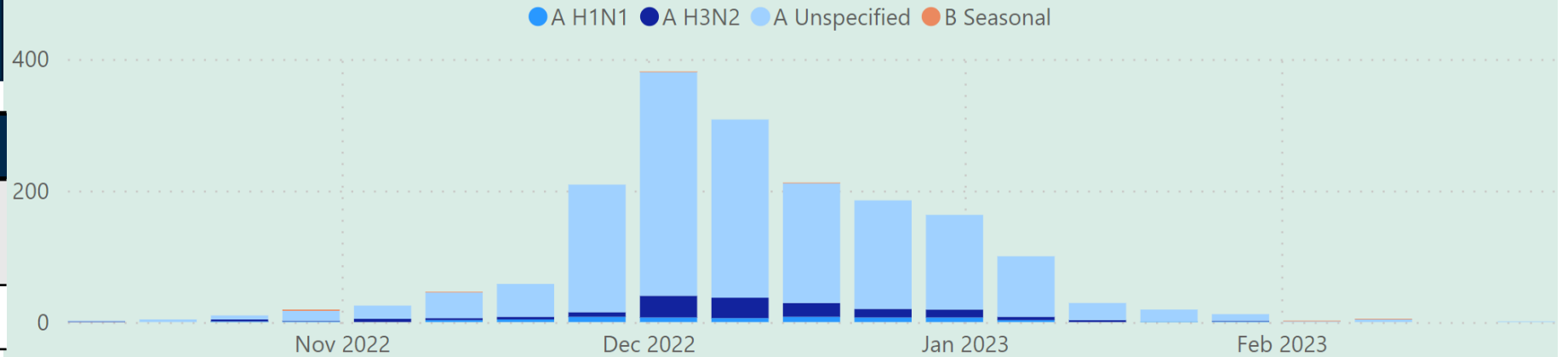
Hospitalizations

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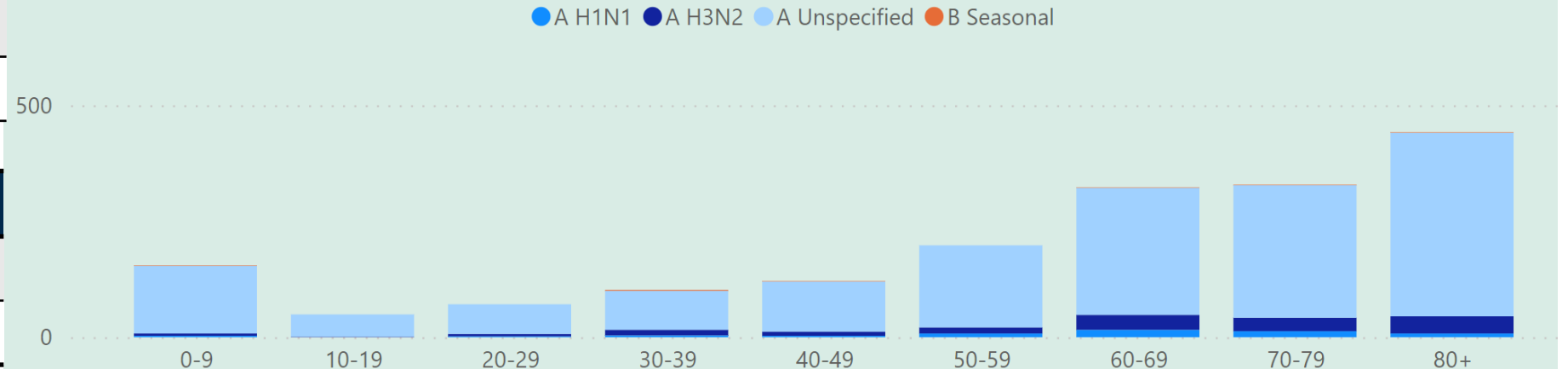
Deaths

Season TD	Current Week
66	2

Total Number of Patients Hospitalized with Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza by Virus Type per Week



Total Number of Patients Hospitalized with Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza by Age Group and Virus Type



Influenza-related Deaths

2022-2023 Flu Season



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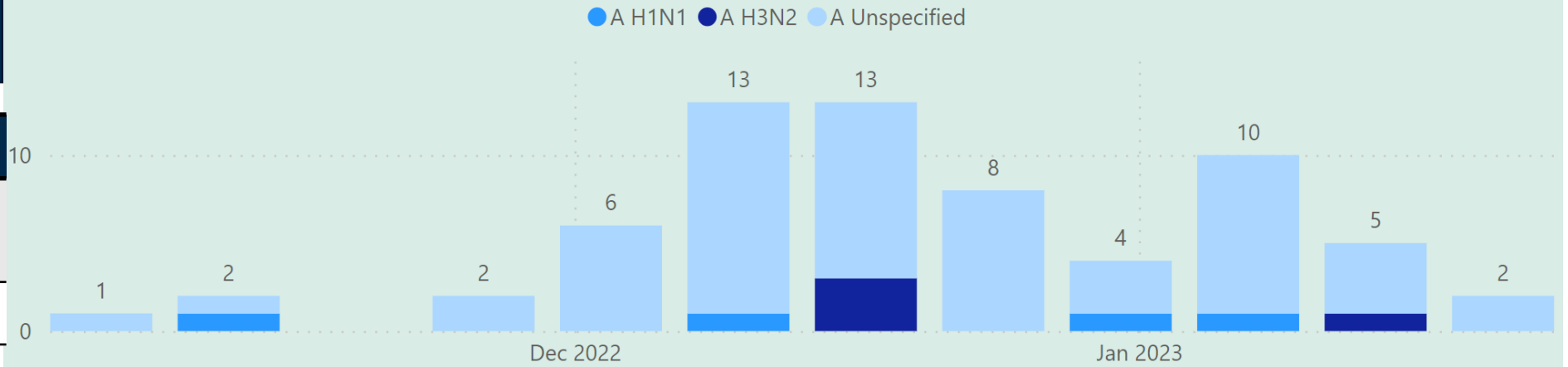
Hospitalizations

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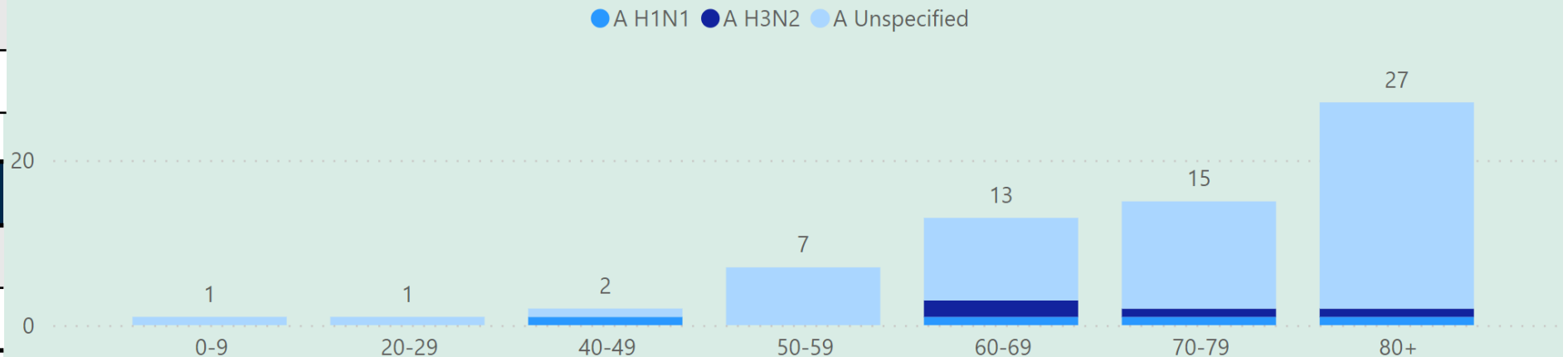
Deaths

Season TD	Current Week
66	2

Total Number of Influenza-Associated Deaths per Week by Type



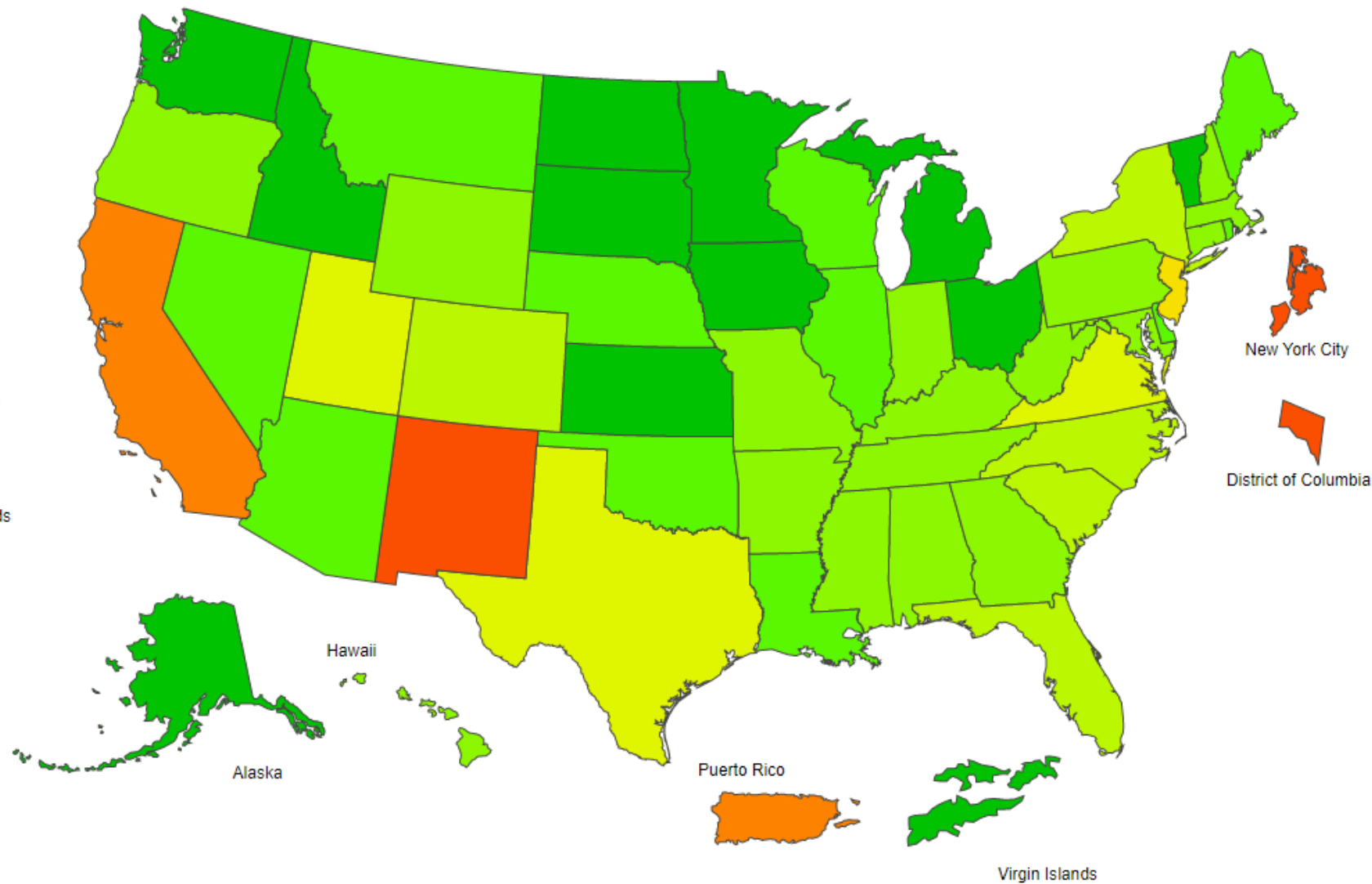
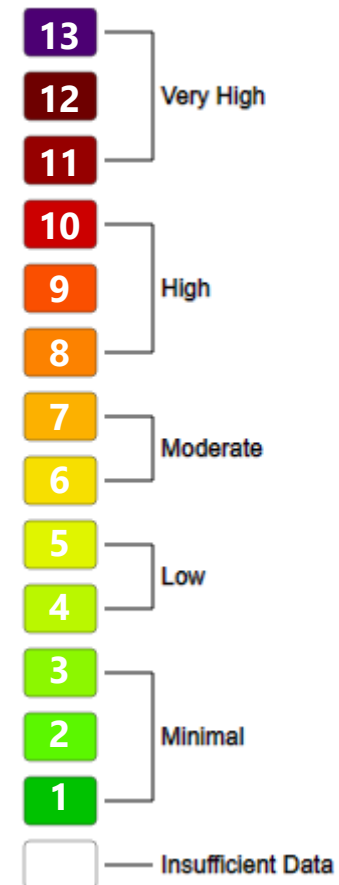
Total Number of Influenza-Associated Deaths by Type and Age Group



ILI Activity Map, State-based

2022-23 Influenza Season Week 8 ending Feb 25, 2023

ILI Activity Level



N. Mariana Islands

Hawaii

Alaska

Puerto Rico

Virgin Islands

New York City

District of Columbia

COVID-19 SUMMARY

*Data for this week are incomplete

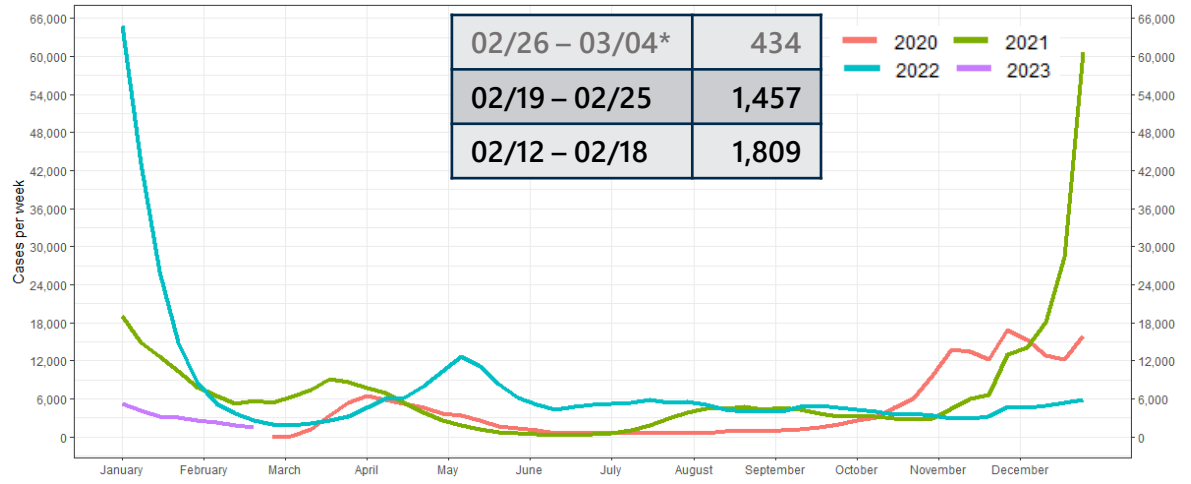
CT 7-day Case Rate per 100,000: 26

Big Picture: COVID-19 Statewide Snapshot

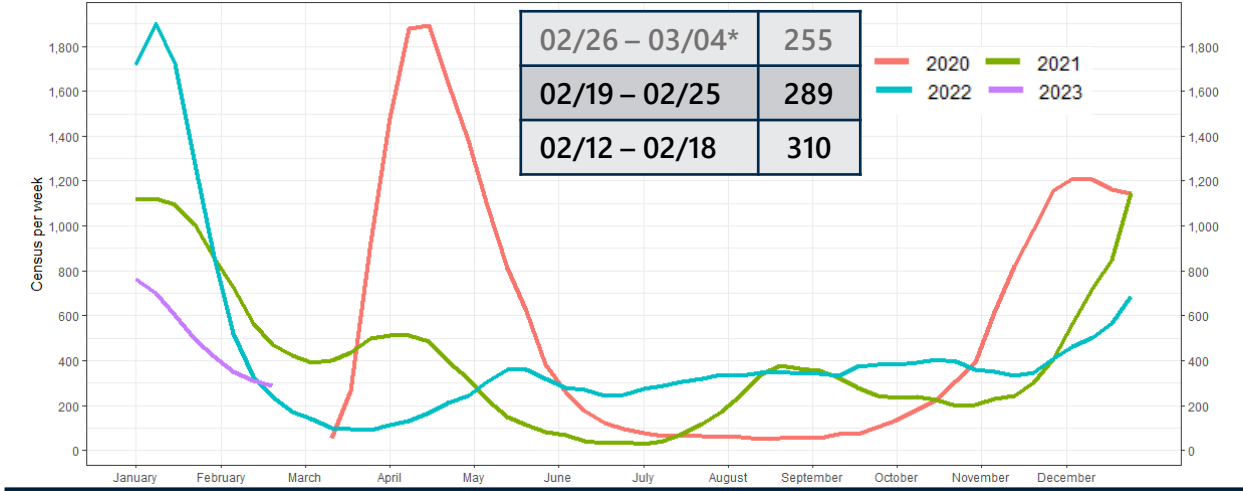
March 1, 2020 – March 02, 2023



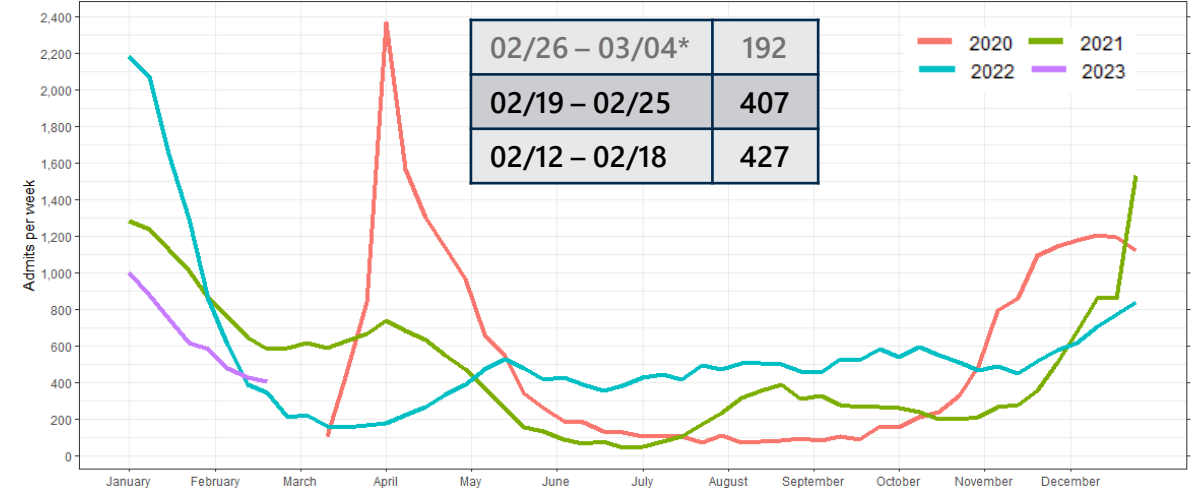
Cases – 975,537



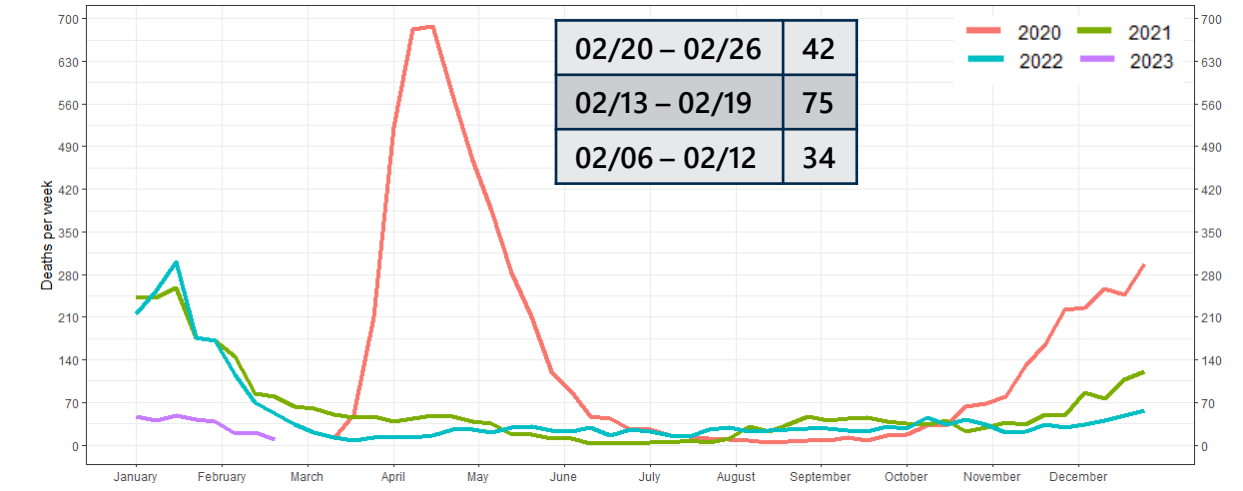
Hospital Census -250



New Admissions – 80,720



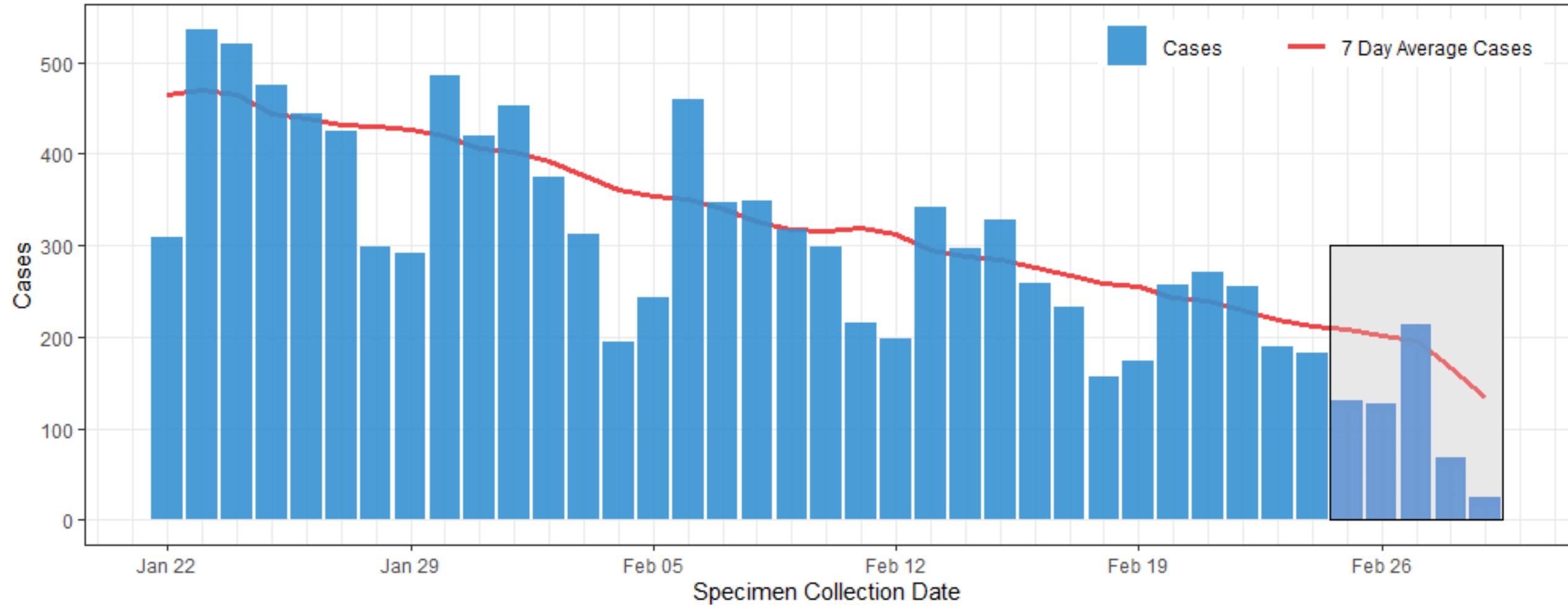
Deaths – 12,187



☆ **Note:** Prior to 5/29/20, CHA defined "COVID admissions" as suspected + confirmed; after 5/29/20, confirmed only

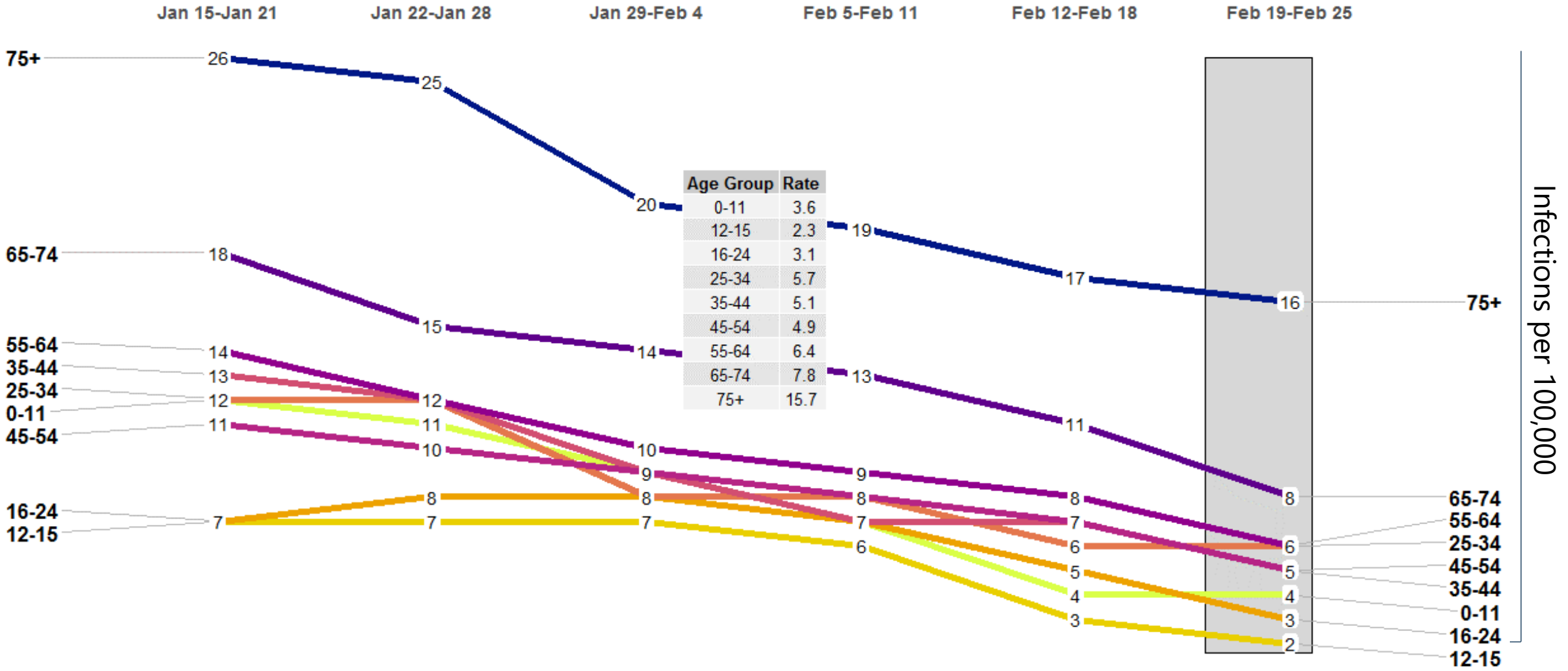
Number of COVID-19 Cases And 7-Day Average

By date of specimen collection (01/22/23 –03/01/23)



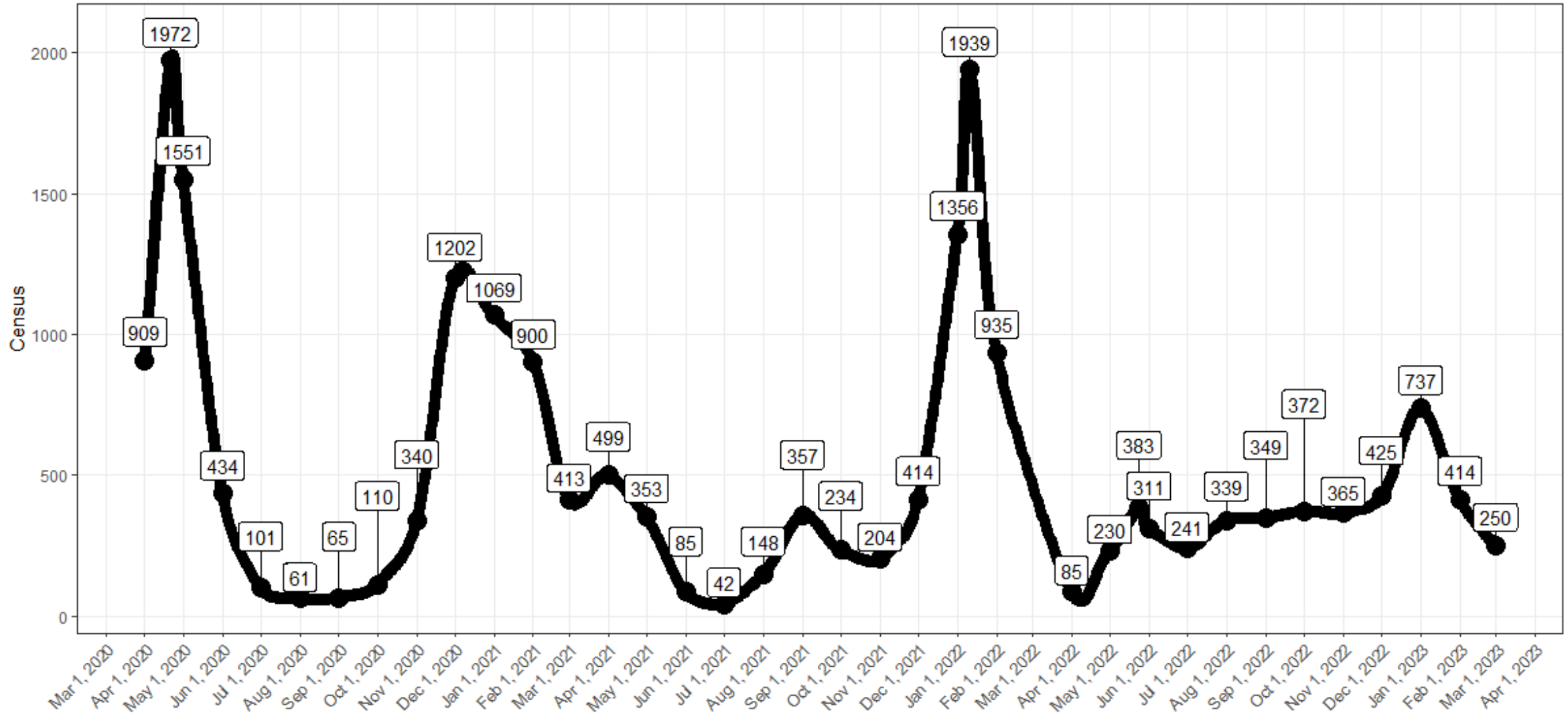
Average Daily SARS-CoV-2 Infection Rates

By Vaccine Age Group (Data as of 03/01/2023)



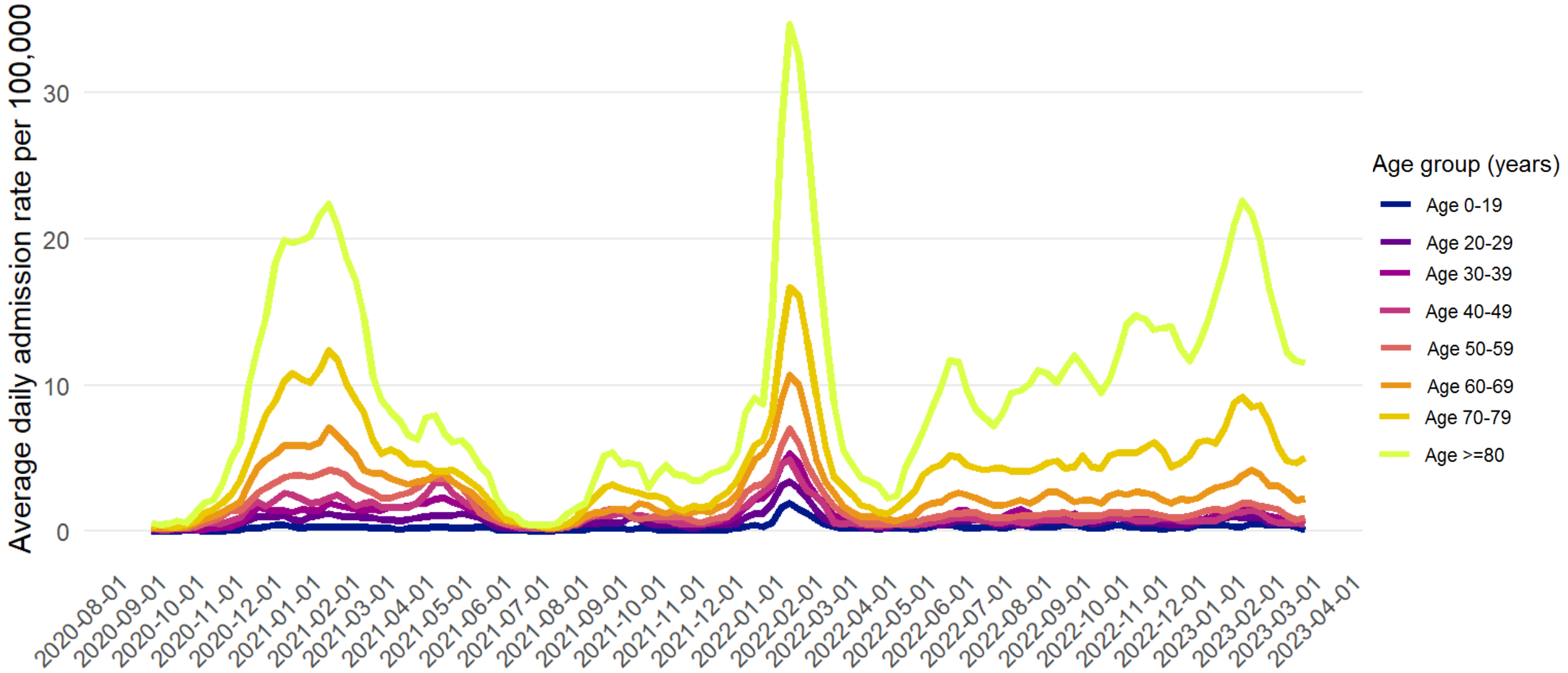
COVID-19 Positive Hospital Census

April 1, 2020 – March 01, 2023



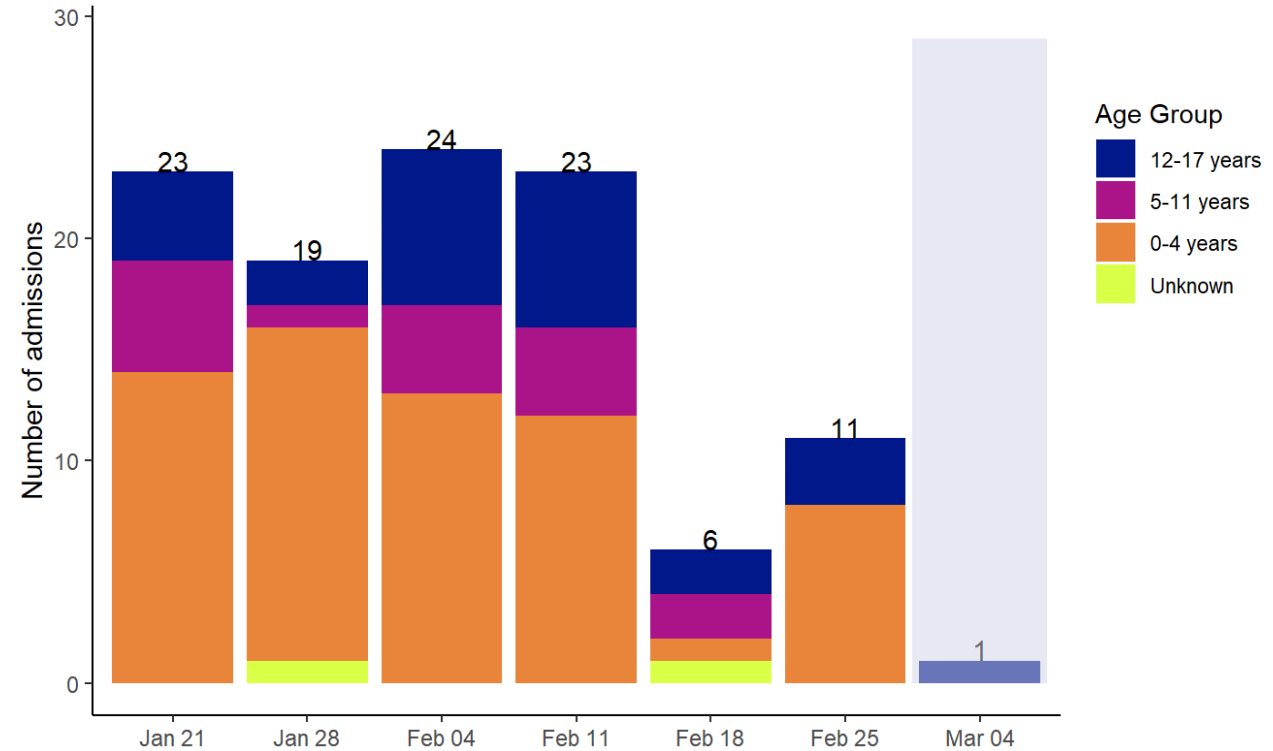
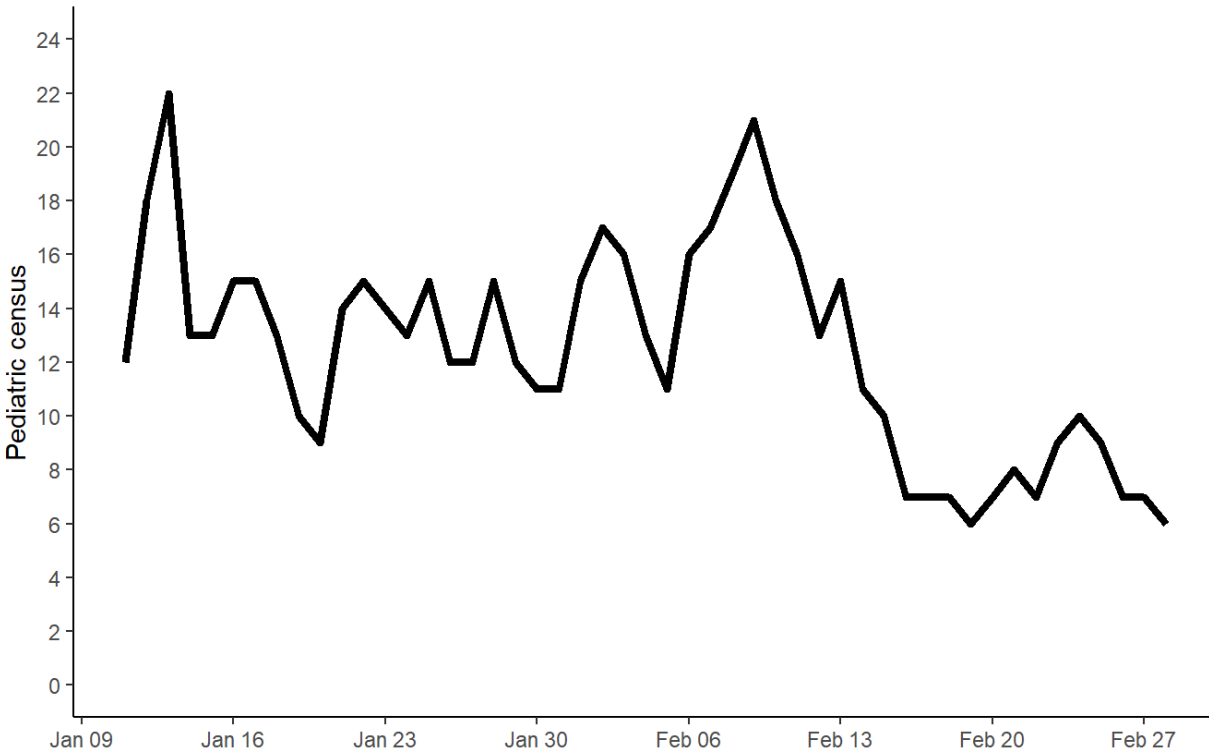
Daily COVID-19 Admission Rate per 100,000 to Acute Care Hospitals

Statewide (As of 03/01/2023)



COVID-19 Linked Pediatric Census and Admissions to Acute Care Hospitals

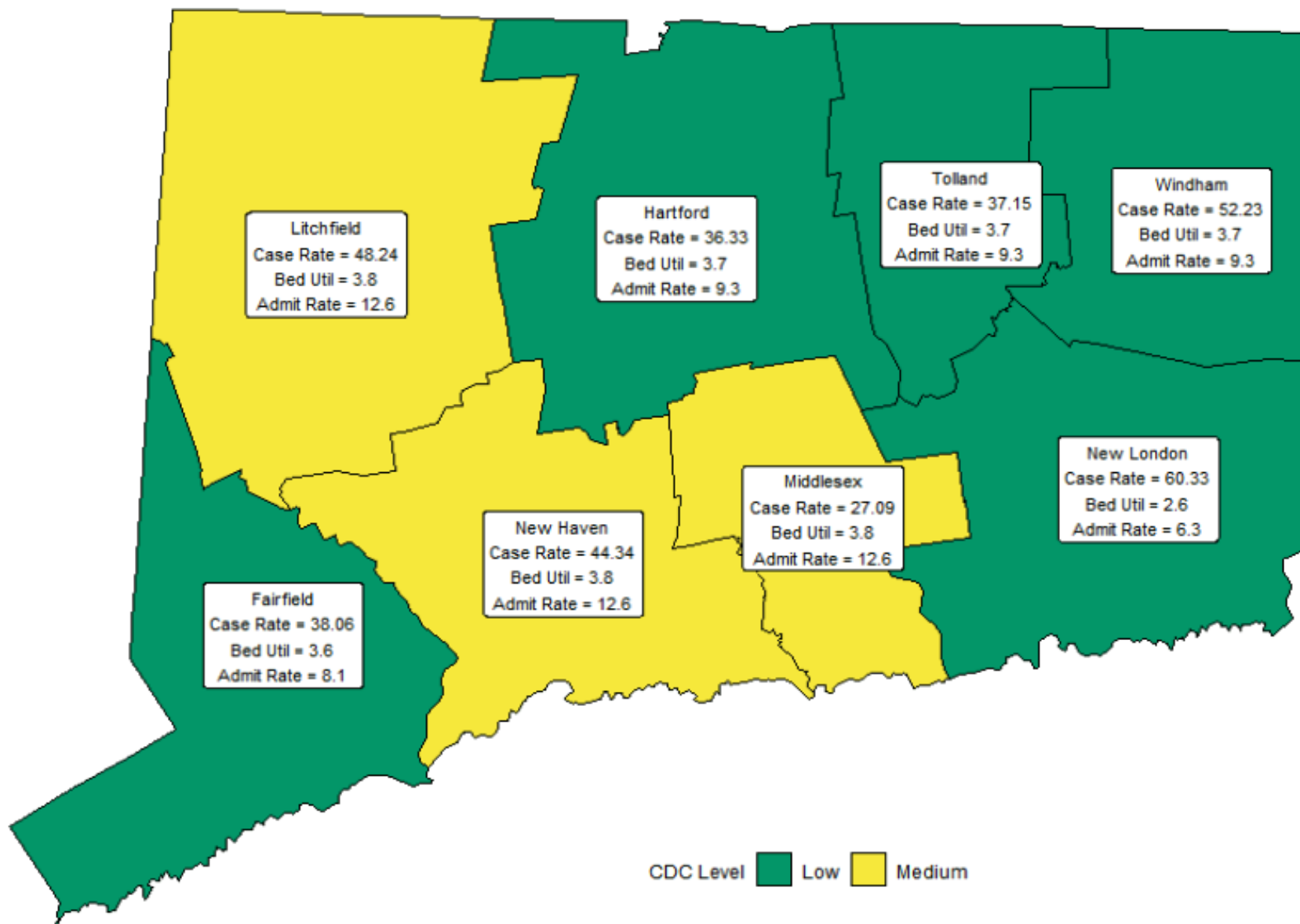
Statewide (as of 02/21/2023)



Pediatric Census (age <18): Patients currently hospitalized in a pediatric inpatient bed, including NICU, PICU, newborn, and nursery, who have laboratory-confirmed COVID-19. Include those in observation beds. Include patients who have both laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 and laboratory-confirmed influenza in this field.

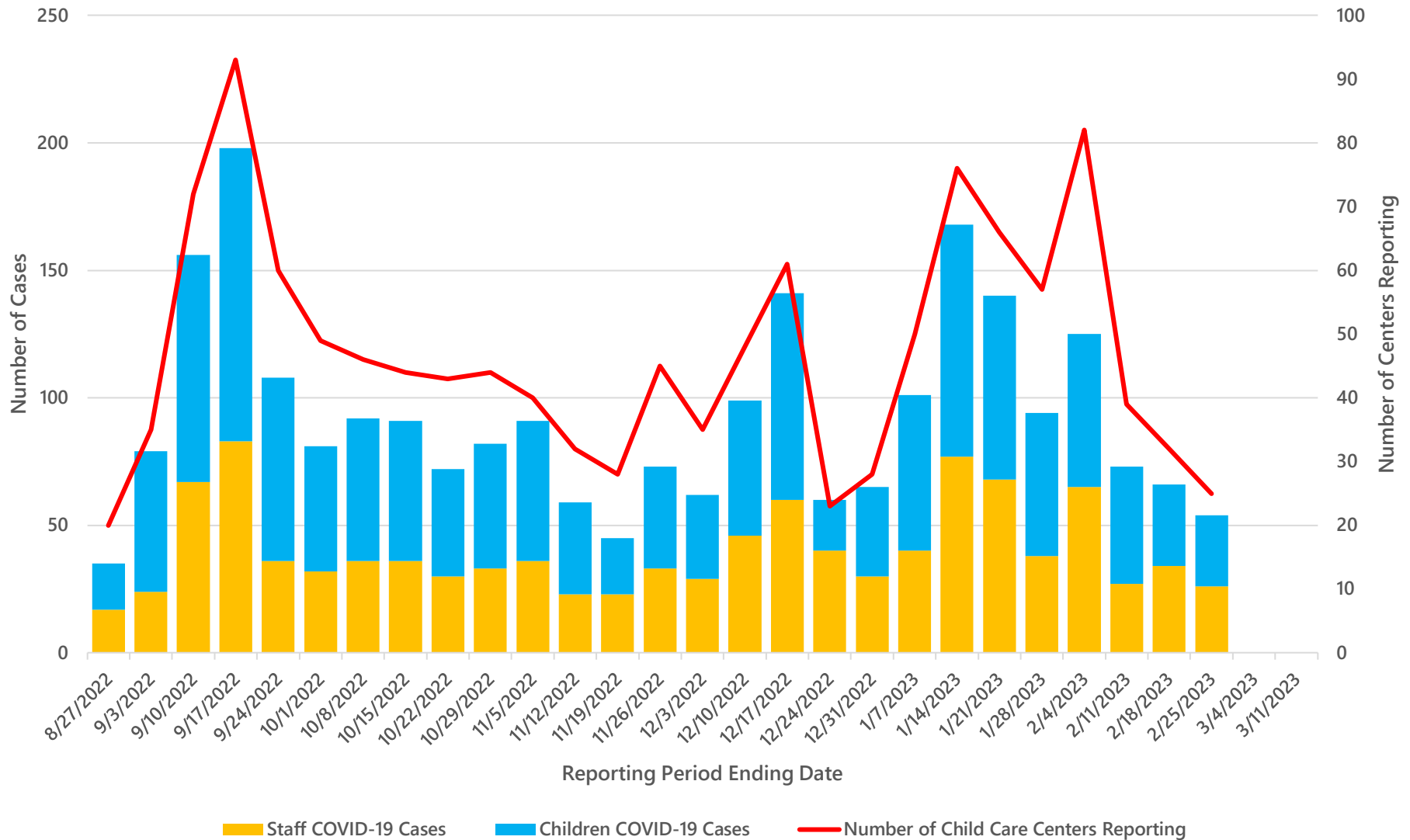
Pediatric Admissions (age <18): Enter the number of pediatric patients who were admitted to an inpatient bed, including NICU, PICU, newborn, and nursery, on the previous calendar day who had confirmed COVID-19 at the time of admission.

Community Level – County Level Data



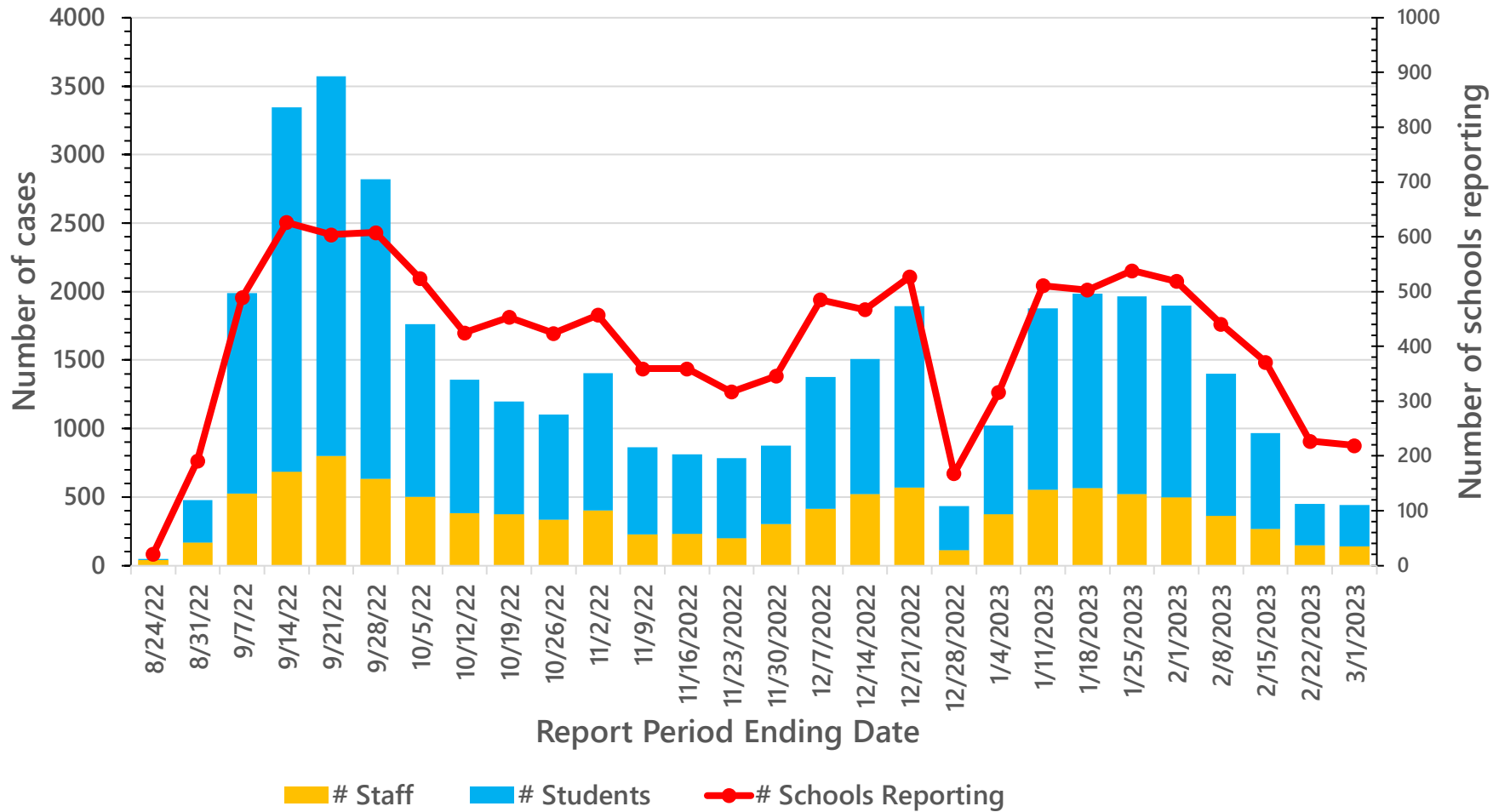
Reported Child Care COVID-19 Cases and Number of Centers Reporting

8/27/2022 - 2/25/2023



Reported School COVID-19 Cases and Number of Schools Reporting

8/18/2022 – 3/1/2023



Winter Respiratory Viral Illness Guidance

- High levels of respiratory viral illness
 - Spending times indoor, holiday gatherings, and travel all increase opportunities for transmission
- Message parents on school illness policies, especially on the importance of keeping kids home when sick
 - For COVID-19:
 - Isolate at home for 5 days after symptom onset (or positive test)
 - May return on day 6-10 with mask, if fever-free for 24 hours and other symptoms improve
 - Everything except COVID-19 (e.g. flu, RSV, other):
 - No set number of days to isolate
 - Fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing meds
 - Well enough to be in school

Questions/Comments?



Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)



March 7, 2023

Connecticut State Department of Education



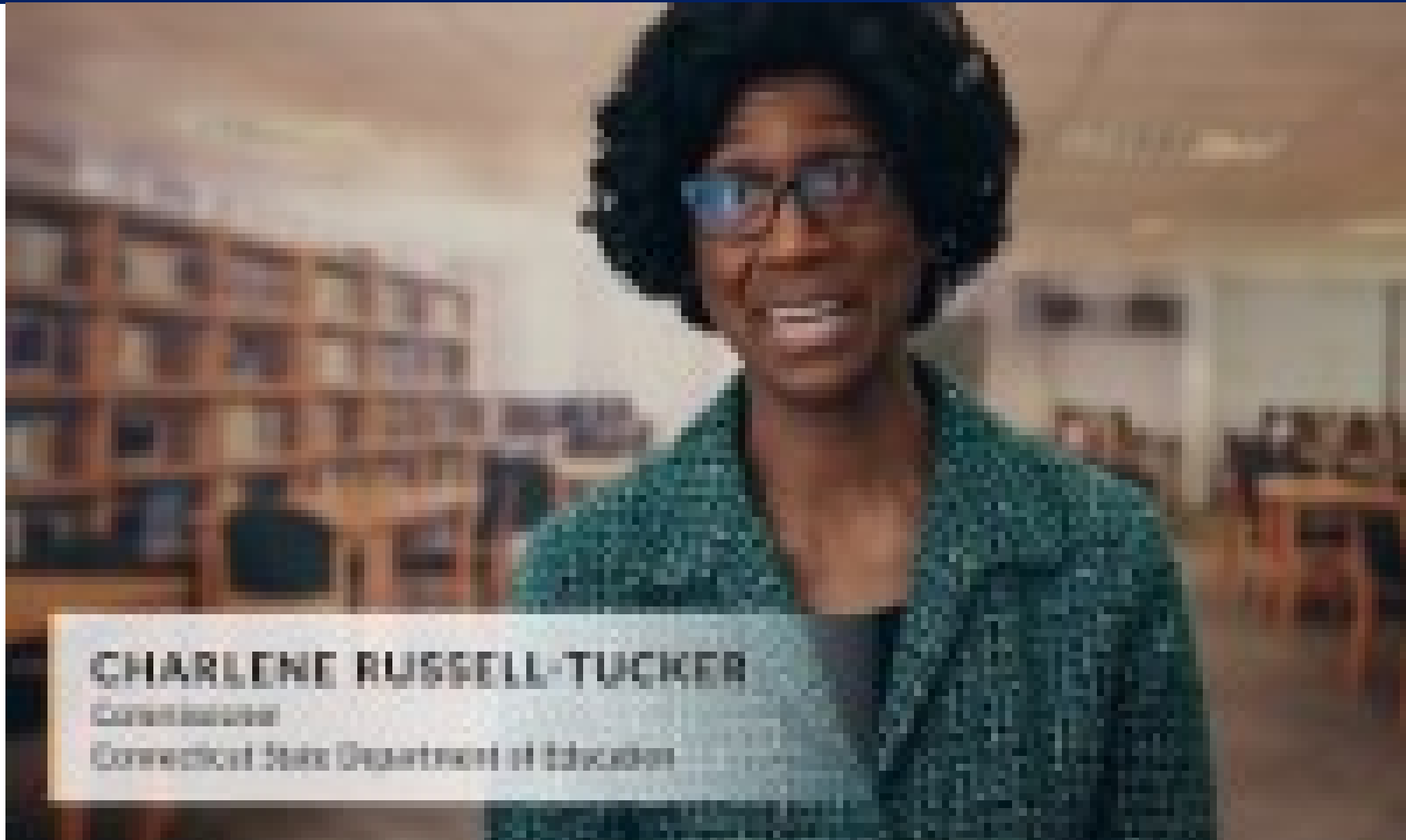
Presentation Outline



- Commissioner Charlene M. Russell-Tucker – Setting the Stage
- Attendance Data
- Learner Engagement & Attendance Program
- Center for Connecticut Education Research Collaboration (CCERC)



Connecticut Program on Reducing Student Absenteeism Featured as National Best Practice



CHARLENE RUSSELL-TUCKER
Commissioner
Connecticut State Department of Education

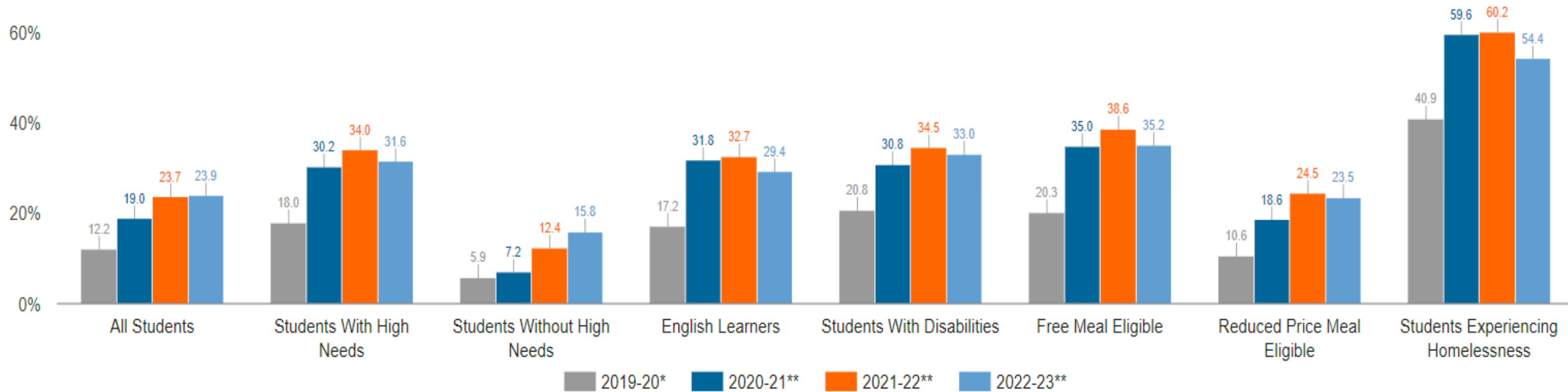
[Press Release](#)
[3/7/22](#)



Statewide Trends in Chronic Absence



Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of January 2023 compared to 2021-22, 2020-2021, and 2019-20)



*Calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. **Calculations include both in-person and remote days.



Source: CT EdSight, Monthly Attendance Reports, [Supporting Student Participation \(ct.gov\)](https://www.ct.gov/edsight)



Current Causes/Challenges

LEAP Coordinators Mtg – 12/6/22



- Illness – triple respiratory threat
 - People following an abundance of caution with illness
 - Appointments
- Stress and mental health
 - Family struggles
 - Shortage of mental health providers in community (long waiting lists)
 - Disengagement – behind in school, loss of credit
 - Increase in school anxiety and school aversion
 - Not feeling like they belong in the school
- Access to housing, cost of utilities (student transiency and lack of stable housing)
- Basic needs not being met - delay in resources (food, clothing)
- Lingering apathy toward school, post pandemic
- Jobs take priority to getting to school (family members and students)
- Childcare for siblings
- High number of absences among staff
- Vacations or family travel needs
- Transportation



Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)



- **Urgent need to address chronic absenteeism**
 - large number of students who were chronically absent and disengaged from school due to COVID-19
- **Understand and address barriers to attendance**
 - Economic, technology for remote learning, physical health, emotional wellness, and basic needs, (e.g., counseling, clothing, food, housing).
- **Expand capacities and people power to reach families**
- **Leverage assets of community-based organizations**
- **Need common and sustained approach**



The LEAP Model

Our cornerstones are key to success.



- ❖ LEAP's mission is to build **trusting relationships** with families to ultimately positively impact students' engagement and attendance.
- ❖ LEAP is a **collaborative** and **flexible** endeavor between families, districts, RESCs, and CSDE. **Connection and support** are key to success.
- ❖ LEAP is a **data-driven** model.
- ❖ LEAP home visitors are trained through the CT Home Visit Hub.
 - The gold standard for home visits is that they occur **in person** by a **pair of trained** home visitors.



LEAP Evaluation



Conducted by the Center for Connecticut Education Research Collaboration
(CCERC)

[CCERC Report: An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Home Visits for Re-Engaging Students Who Were Chronically Absent in the Era of Covid-19](#)

This research shows that when implemented with fidelity, the LEAP model has a positive impact on students and families.



LEAP Evaluation: Lessons Learned

When implemented with fidelity, LEAP works.



- ❖ The **objective quantitative results** show that Connecticut’s home visit program is **clearly effective**, leading to an **average increase in attendance rates** of nearly **15 percentage points** for families visited during the 2021-22 school year in the 6 months that followed.
- ❖ The **positive impact** was noted **across student populations** (race, ethnicity, gender, geography, etc.).



LEAP Evaluation: Lessons Learned

LEAP had a particularly effect at the middle and high school levels.



- ❖ For most students, attendance rates increased by **four percentage points** in the month immediately following the **first LEAP home visit**.
- ❖ **Six months after the first LEAP visit**, students in grades **PK – 5** experienced approximately a **10 percentage point increase** in attendance.
- ❖ Students in grades **6-12** experienced approximately a **20 percentage point increase in attendance rates**, suggesting that the impact of LEAP was significantly larger in later grades.

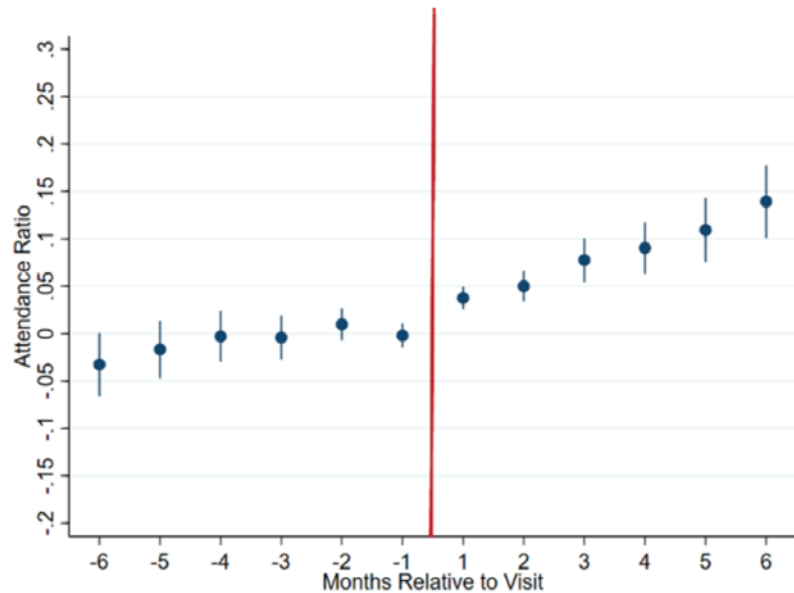


Event Study Estimates of Impact of LEAP on Student Attendance Ratios:

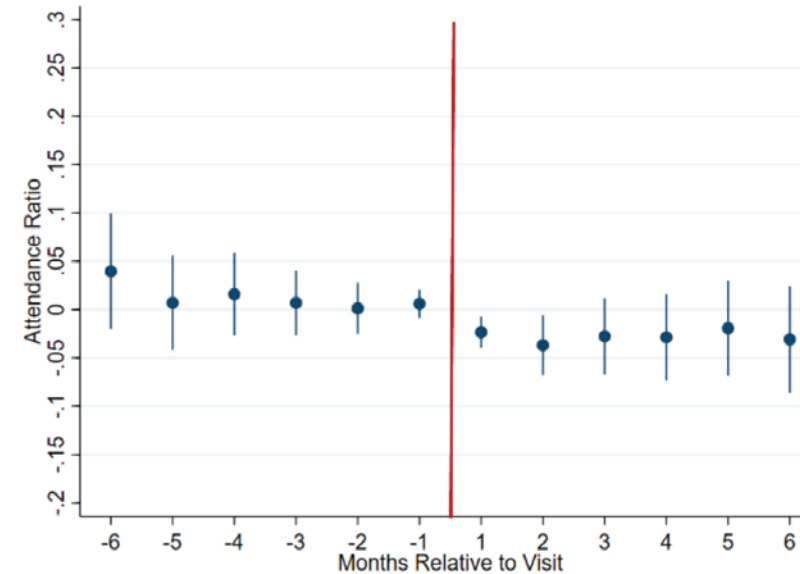
Students Served During 2021-22 School Year



All LEAP Districts other than NPS



New Haven Public Schools (NPS)



- Vertical axis shows changes in the average student attendance ratio for students served by the LEAP program relative to students not yet served by the LEAP program.
- Horizontal axis shows months relative to treatment with -6 indicating 6 months or more prior to treatment and 6 indicating 6 months or more after treatment.
- Red vertical line indicates month of treatment.
- Left hand size figure shows that 5-months after students were served by the LEAP program, attendance increased by more than 10 percentage points relative to students that were not yet served but would be served in the future (i.e., other chronically absent students).

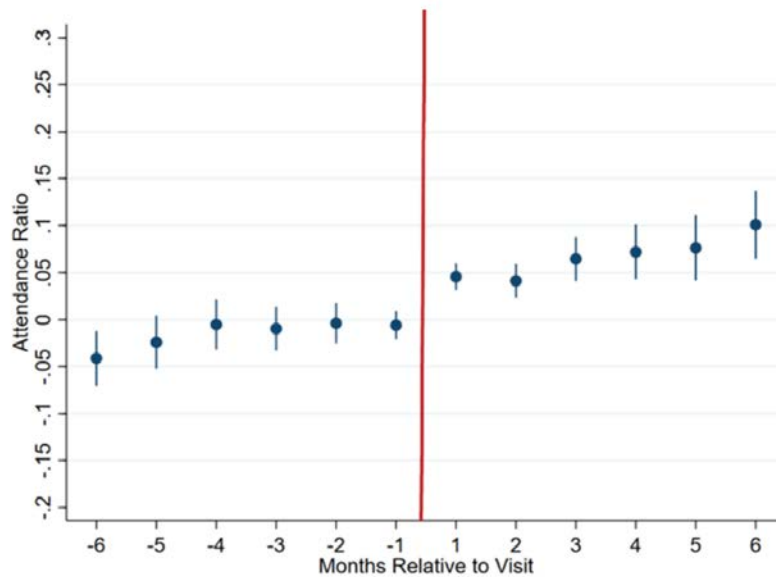


Event Study Estimates by Grade Level:

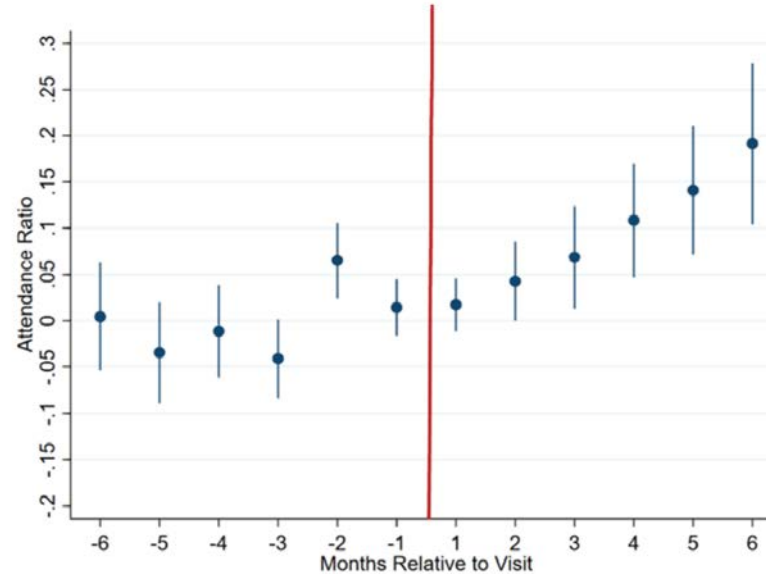
Students Treated in 2021-22 All LEAP Districts other than New Haven Schools



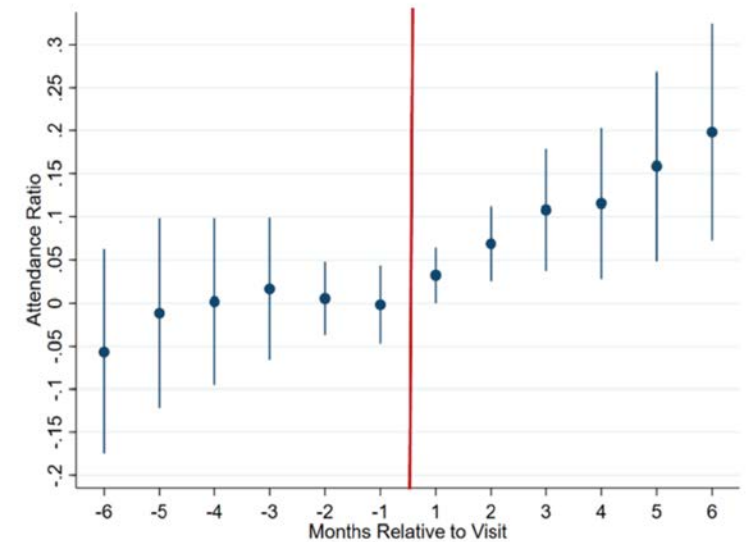
Grades PK-5



Grades 6-8



Grades 9-12



Six months after the first LEAP visit

- ❖ students in grades **PK – 5** experienced approximately a **10 percentage point** increase in attendance.
- ❖ students in grades **6-12** experienced approximately a **20 percentage point** increase in attendance rates, suggesting that the impact of LEAP was significantly larger in later grades.



LEAP Evaluation: Lessons Learned

LEAP had a positive impact regardless of who conducted the home visit.



- ❖ Results did not differ based on title of personnel conducting the home visit (e.g., social worker, support staff, administrator, teacher).
- ❖ Results did not differ based on whether the home visitor was from the school/district or from a community-based organization.



LEAP Evaluation: Lessons Learned

When implemented with fidelity, LEAP works.



- ❖ **8,700 CT students** received at least one LEAP home visit.
- ❖ Families and their home visitors noted **8 main benefits of LEAP**:
 - improved family-school **relationships**
 - increased student attendance
 - increased student **engagement**
 - increased student achievement
 - increased feelings of **belonging**
 - increased access to **resources**
 - increased **expectations of accountability**
 - greater **gratitude and appreciation**



LEAP: Making Headlines



- ❖ [Forbes](#): *Connecticut's Funding What Works in Education. They Can Prove It*
- ❖ [Education Week](#): *This State Set Up a Program to Reduce Chronic Absences. It Worked*
- ❖ [CT Examiner](#): *Chronic School Absenteeism Shows Sharp Decline After Home Visitation Program*
- ❖ [WFSB.com](#): *Home Visits Helped Improve Student Attendance in Schools, New Report Says*
- ❖ [WTNH.com](#): *New Study Shows Connecticut Educators Visiting Students Decreased Chronic Absenteeism*
- ❖ [CTPUBLIC.org](#): *Researchers Say In-home Visits Boost School Attendance for Chronically Absent Students*
- ❖ [NY Times](#): *The Key to Getting Students Back in Classrooms? Establishing Connections*

- ❖ [Collaborative for Student Success](#): *A documentary promotional video about LEAP and its success!*
 - Shout out to **Torrington** for hosting and coordinating a visit from this Washington D.C.-based film crew who got on-the-ground video footage and interviews with home visitors, district leadership, and a LEAP family!

Questions/Comments?

Next Steps

- 2023 Meeting Schedule (all meetings will be held from 1 to 3 p.m.)
 - *June 20, 2023*
 - *September 19, 2023*
 - *December 12, 2023*
- Preparation for next meeting

Closure/Meeting Adjourned

