



COVID-19 Update

September 2021

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FALSE MEDIA REPORTS

1. State epidemiologist says “60% of outbreaks are in Georgia schools” – which can mean as few as 2 students testing positive in one place and does not have a direct tie to the overall number of cases
2. Reporter says “60% of new cases are in Georgia schools,” and that false report gets picked up by multiple outlets including CNN
3. Local citizens catch the error and confront media outlets, but some never correct the report

Result: parents and students are left greatly concerned by a false report that exaggerated actual case spread by over 300% when cases were actually falling sharply

One week ago

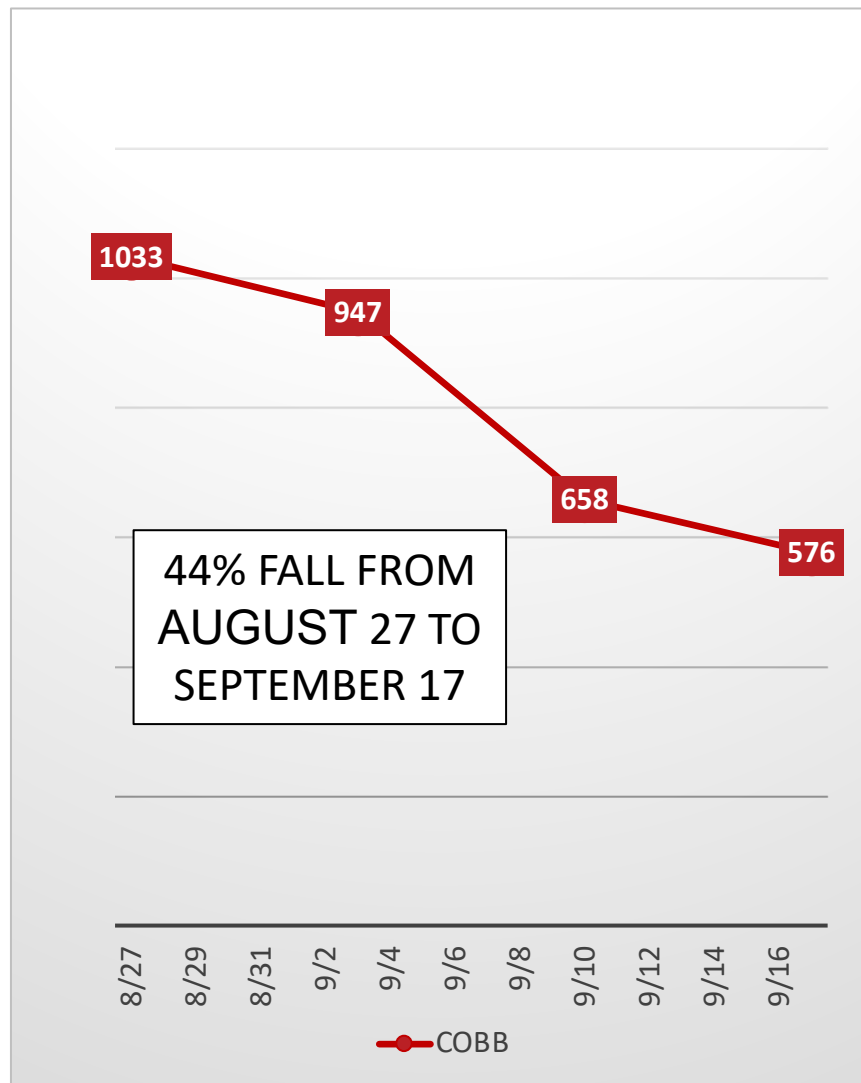


Today





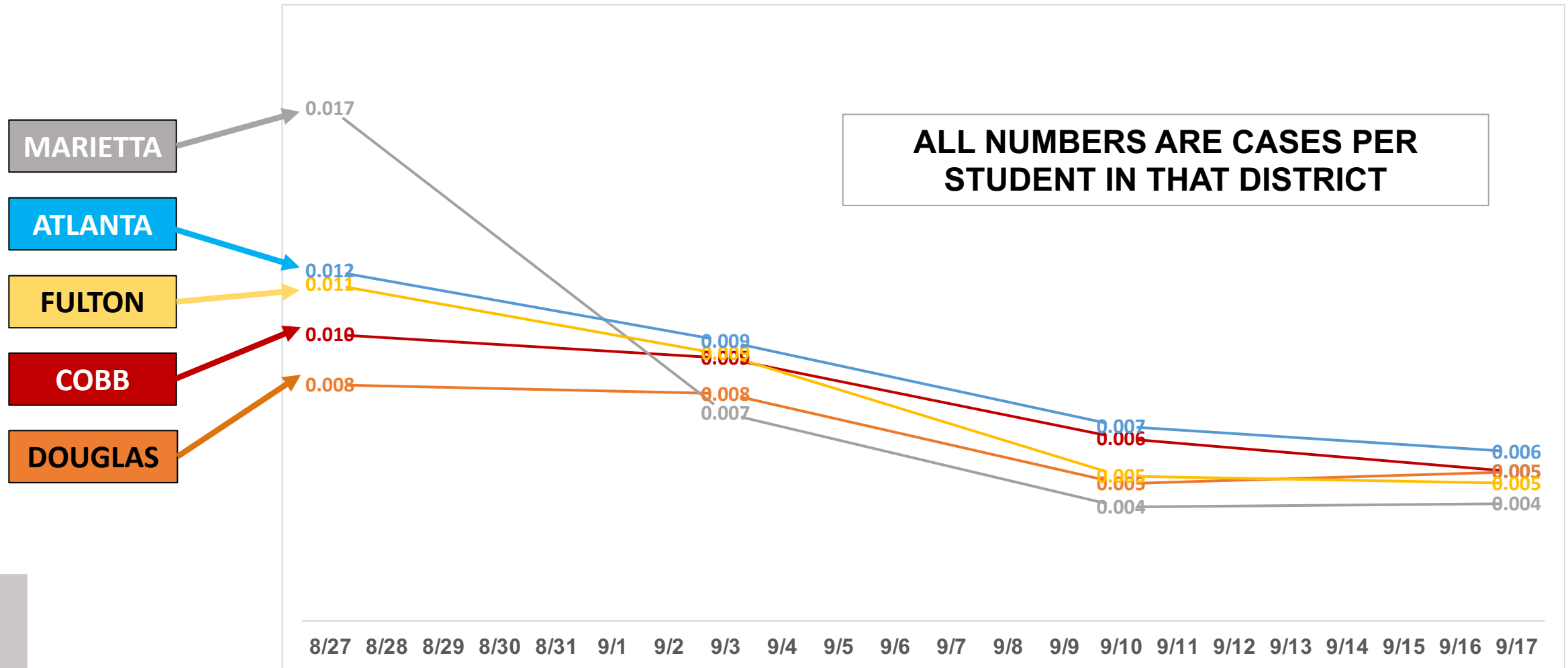
CCSD DATA



Cases among all Cobb School students and staff are down 44% in the last three weeks and have fallen in 90% of Cobb Schools (103 OF 114)



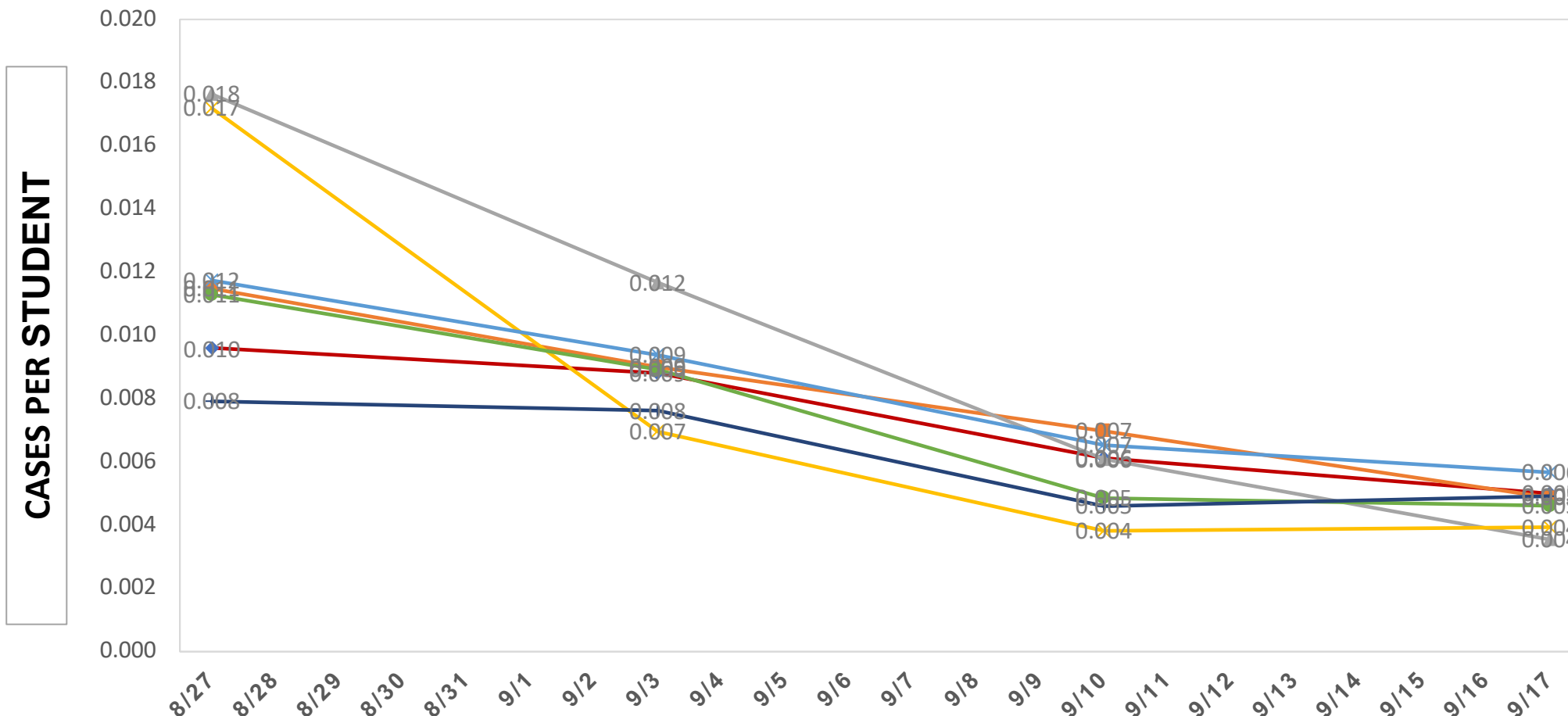
COVID-19 CASES PER CAPITA



PER CAPITA STUDENT INFECTION RATES = CASES DIVIDED BY ENROLLMENT ADJUSTED FOR COMMUNITY SPREAD AND OBTAINED FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES: COVID-19 INFORMATION PORTALS – MARIETTA CITY SCHOOLS, ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, FULTON COUNTY SCHOOLS, DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS; GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH COVID-19 DASHBOARD



COVID-19 CASES PER CAPITA ALL NORTHWEST METRO

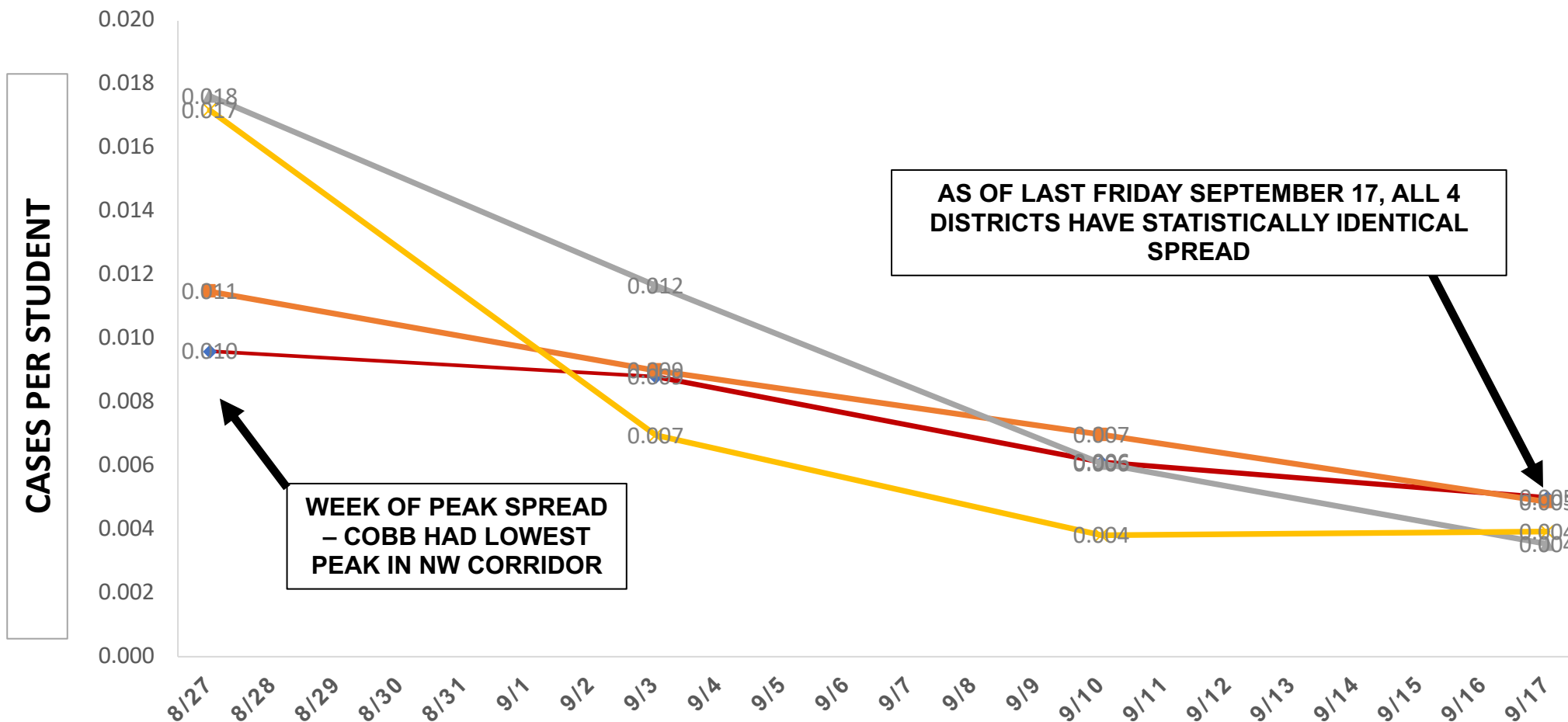


PER CAPITA STUDENT INFECTION RATES = CASES DIVIDED BY ENROLLMENT ADJUSTED FOR COMMUNITY SPREAD AND OBTAINED FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES: COVID-19 INFORMATION PORTALS – PAULDING COUNTY SCHOOLS, MARIETTA CITY SCHOOLS, ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOLS, FULTON COUNTY SCHOOLS, DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS; GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH COVID-19 DASHBOARD



CCSD PEAK AND DECLINING CASES

- PAULDING
- MARIETTA
- CHEROKEE
- COBB

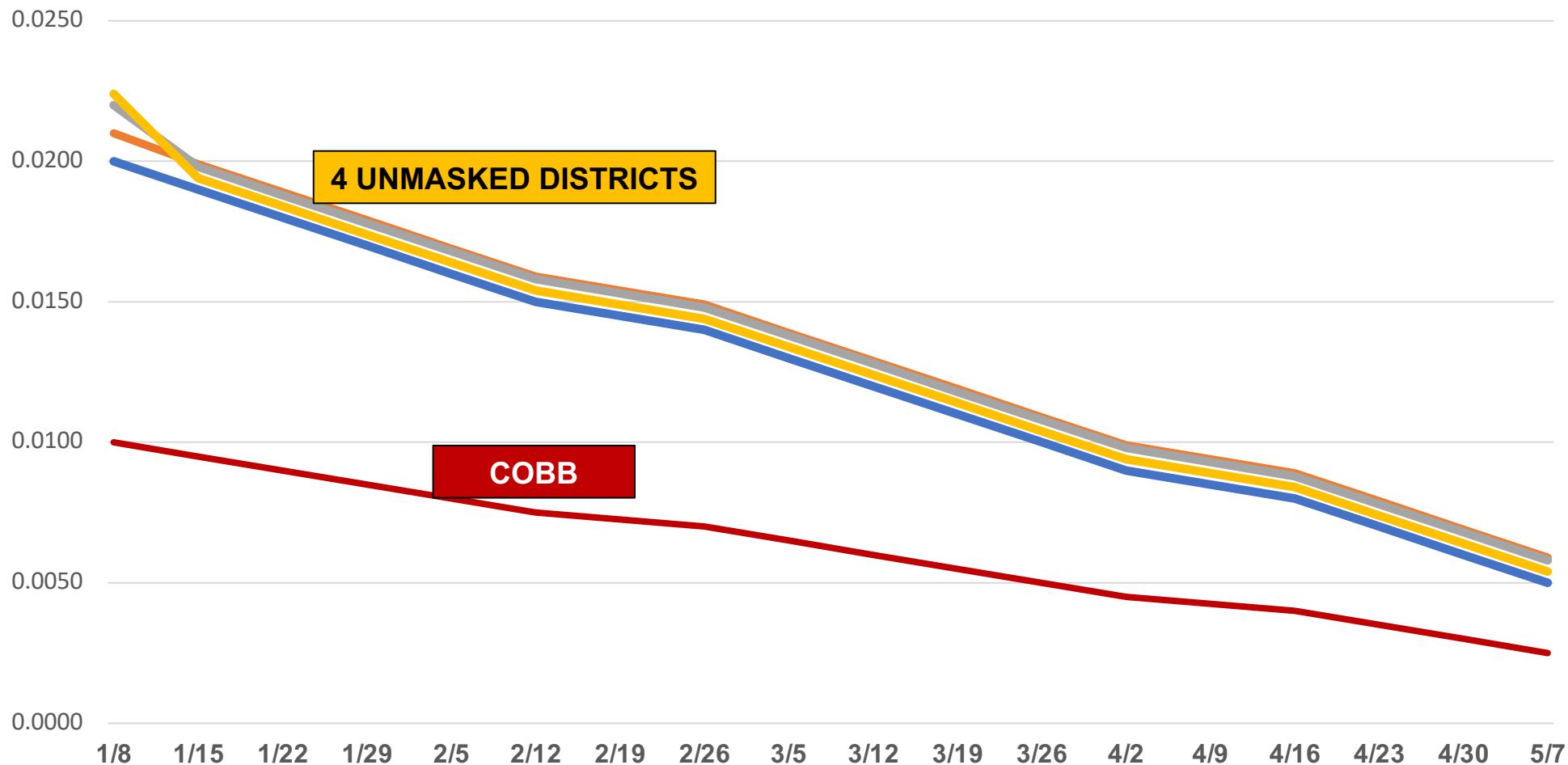


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COVID-19 CASES PER CAPITA PRIOR SCHOOL YEAR 2020-21

WHAT WE EXPECTED TO SEE

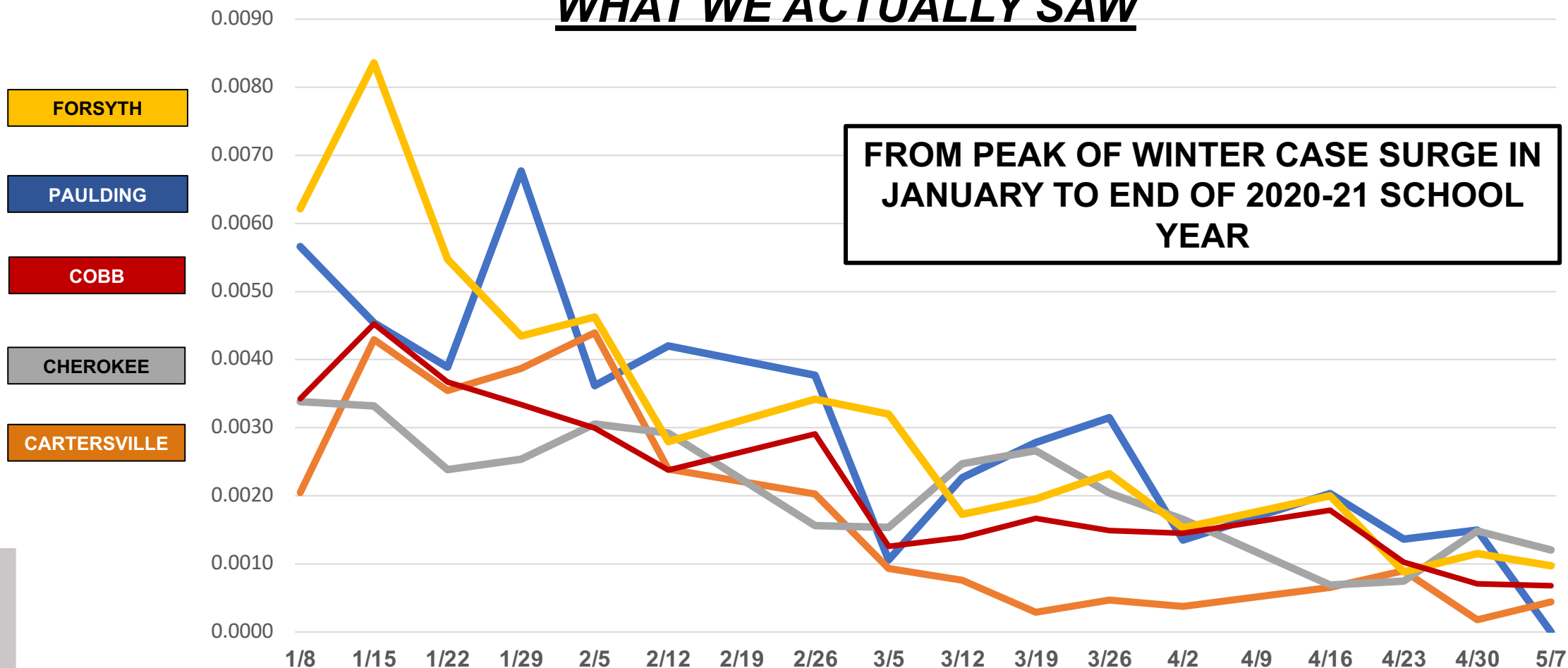


This graph is for illustration purposes only – it does not represent any actual data or phenomena



COVID-19 CASES PER CAPITA PRIOR SCHOOL YEAR 2020-21

WHAT WE ACTUALLY SAW



PER STUDENT CAPITA INFECTION RATES ADJUSTED FOR COMMUNITY SPREAD AND OBTAINED FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES: COVID-19 INFORMATION PORTALS – FORSYTH COUNTY SCHOOLS, MARIETTA CITY SCHOOLS, CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOLS, CARTERSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS; GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH COVID-19 DASHBOARD



CDC - GA STUDY ON STUDENT MASKING 2020

Cobb's experience fits with study of 90,000 Georgia students during last winter's surge which showed student masking **"COULD NOT BE SAID TO BE EFFECTIVE."**

*"Other findings of equal importance in the study, however, were absent from the summary and not widely reported... **most notably, requiring student masking [was] found to not have a statistically significant benefit. In other words, these measures could not be said to be effective.**"*

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CDC - GA STUDY ON STUDENT MASKING 2020 - FINDINGS

Dr. Elissa Schechter-Perkins, Boston University School of Medicine, Master of Public Health, specializing in Infectious Diseases in Emergency Medicine and Pediatric Immunology, said as follows:

"We don't have data they (masks) have any impact on any important clinical outcomes in the school setting. A year ago, I said, 'Masks are not the end of the world; why not just wear a mask?' But the world has changed, there are real downsides to masking children for this long, with no known end date, and without any clear upside. I'm not aware of any studies that show conclusively that kids wearing masks in schools has any effect on their own morbidity or mortality or on the hospitalization or death rate in the community around them.

I don't think that Delta changes the calculus because it still seems clear that it doesn't cause more severe disease, so it still doesn't change the fundamental question of 'What are we trying to achieve by masking kids when they are still extremely unlikely to suffer from severe illness or death if infected?' And the adults in their lives have the opportunity to be vaccinated and also protected so we don't need to worry about transmission. Even with a new variant, the onus is on those who recommend masking kids to robustly demonstrate a meaningful benefit, especially when the pre-Delta study of the Georgia schools did not find one, and when there are obvious socio-emotional and educational harms from masking children for this unprecedented duration of time."

SOURCE: <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/08/the-science-of-masking-kids-at-school-remains-uncertain.html>



LOOKING FORWARD

One of the foundational principles of education is to engage in “DATA DRIVEN DECISION MAKING” – and the Cobb County School District will continue with a data-driven and forward-looking process that mitigates disruptions and the learning loss it causes.

- Addressing learning loss
- What comes next?
 - Mu?
 - Lambda?
 - Winter surge?
 - Our staff has not received a forward-looking process from public health officials, so CCSD will be drawing upon all available resources to prepare our community for all eventualities.

As cases continue to fall, CCSD will be doing a full “Lessons Learned” from the Delta variant surge. To continue being a learning organization prepared for what is coming, we must continue learning from what has happened. The news being better today does not mean it cannot be worse tomorrow, and we will strive to be prepared for whatever comes.