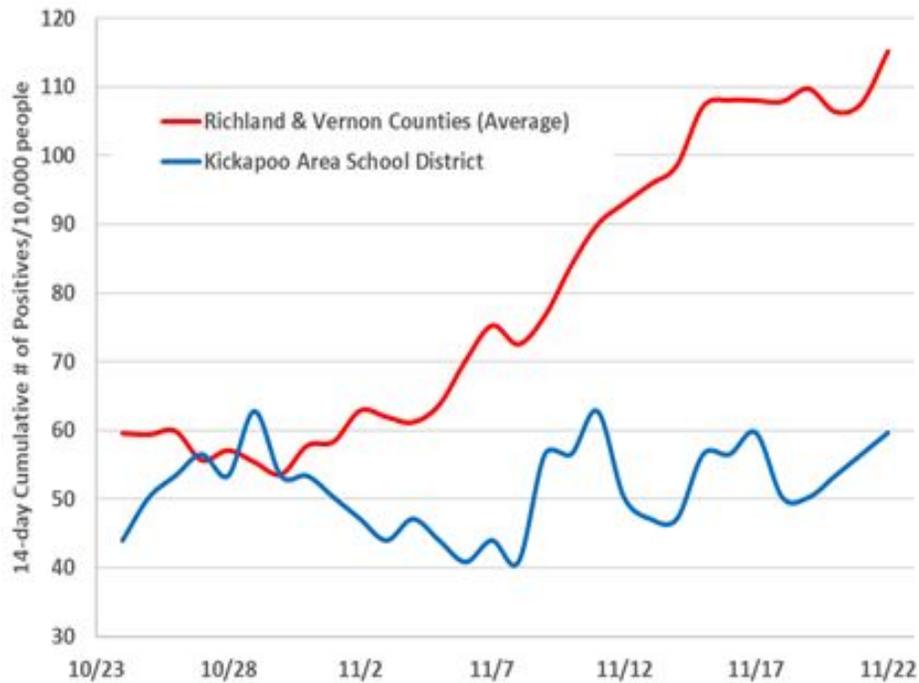


Gating Metric Evaluation



We now have the opportunity to evaluate whether or not our gating metric may have accrued any health benefits for district residents. Interestingly, the number of coronavirus cases within the KAS district were significantly lower during this surge than in the broader bi-county area. The above graph depicts the comparative data set during the fall Covid 19 surge, and reflects the impact on the residents of the Kickapoo School District vs. the residents of Vernon and Richland counties at large. Additionally, Kickapoo School District residents had the only district population data to show a negative trend in new cases during this period. This correlation implies some protective effect for citizens of our community may have been provided because of the decision to move to all virtual instruction, where other districts tended to have more in person learning.

Your KAS board members recognize the challenges that students and families in the district have faced as a result, and are fully aware that our approach has been more conservative than that of other local school districts, which tended to allow in-person learning- at least for longer periods.

A lack of scientific evidence has led to disparate opinions about the role of schools as sources of viral transmission, and hence widely differing views about whether or not instruction should be in-person or virtual. While some early evidence suggested that in-person instruction did not appear to be linked to increased rates of community spread, these studies were confounded by the emerging fact that children are much more likely to be asymptomatic. Asymptomatic children are problematic because they can spread the virus but are not likely to be detected, again clouding our ability to clearly understand the role that schools may play in coronavirus spread.

From the outset, board members have been cognizant of the educational and social benefits that in-person instruction provides to our students, while also considering it imperative to protect the health and well-being of our students, staff, families, and other district residents. Through many open discussions, we have tried to adopt policy that best balances these competing risks,

Our response to the current pandemic will continue to rely on the best available science and information, and we will be adaptive in our approach to decision-making.