# Twitter Thread by KJ Seung



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## The new pooled testing initiation for MA schools is a game changer. Looking forward to seeing how this is going to roll out. Initial plans seem to call for pooled PCR testing for classes, followed by rapid antigen testing for pools that are positive. 1/

This is NOT exactly what colleges are doing. MA colleges are screening with individual testing, not pooled testing. BTW, this has been very successful. It's not just screening, it's also going all in on tracing, isolation, distancing, masks, education. 2/ https://t.co/fPjrDscO4q

But no question that infection rates are much lower than the general population. Check out this graph from Dec 19. Percent positivity is much lower in higher ed.

I don't think this is because college students stay at home all day and never have risky social interactions! 3/

But there are a LOT more K-12 students than college students. So use of pooled PCR tests is crucial to keep costs down. Also intrigued by the proposed use of rapid antigen tests to find the infectious member of a positive pool. 4/ @michaelmina_lab
https://t.co/e9Aktj8WU1

One of the lessons from higher ed is that regular PCR testing is really the best test to detect asymptomatic infection, which will be even more common in K-12 than college-aged students. 5/ @mbebinger @RanuDhillon https://t.co/oT7QMvNII1

Of course, tracing, masking, distancing will still need to be done. Vaccination of teachers too. All these measures will be made even more effective by regular screening.

Community rates are surging so this is the time to bolster defenses against the virus. 6/ @AbraarKaran

Expect this to help control COVID in the community too. K-12 students are likely to get infected at home. So if a case is detected with school screening, backwards tracing may find the source of transmission in the household and stop ongoing community transmission. 7/ @BillHanage

Make no mistake, this will be highly complex and will need weeks or months to implement fully. But I'm glad no one is saying "it's too late". Children will likely be the last to be vaccinated, and schools will need screening for a long time. 8/ @nataliexdean @conarck

Kudos to Tufts University, piloting pooled testing in Somerville and Medford. @MonacoAnthony
9/ https://t.co/8lrg9PLU5c

And to Gingko Bioworks, piloting pooled testing in Salem and other school districts. @jrkelly @Lens_of_Ben @dsallentess
10/
https://t.co/VfnCM31aus