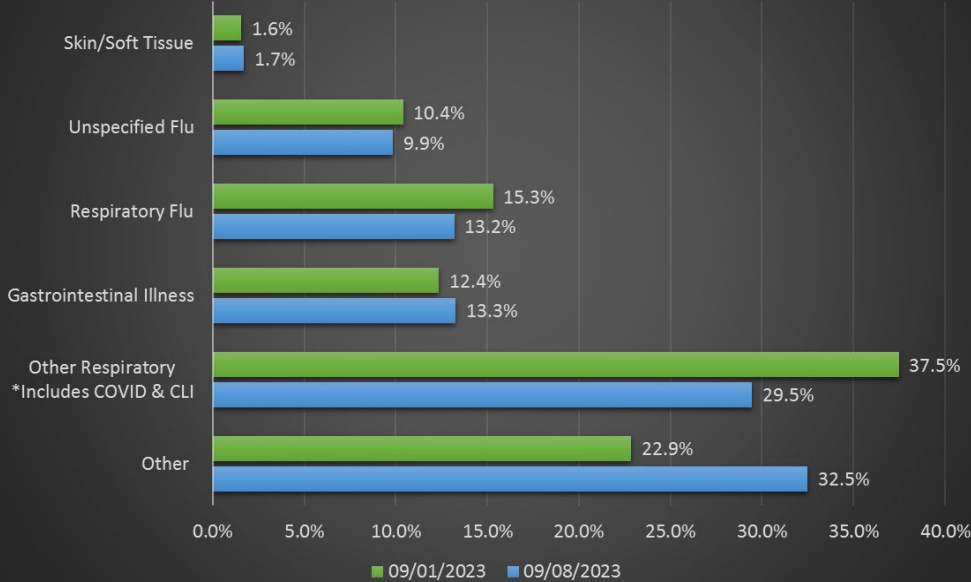


Kent County, Michigan School Absenteeism Trends

Week 9/04/2023 to 9/08/2023

Figure 1. School Illness by Category in Kent County Schools, Weeks Ending 9/01/23 & 9/08/23



Schools are an important part of the public health system and information submitted by schools to the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) regarding student absences is critical to identifying disease trends that are occurring within the county. Schools submit a weekly report containing the number of student absences due to the following communicable diseases: “Flu-like” illnesses (respiratory, gastrointestinal, and unspecified), respiratory infections (common cold, mononucleosis, strep throat, breathing issues, and bronchitis), and Skin/Tissue-related illnesses (head lice, pink eye, impetigo, Scarlet fever, scabies, and fifth disease). In addition to the above diseases, KCHD collects data related to absences due to illness that are diagnosed by a physician, such as Chickenpox, Measles, Rubella, Mumps, Hepatitis, Pertussis, *Haemophilus influenzae* type B, Encephalitis and Meningitis. *Illnesses that were not diagnosed, or required more information, were listed under the “Other” category. *COVID-19 and COVID-19-like-illnesses (CLI) are included in the “Other Respiratory” category. *Staff COVID-19 cases are not included in absenteeism totals. *Staff total enrollment numbers are unavailable.

Figure 3. Comparison to Previous Year, Most Common Illnesses Reported in Kent County Schools, Weeks Ending 9/09/22 and 9/08/23

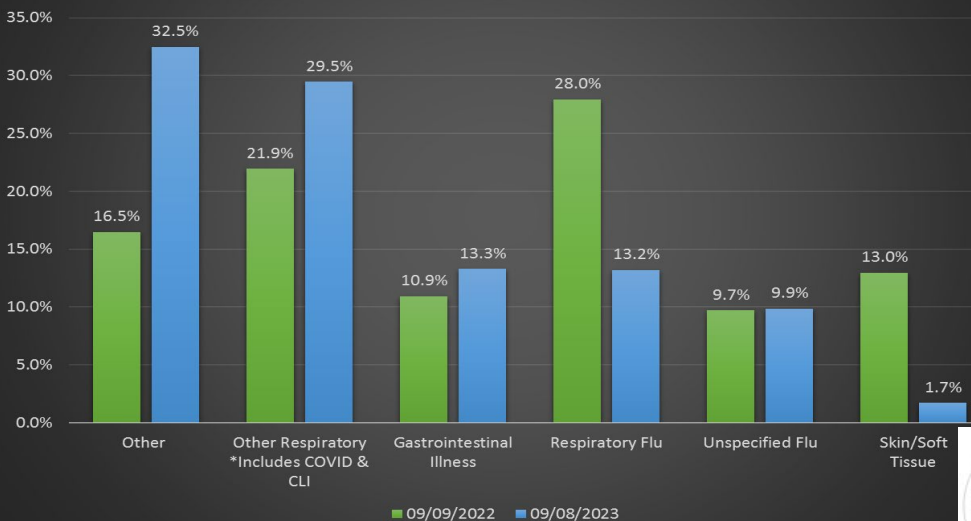


Figure 2. School Absences Due to Reportable Illnesses, Week Ending (9/08/23), Kent County

| Reportable Illness | Number of Cases |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Other | 847 |
| Cold | 551 |
| Gastrointestinal Illness | 346 |
| Respiratory Flu | 344 |
| Unspecified Flu Symptoms | 257 |
| Covid | 157 |
| Strep | 30 |
| Breathing Issues | 27 |
| Head Lice | 23 |
| Pink Eye | 15 |
| Impetigo | 4 |
| Bronchitis | 3 |
| Fifth Disease | 1 |
| Scarlet Fever | 1 |
| Mono | 0 |
| Scabies | 0 |
| Total | 2606 |

9/04/23 – 9/08/23

- Schools Reporting: 188
- Students Enrolled: 64474
- Students Absent: 2606
- Staff Absent (COVID-19): 55
- Percent Absent: 4.0%
- Previous Week % Absent: 3.0%

Figure 1: Percent Common Illness Reported Highest Percent

- Other: 32.5%
- Other Respiratory: 29.5%

Figure 2: Common Illnesses Reported Most Common Cases

- Other: 847
- Cold: 551

Figure 3: Comparing Percentages to Last Year Higher

- Other: 32.5%
- Other Respiratory: 29.5%
- Gastrointestinal Illness: 13.3%
- Unspecified Flu: 9.9%

Lower

- Respiratory Flu: 13.2%
- Skin/Soft Tissue: 1.7%



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