

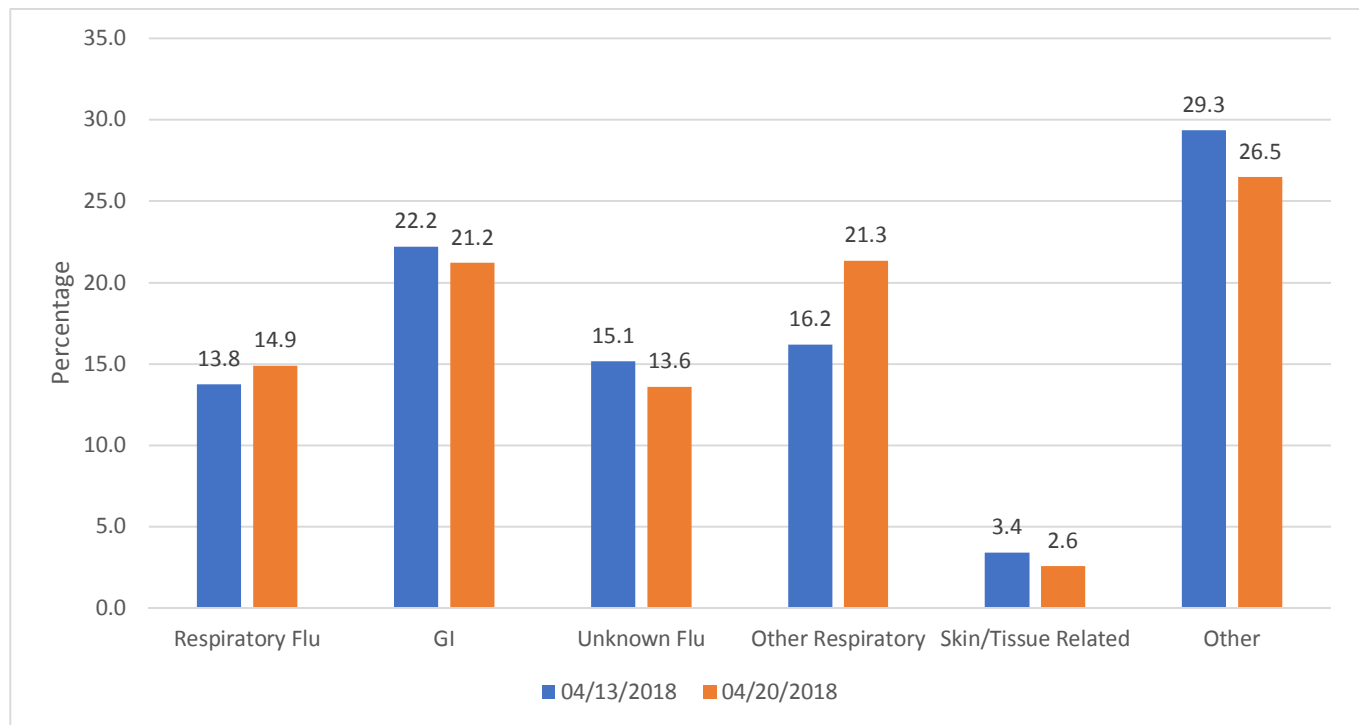
Kent County School Absenteeism Trends

Week 04/16/2018 to 04/20/2018

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, stomach, and unknown), respiratory infections (common cold, mononucleosis, strep throat, asthma, 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

For the week ending April 20, 2018, there were 201 reports received, accounting for 73,866 students enrolled in Kent County schools. Throughout the week, there were 2,695 students absent from school, representing 3.6% of the total reported enrollment, which was slightly lower than the previous week (3.9%). As seen in **Figure 1**, reports of respiratory flu and other respiratory illness were higher than the previous week (04/13/2018). Other illnesses accounted for the greatest percentage of absences (26.5%) during the week.

Figure 1. School Illness by Category, Week Ending 04/13/2018 and 04/20/2018, Kent County



In terms of total numbers, the most commonly reported illness was “other” (n=713) and stomach flu was second (n=571) (**Figure 2**).

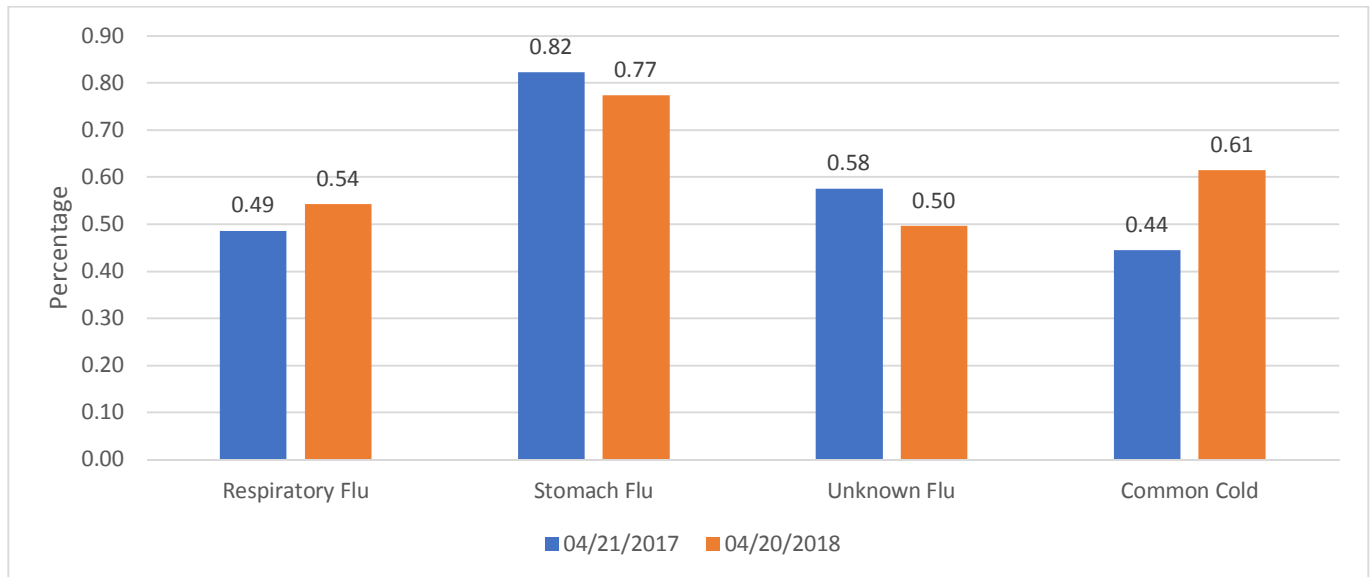
Figure 2. Absences due to reportable illnesses, Week Ending 04/20/2018, Kent County.

Reportable Illness	Number of Cases
Other	713
Stomach Flu	571
Cold	454
Respiratory Flu	401
Unknown Flu	366
Strep	88
Head Lice	39
Pink Eye	29
Asthma	24
Bronchitis	5
Mono	4
Scarlet Fever	1
Fifth Disease	0
Impetigo	0
Scabies	0

*Illnesses that were not diagnosed, or required more information, were listed under the “Other” category.

In comparison with this time last year, percentages (based on total weekly enrollment) for respiratory flu and the common cold were higher than those reported during the week ending April 21, 2017. (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3. Comparison of the most common illnesses reported among school absences (week ending 04/21/2017 and 04/20/2018).



Percentages based on total weekly enrollment.