

**HAMILTON R-II SCHOOL DISTRICT**

POST OFFICE BOX 130

HAMILTON, MISSOURI 64644

**BILLIE MCGRAW**  
Superintendent of Schools

**ASHLEY FORD, Principal**  
Hamilton Elementary School

**TIM SCHIEBER, Principal**  
Penney High School

**RICK ROSS, Principal**  
Hamilton Middle School

December 8, 2021

Public Notice:

**Caldwell County Health Will Cease Identification of Close Contacts.**

**What's that Mean for Hamilton R-II School District?**

In response to the following judgement issued in Cole County court, the Caldwell County Health Department took the official action as summarized below: *“On November 22, 2021, Judge Daniel Green of the Cole County Circuit Court entered a judgement regarding health orders related to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. Judge Green ordered local health departments to cease from issuing public health orders, including rules that restrict students from going to school because they could potentially spread COVID-19.”*

While awaiting further clarification as to how this judgement impacts local health authority and public health matters, the Caldwell County Health Department will no longer be allowed to:

1. Provide consultation to schools regarding quarantine, except for directing schools to other sources, such as CDC, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, etc.
2. Issue quarantine orders for those that have been exposed to COVID-19, or any communicable disease, but have not yet been determined to be a positive case.
3. Assist schools with contact tracing, notification of exposure, or enforcement of quarantine. In summary Caldwell County Health is no longer allowed to provide consultation or assist with quarantine orders/enforcement and contact tracing. They will continue to contact those determined to be positive COVID 19 cases (or any other reportable diseases) based on CDC guidelines.

How does this effect the mitigation strategies employed by Hamilton R-II?

Our current board approved Safe Return to Schools Plan states that “The Caldwell County Health Department will notify school officials of when students or staff need to be contact traced.” Under this new order, the Caldwell County Health Department will no longer be allowed to make recommendations regarding contact tracing. Without this crucial step, Hamilton R-II is unable to identify close contacts and subsequently enforce quarantines of these close contacts.

What if someone is displaying symptoms of COVID 19? Our Board approved policy ‘Communicable Diseases’ (EBB) states that students or employees with communicable diseases that pose a risk of transmission in school

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or at school activities will be managed as required by law and in accordance with guidelines provided by the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and local county or city health departments. Such management may include, but is not limited to, exclusion from school or reassignment as needed for the health and safety of students and staff. Parents/guardians will notify District personnel about students with a communicable disease, and provide the written approval from the treating physician for the student to attend school. The District reserves the right to prevent student attendance until clarification or implementation of precautionary measures are in place, as permitted by law. Students with a communicable disease that exhibit behaviors or 'have symptoms' will be prevented from attendance at school.

In summary, the Caldwell County Health Dept will no longer be allowed to identify close contacts even though the District may determine a child has been within six (6) feet of a person who is positive for COVID 19. If the District determines your child has been within six (6) feet of a COVID 19 positive person for more than 15 minutes we will contact you as a courtesy for the safety of your child. If this determination includes your child showing symptoms of a communicable disease such as COVID 19, parents will be notified and the student will be sent home and only allowed return once symptoms have ceased for at least 24 hours.

We shall abide by our Board approved Safe Return to School Policy until further clarification is offered in the Cole County case or until the Board approves any changes to the Safe Return to Schools Plan. The Safe Return to School Plan can be found on the District website, [www.hamilton.k12.mo.us](http://www.hamilton.k12.mo.us). The Safe Return to Schools Plan will be on the December board meeting agenda for semi-annual review. Public comment is welcome under our new public comment policy. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 816-583-2134. As always, thank you for your partnership in keeping all our students safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



**Dr. Billie McGraw, Ed. D**  
Superintendent  
Hamilton R-II School District