

'Settlement agreement' in Lombardi case

Written by Jim Ecker

Monday, 25 November 2013 20:30 -

A settlement agreement has been reached in the State of Iowa's case against former Cedar Rapids Washington football coach Tony Lombardi, pending approval by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners.

Terms of the agreement have not been revealed.

The Board of Educational Examiners will meet on Friday, Dec. 13 to review the settlement. If the BoEE approves the settlement, it will become a public document. If the BoEE does not approve the settlement, the case will be reset for a public hearing.

Lombardi was charged this summer with four counts of unethical conduct during his time as a teacher and coach at Washington High School, where he worked from 2006 through 2013 before resigning and moving to the Des Moines area this summer with his family.

A public hearing, originally scheduled for Sept. 23-24, had been rescheduled for Dec. 3-4-5, with Lombardi and the State of Iowa both planning to call witnesses. Kathi Jensen, a Washington parent who filed the complaint against Lombardi, was notified Monday of the settlement by September Lau, an assistant attorney general for the Iowa Department of Justice.

"I wanted to let you know that the case against Mr. Lombardi will once again be continued, as the parties have achieved a settlement agreement," Lau notified Jensen in an e-mail.

"The board (BoEE) will review the settlement document at their next scheduled board meeting," Lau told Jensen. "If they approve it, it will become a public document, and you will be able to review it. If they don't approve it, the matter will be reset for hearing."

"The meeting itself is public," Lau stated in her e-mail exchange with Jensen, "but any deliberations or discussions regarding licensee discipline and potential settlement orders will be conducted in closed session."

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Lombardi has been charged with four violations of state rules:

1. Charged with unethical practice by failing to make reasonable efforts to protect the health and safety of students or creating conditions harmful to student learning.
2. Charged with unethical practice by conducting professional business in such a way that the practitioner repeatedly exposes students or other practitioners to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
3. Charged with unethical practice by engaging in any act of illegal discrimination, or otherwise denying a student participation in the benefits of any program on the grounds of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status or national origin.
4. Charged with unethical practice by intentionally disclosing confidential information including, but not limited to, unauthorized sharing of information, assessment or testing results, or family income.

The BoEE examiners listed these factual circumstances in the complaint against Lombardi:

"Respondent used language with student-athletes that was profane, demeaning, and/or inappropriate on multiple occasions.

"Respondent used language with student-athletes and practitioners that constitute race, religious and/or ethnic slurs.

"Respondent's pattern of bullying behavior and language with students created a hostile environment.

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"Respondent disclosed confidential student academic information at the football banquet."

Lombardi entered private business when he moved to the Des Moines area this summer. He can have his teaching license revoked or possibly suspended as a result of the investigation.