

Lombardi has coaching license suspended

Written by Jim Ecker

Monday, 16 December 2013 17:38 - Last Updated Monday, 16 December 2013 18:24

Former Cedar Rapids Washington football coach Tony Lombardi has had his coaching license suspended until at least Aug. 1, 2014 following an 18-month investigation by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BoEE) into ethics complaints.

Lombardi can have his coaching license reinstated once he completes an "Ethics for Educators" course and completes anger management counseling.

No sanctions were imposed on Lombardi's teaching license in the settlement agreement that was reached between Lombardi and the state.

Lombardi resigned as a teacher and coach at Cedar Rapids Washington in August and moved with his family to the Des Moines area, where he is currently employed with a private company.

The Iowa Department of Justice provided a copy of the settlement agreement to the Metro Sports Report Monday afternoon. The case had been scheduled for a public hearing, but Lombardi and the Iowa Department of Justice reached a settlement agreement last month and it was approved by the BoEE this past Friday.

Lombardi could not be reached for comment Monday.

Lombardi was charged with four ethics violations. The BoEE declared that the settlement agreement is not an admission of guilt by Lombardi, but he did admit he unintentionally released grade point average information about a student at a banquet.

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Lombardi worked at Cedar Rapids Washington from Aug. 1, 2006 until this past summer as a teacher and coach. He coached the football team for seven years and coached the baseball team for two years.

Kathi Jensen, a parent of a Washington student, filed the complaint with the BoEE against Lombardi on behalf of herself and other Washington parents.

Lombardi denied in the settlement agreement to engaging in abusive, discriminatory or harmful conduct toward student-athletes. He has never been accused of physical or sexual abuse of a student, according to the BoEE document.

Lombardi has taken steps, beginning in 2010, to modify his coaching behavior in response to allegations made against him, according to the BoEE. He has completed a psychological evaluation and counseling, and submitted documentation of successful completion to the board.

Lombardi signed the settlement agreement on Dec. 5, 2013.

"I agree to comply with the requirements set forth in the stipulations and understand that my failure to do so will result in the continued suspension of my coaching authorization until such requirements have been met," Lombardi declared in the agreement.

"I understand that the Notice of Hearing and Stipulation and Order are public records which will become part of my permanent licensure file and will be available for public inspection and reproduction.

"I understand that my name will be added to the national clearinghouse database kept by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification," Lombardi stated.

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Duane T. Magee, the executive director of the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners, signed the settlement agreement.

"In determining the appropriate sanction to impose in this case, the Board has considered the nature and seriousness of the allegations as well as mitigating circumstances such as the length of time since the specific allegations of the complaint and Respondent's (Lombardi's) demonstrated effort to address the allegations on the local level," Magee declared in the agreement.

Lombardi had been charged by the BoEE with four ethics violations on Aug. 1, 2013. They were:

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 (Lombardi) 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 investigation revealed the following "factual circumstances," according to the complaint filed against Lombardi and dated Aug. 1, 2013:

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

2. Lombardi used language with student-athletes and practitioners that constitute racial, religious and/or ethnic slurs.

3. Lombardi's pattern of bullying behavior and language with students created a hostile environment.

4. Lombardi disclosed confidential student academic information at a football banquet.

Lombardi did not admit guilt to any of the charges, except for unintentionally revealing a student's grade point information.