

Linn-Mar has 'no comment' on Casebolt's status

Written by Jim Ecker
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The Iowa Board of Educational Examiners has dismissed all of the ethics complaints against Linn-Mar assistant football coach Matt Casebolt, presumably clearing him of any penalty from the state board.

But here's a question that nobody seems willing to answer at Linn-Mar: Why hasn't Casebolt been working with the Lions in practice this week?

High school football practice began Monday and several sources have told the Metro Sports Report that Casebolt has not attended a single workout all week. Not Monday, not Tuesday, not Wednesday, not Thursday.

Bob Forsyth, Linn-Mar's head coach, apparently learned last Friday that all complaints against all Linn-Mar personnel had been dismissed. KCRG officially broke the news Tuesday night, and Linn-Mar superintendent Quintin Shepherd confirmed the television report early Wednesday morning in an e-mail to the Metro Sports Report.

If Linn-Mar wanted Casebolt to keep a low profile until the BoEE finished its investigation, there's now been ample opportunity for Casebolt to resume his duties as a long-time member of the coaching staff.

So where is he?

Has Casebolt taken a medical leave? Is he taking care of a family situation? Is he on vacation? Has he been suspended?

"I cannot comment on personnel matters," Matthew May, the communications/media coordinator for the Linn-Mar district, told the Metro Sports Report Thursday in response to a

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question about Casebolt's status.

We've sent e-mails to Shepherd, Linn-Mar principal Jeff Gustason and new Linn-Mar athletic director David Brown for a clarification about Casebolt's status with the program, but none of them have responded.

"I believe Dr. Shepherd would say the same thing (about it being a personnel matter)," said May.

Brown confirmed last week that Casebolt was still a member of the football staff for the 2016 season. If that's changed, nobody is talking. So if he's still a member of the staff, why isn't he coaching?

The Linn-Mar families who filed the complaints against Casebolt, Forsyth, Gustason and former athletic director Scott Mahmens have begun receiving letters from the BoEE, confirming that their complaints have been dismissed. Bob Jordan, one of the parents who filed a complaint, said the letter he received from the BoEE cited "not enough documentary evidence" for the BoEE to file charges.

The school district conducted an in-house investigation before all this landed with the BoEE and the district also dismissed all complaints due to "insufficient evidence," but the school district apparently commissioned a second investigation after more complaints were raised by members of the community. Shepherd would not confirm the existence of a second investigation when asked by the Metro Sports Report earlier this summer, but numerous sources have said there was a second probe by the district.

Perhaps that second investigation uncovered enough material that convinced the school district to take action against Casebolt. Or perhaps not, since nobody is talking.

Shepherd told the Metro Sports Report earlier this summer that it was "safe to assume" there would be personnel changes as a result of everything that's transpired in the case, but he declined to be specific. Perhaps that "personnel change" includes Casebolt being suspended

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for a period of time, or perhaps not.

Meanwhile, the Linn-Mar Lions are getting ready for the season without Casebolt, who has been the offensive coordinator in previous years. Perhaps he'll return to practice on Friday. Perhaps he'll return next week. Or perhaps he'll miss the entire season.

At some point, the Linn-Mar school district should clarify the situation so everyone can move forward.