



Byron Schlotterback [will not coach the Cedar Rapids Washington baseball team this season](#) , but his situation has nothing to do with his performance as the Washington coach.

Dr. Ralph Plagman, the principal at Washington High School, made that point Thursday morning.

"I can't say much," Dr. Plagman remarked. "What I'm officially supposed to say is he has requested a leave of absence for personal reasons and he does not wish to be contacted. That's the official line I've been given.

"We're assuming that's for the season," he said. "I've been told it's for the season."

Schlotterback, who was set to begin his fourth season as Washington's head coach, teaches at Jefferson High School where he has been the director of vocal music.

"Byron Schlotterback is on a personal leave from the school district for an undetermined length of time for personal matters," Marcia Hughes, the community relations supervisor for Cedar Rapids Community Schools, said in an e-mail.

Dakota Freese, the top pitcher for the Washington baseball team, has been suspended for the first seven games of the season for a violation of school rules, but Dr. Plagman said Schlotterback's situation is not related to Freese's suspension.

"You can definitely rule that out," he said. "That is absolutely false."

## **Plagman: Schlotterback requested leave**

Written by Jim Ecker

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Brent Henry, Washington's top assistant coach, has been named interim head coach and will lead the team this season.

Schlotterback conducted practice at Washington on Monday when preseason drills began. Dr. Plagman said he received a phone call during the lunch hour on Tuesday, informing him that Schlotterback would not be coaching the team. Dr. Plagman informed the players at practice Tuesday evening of the change.

"I've received one phone call, telling me what I've just told you," Dr. Plagman said. "And that is truly all I know."

Dr. Plagman was asked if Schlotterback is being investigated by school or legal authorities for any allegations of improper conduct. "I can't answer that," he said. "I don't know."

Hughes said in an e-mail that she was not aware of any investigation by local law enforcement. She also said that "any personnel matter in the District is confidential, which would include personal leave."

Henry was beginning his fourth year as one of Schlotterback's assistant coaches at Washington, according to Plagman. Prior to that, Henry worked for Schlotterback for two years at Anamosa High School.

Henry is a business teacher at Linn-Mar High School and also serves as an assistant baseball coach at Cornell College.

"Because he doesn't work here in any other capacity, I scarcely knew him," Dr. Plagman said. "He's an impressive young man. He will do fine. We determined that Brent Henry was clearly the best person to elevate to the head coaching position on an interim basis.

"We're just a bit player in the story here," Dr. Plagman remarked. "But because he

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(Schlotterback) has requested to be relieved of all his responsibilities, we had to move ahead here, too."

Henry, from Aurora, Colo., played baseball at Cornell.

Henry did not return a phone call Thursday morning seeking comment about his new position.

Chuck McDonnell, the principal at Jefferson High School, also did not return a phone call Thursday morning.