

Six per cent wage hike

# New contract ends secondary teacher's dispute

By LORI TAYLOR  
Herald staff writer

The Halton board of education agreed, reluctantly in some cases, to support an agreement proposed by provincial mediator Martin Tepitsky to settle the four-month-long contract dispute with its secondary school teachers.

The one-year agreement grants the region's teachers a salary increase of six per cent across the board, with the resulting salaries, including benefits, costing the board \$30 million.

Other items included in the agreement were: a dental plan, with 75 per cent of the contribution coming from the board; the hiring, as of the beginning of the second semester, in February, an additional 18 teachers, bringing the pupil-teacher ratio from 18.5 and 13.5 in regular and vocational secondary schools, down to 18.2 and 13.2; a change in the professional development fund from a contribution by the board of 1/2 of 1 per cent of total

teachers' salaries to a flat \$100,000 which represents a financial gain for the board; and a decision by the teachers to approve the concept of using paraprofessionals in schools, provided that if teachers become redundant or surplus, the paraprofessionals will be the first to be let go.

**TOTAL PACKAGE**  
The total package as approved by the board represents an increase of 9.02 per cent over the board's costs for 1977-78.

The agreement came about as the result of a relatively unorthodox move by Mr. Tepitsky, who met with both sides for two nights, and then approached them with a proposed solution of his own.

A number of trustees said they weren't in agreement with everything included in the proposal, but they were supporting it anyway because of the length of time for which negotiations had already been in progress. Each trustee who joined in the discus-

sion had compliments for the board negotiating committee and its work during the process.

Oakville trustee Fred Armitage argued that there has never been any convincing argument that a minimal change in the pupil-teacher ratio would have any effect on the quality of education in the classroom. He said he believes the teachers' federation's move toward changing the ratio is not based on the benefits to the students, "although they'll say it is," but to safeguard jobs. He added that the proposed minimal change in the pupil-teacher ratio will cost the board over \$200,000.

**PUPIL-TEACHER**  
The pupil-teacher ratio was a matter of concern with most trustees. Oakville trustee Elsie Hilson said that teachers want to be treated like those in private industry, but she said she has never heard of a private industry in which, when the productivity is decreasing, the employees ask the employer to hire more staff.

John Boich, superintendent of instruction, said the administration is proposing to hire the additional 18 teachers strictly for special education programs, particularly in the high schools. This means the change in the pupil-teacher ratio will not be seen in the regular classroom. Had the teachers been hired for regular classrooms, it would have meant an estimated reduction of about .2 per cent in the average class size, Mr. Boich said.

Several trustees, including former chairman Garry Morton, contended that the teachers' salaries were getting too high. "A bit beyond reason" was how Rev. Morton described them. Trustee Ivan Armstrong predicted that principals will soon be earning in excess of \$50,000.

**NEW AGREEMENT**  
Under the new agreement, teachers in the maximum salary category will be earning \$28,454, and principals will be getting between \$34,909 and \$39,620 depending on their level of experience.

At a press conference after the board meeting adjourned, Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation District Nine council chairman Diane Barsoski said, "In a time of nine per cent inflation, a six per cent settlement, in the teachers' view, appears to us to be a responsible and reasonable settlement." Burlington trustee Bill Priestner, who headed the board's salary negotiating committee, said that the committee feels the settlement, as far as salaries are concerned, is "quite in order" in comparison with the

settlements reached by neighboring boards. He said, however, that he feels there must be a better solution to salary negotiations than that set down in Bill 100, which sets out the collective bargaining process between school boards and teachers. He said as it stands, there is no incentive to

settle early, and no lever for each side to use to pressure for a settlement before the current contract expires. **MAJOR CONCESSIONS**  
According to Miss Barsoski, the major concessions made by the teachers concerned differentiated staffing (the use of paraprofessionals in the classroom)

and the professional development fund. By last year's formula, the board would have contributed \$38,000 more this year. Miss Barsoski also said the District Nine council has not decided yet whether or not the results of the teachers' ratification vote will be released. The decision not to release the num-

bers in the vote was made before the vote was taken, she said, and she didn't know when the final decision would be made. Halton Hills trustees Barry Shepherd and Betty Fisher both voted in favor of the proposed settlement on a recorded vote requested by trustee Fred Armitage.

## Lunch service policy

The Halton board of education has approved a resolution setting out a policy which will permit groups of parents to operate a school lunch service.

The policy came about in an effort to set out guidelines for those principals who already have students staying at school during lunch hours for family reasons, or because of the distance between their home and the school.

Although the policy was accompanied by a set of guidelines, the contents of which some of the trustees were opposed to, director of education Em Lavender said these guidelines were to establish "a kind of rough justice, and we admit it's rough." He said these guidelines could be changed, but that the policy should be the main object of discussion.

Included in the policy are a set of criteria, which says there

must be a proven need for the service, the parent group must, in co-operation with the principal, assume responsibility for the administration, operating and financing of the service, and that competent supervisors will be hired and paid out of the fees charged to the students. It was also stated that participation in the program by students is a privilege and not a right, except for those students who are bused regularly to school.

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