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Teachers step up their work-to-rule

By **MELANIE HENNESSEY**
The Champion

Local public elementary school teachers stepped up their work-to-rule actions this week.

As of Monday, Halton District School Board (HDSB) elementary teachers — represented by the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (EFTO-Halton) — imposed more sanctions in addition to those that came into effect March 21, just after March Break.

As listed on the HDSB Web site, these new sanctions include:

- Not attending or providing any professional development, workshops or in-service sessions occurring outside the instructional day.
- Not participating in any school-wide fundraising activities such as cookie sales, cheese orders, hot lunch days, tuck shops or fun fairs.
- Not providing information technology support, unless it's part of a regularly-scheduled assignment.
- Not participating in 'First Steps' or 'PM Benchmarks' (data collection) initiatives.
- Not acting as 'teacher in charge' or 'acting administrative teacher.'
- Not participating in any interviews involving hiring staff.

EFTO-Halton president Maureen Weinberger said the sanctions were increased to apply pressure to the school board for a collective agreement.

"That's standard practice when bargaining is not occurring," she said.

Sanctions that were put in place last month include teachers not attending staff or school committee meetings, performing any administrative functions or organizing any new field trips.

HDSB Executive Officer of Human Resources Dawn Beckett-Morton said the board is continuing to have regular discussions with elementary school principals to monitor the potential impacts of the sanctions. The board will meet with principals Tuesday to further assess the situation.

"I think we're all concerned and keeping an eye on the safety of students," she said.

While it was earlier thought field trips could be cancelled if student supervision and subsequently student safety became an issue, Ms Beckett-Morton said this hasn't happened yet.

Ms Weinberger noted she doesn't think the sanctions have caused any negative repercussions at Halton's elementary schools.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Good read

Maureen Martin looks engrossed in a book — one of thousands on sale today and tomorrow at the Canadian Federation of University Women's annual book sale at Milton Mall.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

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