

# Halton elementary teachers continue work-to-rule

*Schools' extra-curricular activities put on hold after contract negotiations stall*

By JASON MISNER

Special to The Champion

Halton District School Board's 32,000 elementary students face at least another day of teachers refusing to participate in extracurricular activities as work-to-rule sanctions continue.

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Halton district — representing some 1,800 teachers — started its sanctions Wednesday morning after talks to negotiate a new contract stalled Saturday afternoon.

Under the sanctions, teachers are arriving at school 15 minutes before the start of class and leaving 15 minutes after the end of the school day. This means teachers are not participating in extracurricular activities like sporting events, school fundraising activities and staff meetings.

What won't be affected are the end-of-the-year school trips for Grade 8s since these events were organized prior to negotiations.

The two sides, however, are now back at the bargaining table.

Maureen Weinberger, local ETFO president, said the union and board met for 16 hours starting at around 2 p.m. Wednesday and progressing well into Thursday morning, desperately trying to work out a deal.

No deal was reached nor was a tentative one offered.

Ms Weinberger remains hopeful a deal will be reached soon.

"There was movement by both parties but we're not there yet. We're certainly going to continue to work toward getting a fair collective agreement," she said. "We were talking to each other and that is always a good thing."

The board sounded a little more pessimistic.

"I'd hope we'd be a whole lot closer, if not settled, so we still have a ways to go," said Dawn Beckett-Morton, the public board's executive officer of human resources. "I'd like to think we can do something quickly."

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**DAWN BECKETT-MORTON**

It's unclear at this point how long the work-to-rule sanctions will continue since there is no scheduled date for both sides to meet again.

Weinberger said union officials will consider what was discussed at the bargaining session and will also consult with their provincial counterparts. Ms Beckett-Morton said outgoing Education Director Dusty Papke was attempting to contact the Ministry of Education to get direction on what to do next.

"I don't quite know where we go from here," she said.

Ms Weinberger and Ms Beckett-Morton said they are willing to meet again at any time, including the weekend.

Meanwhile, the Ontario Ministry of Education has suspended new special funding to the Halton District School Board as well as eight other boards for deciding to re-impose work-to-rule sanctions, Amanda Alvaro, press secretary to Education Minister Gerard Kennedy, said.

The stipulations for receiving \$128 million in special funding from the province included no accelerated job actions by teachers and reaching agreements with unions before a midnight Wednesday deadline.

Most Ontario teachers' contracts expired August 31, but in mid-April Mr. Kennedy announced a provincial agreement between the school boards and the public teachers' unions that would cover salary increases of about 10 per cent over four years. Boards were to take that money and bargain contracts that included local bene-

• see WORK-TO-RULE on page A15

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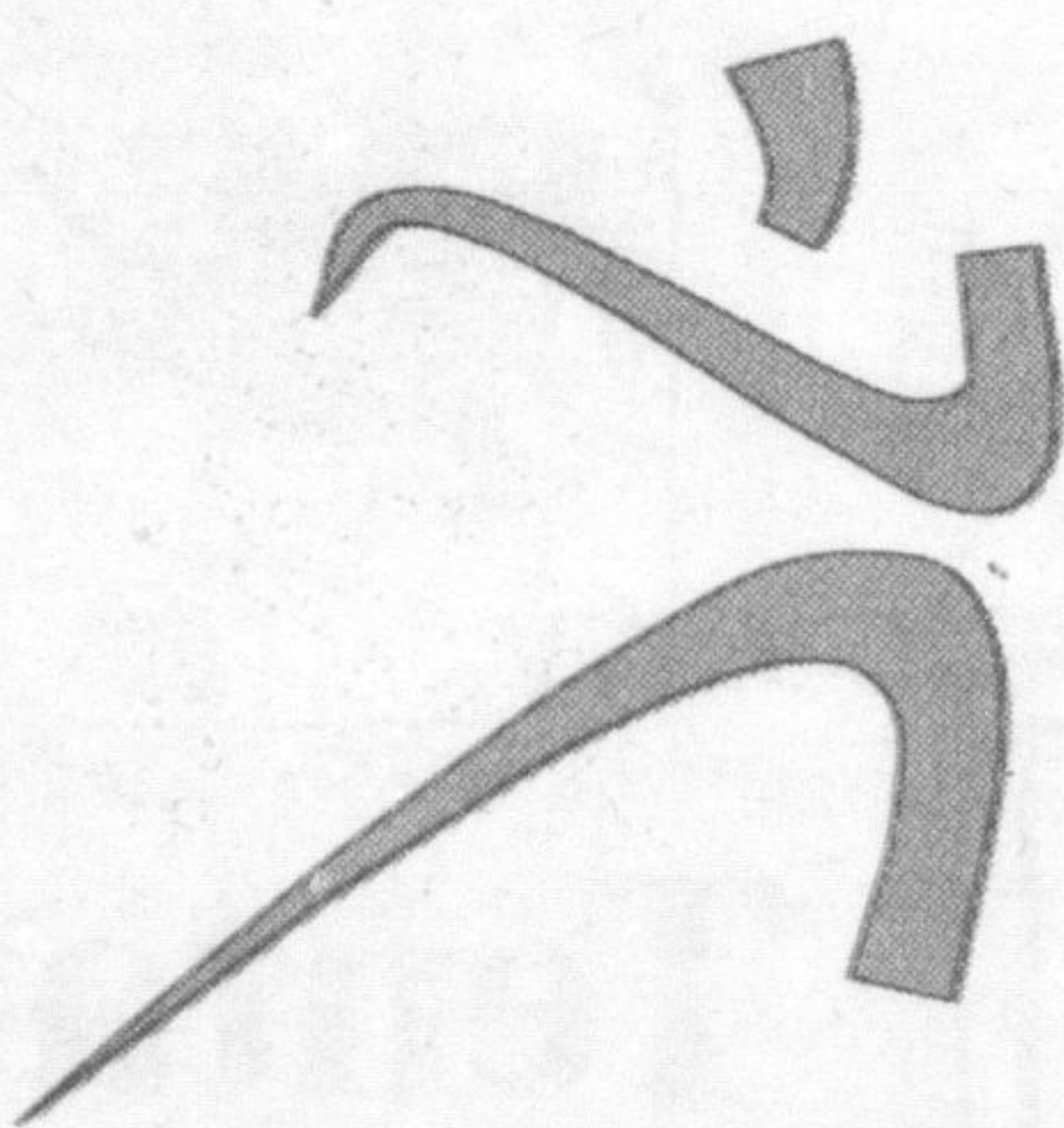
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