

Two sides have met six times, with four more sessions planned

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OSSTF Halton represents 1,300 permanent full- and part-time high school teachers at the Halton District School Board (HDSB). Halton Secondary Occasional teachers (HSOT) is an affiliate of OSSTF District 20. It represents about 600 occasional teachers who fill in for permanent teachers when they are absent due to illness or leaves of absence. Tom Beer is the president of HSOT. The HSOT has been negotiating separately with the Halton board. The two sides have met six times with four more sessions

planned. The Halton public board also has had three bargaining sessions with its permanent elementary teachers union and two sessions with the elementary occasional teachers, with more talks planned with both employee groups. "So we are engaged with our local bargaining units and are having positive and productive discussions related to local issues," Jeff Blackwell, the board's acting executive officer of human resources, said in an email.

The Rainbow public school board in the Sudbury area is the only public school board, other than Durham, with a firm set strike date for its high school teachers — Monday. The other five boards that have been served notice that its high school teachers may strike are Halton, Peel, Waterloo, Ottawa-Carleton and Lakehead in Thunder Bay. Contract talks broke off at the provincial level last week but the OSSTF says they will resume. The local level talks are centered on non-monetary issues. Monetary items are bar-

gained provincially at a central table. It's the first time a two-tiered bargaining process has been used in Ontario. A provincial conciliator brought in to aid the bargaining process issued a no-board report at the end of March, placing the two Halton sides in a legal strike or lockout position as of April 17. However, under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, a minimum of five days' notice must be given before any strike or lockout can occur. None has been given to date.

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