

EDUCATION

Catholic teachers seek 7.5-per-cent pay hike

FROM PAGE 1

chairperson Elizabeth Crowe said they already notified the union that 1998-'99 staffing schedules will reflect new provincial regulations requiring students to receive 1,250 minutes of class time per week.

The government also mandated a 25-1 pupil-teacher ratio for elementary classes and a 22-1 formula for secondary classes.

"Part of the ultimatum is we don't change anything in their agreement, but we had to," said Crowe, an Aurora-King trustee. "We told the union we can't move on this."

Maintaining previous staffing arrangements would force the board to hire 100 new teachers, a move it just can't afford, she said.

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"We are going to do everything in our power to avert a strike. We just hope they are willing to listen to what we have to say," added Crowe. "Teachers won't actually have any more students, they will just spend more time in the class with a smaller average class size."

Following four meetings last week, the two parties will return to the bargaining table Monday, Wednesday and Thursday in a last-ditch effort to reach a deal.

On Tuesday, the board will give the union a comprehensive proposal that encompasses details of all outstanding contentious issues, including staffing, working conditions, salaries and benefits.

The proposal will not change salaries or benefits, Crowe

reported Friday afternoon.

Earlier in bargaining, the board had indicated it wanted to change the benefit package and introduce lower salaries for newly hired teachers.

"We've taken that off the table," Crowe said.

One of the major differences between the two sides surrounds a new secondary school timetable based on four 72-minute instructional periods, with a 72-minute lunch for students.

Teachers would take a 40-minute lunch and use the remaining 32 minutes for preparation time, on-call duties, supervision or extracurricular activities.

Baczynsky, however, said the union favours three 90-minute periods and a 40-minute lunch for each semester.

"We have told the board we are not opposed to increasing the teaching time and this is a suggestion to the board for a solution to get to the 1,250 minutes required," he said.

"The government is trying for smaller classes to get more individual attention for students. Under this plan, we would be teaching more and, hopefully, the students would be learning more."

With the teachers' current deal set to expire tomorrow, the union has asked for a 7.5-per-cent salary hike over the next two years. Combined with a cost of living allowance, the highest paid teacher in the board would receive \$71,767 a year.

Janisse did not mediate negotiations last week as originally planned, but Crowe said she expects him to arrive as early as Tuesday morning.

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The basic vision skills needed for school use are:

- Near vision: The ability to see clearly and comfortably at 10-13 inches.
- Distance vision: The ability to see clearly and comfortably beyond arm's reach.
- Binocular coordination: The ability to use both eyes together.
- Eye movement skills: The ability to aim the eyes accurately, move them smoothly across a page and shift them quickly and accurately from one object to another.
- Focusing skills: The ability to keep both eyes accurately focused at the proper distance to see clearly and to change focus quickly.
- Peripheral awareness: The ability to be aware of things located to the side while looking straight ahead.
- Eye/hand coordination: The ability to use the eyes and hands together.

If any of these or other vision skills is lacking or not functioning properly, your child will have to work harder. This can lead to headaches, fatigue and other eyestrain problems. As a parent, be alert for symptoms that may indicate your child has a vision or visual processing problem. Be sure to tell your optometrist if your child frequently:

- Loses their place while reading.
- Avoids close work.
- Holds reading material closer than normal.
- Tends to rub their eyes.
- Has headaches.
- Turns or tilts head to use one eye only.
- Makes frequent reversals when reading or writing.
- Uses finger to maintain place when reading.
- Omits or confuses small words when reading.
- Consistently performs below potential.



Since vision changes can occur without you or your child noticing them, your child should visit the optometrist at least every two years, or more frequently if specific problems or risk factors exist. If needed, the doctor can prescribe treatment including eyeglasses, contact lenses or vision therapy.

Remember, a school vision or pediatrician's screening is not a substitute for a thorough eye examination.

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ADVERTISING CORRECTION

In our Fall Storewide Back-To-School insert included in this newspaper, please note: Page 13 - Men's Brooks Web Crosstrainer, our reg. \$49.99, not as illustrated or as photographed. We sincerely apologize to our valued customers and regret any inconvenience or confusion this may have caused.

EATON'S

Tour unique homes

Evergreen Hospice will host its fundraising event House Tour '98, on Sunday, Sept. 13, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The tour includes seven unique homes and gardens in the villages of Markham and Unionville. After the tour, enjoy refreshments and organ music at Boxgrove United Church, a church built in 1877 which is being restored to its original beauty. A raffle features a signed A.J. Casson print, an antique Coca-Cola cooler, a fashion consultations, and handmade craft items. Raffle tickets are available for \$4 each or 3 for \$10.

Tour tickets are available for \$20 at Inside Out Decorating, Main Street, Stouffville or by calling Evergreen Hospice at 472-5014 (VISA accepted).

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