

Board not negotiating, says teacher union rep

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be limited to an average of 22. Many Catholic boards and teacher unions, including York's, have resumed bargaining because Minister of Education Dave Johnson has agreed to temporarily relax the definition of instruction time.

In the past, he has said the 1,250 minutes of instruction can't include activities such as hall monitoring, home room supervision and student tutoring.

But last Wednesday, Johnson said he won't reject any teacher

contracts that have used those activities as bargaining chips to reach an agreement.

However, that opportunity will end once Johnson introduces new legislation later this month to better define instruction time.

Despite the narrow window of opportunity, York's public board insists it simply can't afford to maintain last year's staffing levels, even with Johnson's loophole.

Barker suggested the problem is York teachers are paid about \$3,000 more than the provincial average salary of \$57,000.

It would therefore cost the

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York secondary teachers union leader

board more than \$7 million to hire the 110 high school teachers needed to keep staffing at last year's level.

But Harrison is angry the board won't use the tools Johnson has

given them to reach an agreement.

"I'm almost at the point that if they can't make a decision, then maybe they should invite Dave Johnson to the table. I'd love Dave Johnson to come to the table to get a deal. Are they absolving themselves of the duty the people of York Region elected them to do?"

Harrison insists the board is overstating the \$7-million cost and said there are other ways to find the money.

"We hope that over the next seven days, we get back to the table and the students of York Region only miss one day — that's my

naive, hopeful goal. I still have to answer to my members," he said.

In addition to the rotating strike, high school teachers will work to rule.

They have been instructed by the union not to volunteer for extra-curricular activities and to arrive at school 15 minutes before classes begin and leave 15 minutes after the final bell.

Harrison said teachers have also been told not to talk about the issue with their students.

"The classroom is not the place for it. I don't want teachers pulling up a chair and talking about this."

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Important Notice

YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

To York Region District School Board Secondary School Students and their Parents

The union representing York Region's public high school teachers has served notice that it will lead a series of rotating strikes beginning this Monday, September 14, 1998.

On Monday:

- Secondary schools will remain open but students are encouraged to stay at home to review and complete assignments
- Busing for high school students will not be available

Beginning on Tuesday:

- Students will return to a full and balanced program

We will monitor the situation daily and we regret any inconveniences caused.

Further action will be determined by our ability to provide safe learning conditions and quality programs. Students can be assured that they will not lose their year and that any disruption to their program will be kept to a minimum.

In the meantime, the Board has extended an invitation to the teachers' union to resume collective bargaining. Please call our Information Line at 1-800-828-0013 regarding any changes to the operation of our schools.



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