

CONTRACT TALKS: Negotiations between York Region public school board and CUPE workers continuing

Strike vote set for Sunday

BY JENNIFER BROWN
STAFF WRITER



STAFF PHOTO/SIGERD WITTEVEEN

CUPE workers, including this Summitview Public School custodian were on the job this week clearing snow from portables and performing other essential duties in York Region schools. The workers, however, will vote tomorrow on a new contract.

Public school board custodians are slated to take a strike vote tomorrow.

Canadian Union of Public Employees leader Sid Ryan is scheduled to speak to the workers at the meeting, which is set for 2 p.m. at Aurora High School.

Negotiations between the union and board resumed Friday.

Both sides declined to discuss what exactly the main concerns are in the talks but board chairperson Bill Crothers said he was optimistic a deal could be reached relatively smoothly, even though "there are always potential issues."

"Like any set of negotiations, if you look at the union proposal and the board proposal, there is a bit of a gap. But once they start talking, the gap begins to disappear," Crothers said.

"I'm not anticipating any difficulties."

While the elementary teachers union was able to negotiate a one-time signing bonus, there have been no pay hikes for unionized employees at the public board this year.

"Anytime you have any discussions like this, dollars are always a part of it, but everybody realizes there aren't a lot of wage increases happening in the public sector," Crothers said.

"On a local basis, I think people understand things are tight and we've tried to treat all of our employees in an equivalent manner."

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