

Issues with province, not us, board says after teacher strike vote

BY CHRIS TRABER
Staff Writer

York's elementary school teachers expressed their anger with the York Region District School Board Tuesday, giving their union a near unanimous strike mandate that may result in work-to-rule action within weeks.

"The teachers are frustrated and they've sent the board the message that had to be sent," said Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario first vice-president David Clegg after 95 per cent of voters cast ballots in favour of job action.

Mr. Clegg said the turnout at the Premier Ballroom in Richmond Hill was good.

He would not estimate how many of the 3,755 public elementary teachers eligible to vote attended.

"The results are consistent because the issues are consistent," he said. "The teachers are tired of being treated like second-class citizens. When they look at their secondary school colleagues, who have the same qualifications, our members want to be treated in the same manner."

"We hope this is the message that will bring the board back to the bargaining table. They (the school board) have the resources and the chance to make this a win-win situation."

With Tuesday's tally in York, 27 of 31



BILL CROTHERS: Relations with teachers federation good, public board chairperson says.

provincial districts have given their federation a strike mandate.

Ballots ranging from 88 to 100 per cent in favour were cast, Mr. Clegg said.

With a provincewide mandate, school boards are caught in the middle of the teacher's union and the Education Ministry, public board chairperson Bill Crothers said.

"Relations with the federation and the school board are good right now.

We've had regular meetings. The tone has been very good.

"To the best of my knowledge there are no local issues causing difficulty," said Mr. Crothers, adding the impasse will not be resolved on a board-by-board basis.

The federation, representing 65,000 public elementary school teachers and education workers in Ontario, is contesting paid preparation time and unpaid supervision time.

Teachers want to increase their preparation time from an average of 150 minutes per week to 200.

They also want to cap teachers' supervision time at one hour each week. The union advised weekly supervision time can range from 45 to 300 minutes.

It will be up to the ministry to decide if elementary teacher's demands are realistic, Mr. Crothers said.

Salaries are also being disputed.

"We're looking for real increases over and above two per cent inflation," Mr. Clegg said.

"We know the province has given the board the funding but we just haven't seen it."

"We will show as much constraint as possible to have the least disruption to student programs, but if the board continues to be stubborn and keeps dragging its heels, we'll have to look at job action."

Man still in hospital after collision

A Whitby man remained in critical condition in a Toronto hospital Wednesday after a weekend motorcycle collision in Whitchurch-Stouffville in which two others were killed.

Three high performance motorcycles were on Bloomington Road east of Kennedy Road Sunday around 4 p.m. when one, a red Honda RC51, crossed the centre line and hit a westbound 2002 Pontiac Sunfire head on.

Speed appears to be a factor in the double fatal crash, police said.

The driver of the motorcycle, a 29-year-old Toronto man, was pronounced dead at the scene. The front seat passenger in the Pontiac, 63-year-old Arnold Hall of Richmond Hill, was also killed.

The driver of the Pontiac, a 30-year-old Whitby man, suffered

serious head injuries and was taken to Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Center in Toronto.

Two passengers in the rear of the Pontiac suffered non-life-threatening injuries. They were transported to Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket.

Both had been released, but one returned to hospital this week, police said.

The two other motorcyclists returned to the scene for a moment, but took off as others stopped to help. Two men returned to the scene hours later in a car and were arrested.

A 30-year-old man from Toronto and 37-year-old Stouffville man have been charged with dangerous operation of a motor vehicle.

Speed appears to be a factor in the crash, police said.

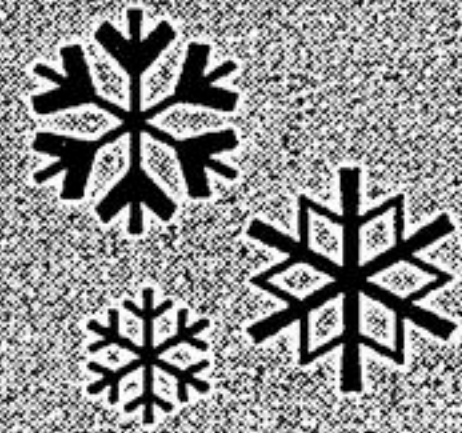
Anyone with information is asked to call police at 1-866-876-5423, ext. 7703; Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS or leave an anonymous tip online at www.crimestoppersyr.ca

2ND ANNUAL TOWN OF WHITCHURCH STOUFFVILLE

Winter Carnival

Saturday, February 12

Musselman's Lake 1:00 ~ 4:00



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES!

- "Shoot for the Cure" and WIN Playoff Tickets "STOUFFVILLE SPIRIT"
- Snowmobile/ATV Rides • Hayrides
- 2:30 pm ~ Stouffville Figure Skating Club performing!
- DOG SLED TEAMS!!
- Snow Shoe Fun!!

M.C. "MIKE FELD"

Entertainment Featuring

- 1:30 pm BACH TO BLUES LIVE CONCERT WHITCHURCH HIGHLANDS PRIMARY CHOIR
- 2:30 pm YORK DURHAM ACADEMY OF PERFORMANCE ARTS CONCERT BAND -CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Celebrate Valentine's with 'Heart shaped' Belgian Chocolates compliments of Charlinda's Chocolates
Face Painting • Children's Ident Kits



FABULOUS CHILI!
compliments of Honey's Beestro
Hot Dogs!!
Hot Chocolate!!

sponsors

Charlinda's Chocolates

Clarkson Auctions

