

Elementary teachers in legal strike position Sunday

By Brock Weir

Elementary teachers across Ontario will be in a legal strike position next week, but the York Region District School Board does not anticipate a significant disruption to the school day next Monday.

The Elementary Teachers Federation informed the government its teachers and occasional teachers will be taking province-wide strike action on Monday over collective bargaining agreements, student learning conditions, and teachers' ability to use their professional judgement when providing instruction.

Objections from the Federation include removing language pertaining to class size out of collective agreements, which they argue could result in increased numbers of students in each class, restricting the independence of their members to prepare for lessons, and concerns over the transparency of hiring practices.

In a statement on Tuesday, the York Region School Board said negotiations are ongoing with employee groups, including teachers.

Currently, the development [of a legal strike position] is not expected to significantly disrupt normal school operations, said the Board. [The Federation] has indicated that the job action commencing on May 11 will not include full withdrawal of services.

Negotiations also continue with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, they added, noting there is no job action for local high schools.