

WATERLOO CHRONICLE

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Peace at last

Province reaches tentative agreement with last holdout in provincewide teacher bargaining

BY BOB VRBANAC
Chronicle Staff

The province has reached a tentative deal with public school elementary teachers that should see an end job action and the return of report cards.

Ontario Education Minister Liz Sandals announced Monday that a tentative deal had been reached between the province and the elementary teachers' union (ETFO).

The education minister also announced school support workers represented by CUPE had also reached a tentative agreement that should see school hallways and common spaces cleaned up after the work-to-rule campaign by custodians and other workers.

Sandals said the tentative deal also included an agreement by ETFO to put out full progress reports, including teacher's comments, this fall after job action last spring had teachers withholding final comments on year-end report cards.

The Waterloo Region District School Board still issued final report cards this summer after spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to contract out the inputting of final marks.

"We have specifically agreed that the full progress reports — including comments — will be prepared for all the elementary students in the English public system" and go out by Dec. 11, said Sandals, at a Monday press conference.

"I know that parents are very anxious to get that information."

The public board announced last week fall reports wouldn't be going out at the end of the month as scheduled because of the strike action, and the province promised sanctions starting Nov. 1.

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The uptown core is losing one of its most recognizable businesses as John Hatashita has decided to close Hatashita Diamond Centre after 55 years. Hatashita and his wife, Joan, stand inside the shop with a photo from their honeymoon in Japan from 1959, the year before they opened.

JAMES JACKSON PHOTO

Thanks for the memories Hatashita wraps up a remarkable career

JAMES JACKSON
Chronicle Staff

After 55 years of helping to make life-long memories for customers, Hatashita Diamond Centre near the heart of uptown Waterloo is closing its doors.

Owner John Hatashita, 84, said one of the highlights of his career has been helping to make engagements, weddings and other milestone events as special as he could.

"It's a lot of fun," he said Monday afternoon, seated in the showroom of the store at 1 King St. N., at the corner of Erb Street West. "You're sharing the happiest time of their lives and trying to make them happier."

But business wasn't always in Hatashita's blood.

Born in British Columbia the son of Japanese migrants, Hatashita has devoted his life to sending money overseas for missionary projects — an act he hopes will help heal the

wounds inflicted by his parents' homeland aggression leading up to and including the Second World War, when Japan aligned itself with the Nazi regime.

"My ancestral country did a lot of bad things. I wanted to do some good to counter-balance that," said Hatashita, whose parents came to Canada in 1905.

Hatashita originally wanted to become a pastor.

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CITY LIFE

Grandpa running across Canada for family/Page 14



BUSINESS

Dana Shortt Gourmet and Gifts completes rebranding/Page 21



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