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Elmira District Secondary School staff joined in a province-wide strike by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation on Wednesday, which saw public schools in the region close their doors. [STEVE KANNON]

## Teachers hit the picket lines

WRDSB teachers and support staff were on strike Wednesday to protest provincial cuts, planned changes to education

BY STEVE KANNON  
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High school teachers and support staff at schools across the Waterloo Region District School Board were on the picket lines Wednesday, protesting the provincial government's cuts to education funding.

Members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF), which includes support staff such as secretaries and custodians in all WRDSB schools, were out by the hundreds in front of Elmira District Secondary School and Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Mike Harris' Elmira office.

Education workers began a work-to-rule campaign last week, slowing down some administrative functions to send a message to the board and, ultimately, the province. That escalated to a walkout on Wednesday morning that closed the schools.

"All of our teachers are on the line today," said EDSS teacher

DJ Carroll, who was acting strike captain out in front of the high school on Wednesday morning. "We want everybody to realize that there are a lot of negative changes coming down from the ministry."

He pointed to larger class sizes, mandatory e-learning and cuts to special-needs programs as areas

of concern for the union.

"The mood today is really positive," he said on the picket line, adding that knowing they're doing the right thing made it easier to deal with the situation. "We have lots of support from people driving by, waves and honking. People have been bringing coffee,

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