

Center staffers may reject tentative pact

A tentative agreement reached last month between the Carey administration and a union representing 100,000 state employees may be in trouble.

Employees at the Staten Island Developmental Center overwhelmingly voted to oppose ratification during an informal vote last week. A formal vote is scheduled April 23.

"The membership indicated they were unhappy with several parts of the proposed contract and would vote it down," said Felton King, president of the center's chapter of the Civil Service Employees Association.

King said members were unhappy about plans to defer part of a promised 7 percent increase in 1980 until the 1981 fiscal year. In addition, King said many of his 3,000 members are opposed to a new merit system that would provide \$300 bonuses to state workers doing exceptional work.

"They feel that it would pit state worker against state worker," King said.

Complicating the vote is a recent court decision giving the Public Employee Federation (PEF) negotiating rights for 45,000 state professional and technical workers. The union is now beginning negotiations with the state and some CSEA leaders believe no contract will be approved until members can see what the PEF wins for its members.

If the contract is turned down, King said he will call for an immediate resumption of negotiations.

If such negotiations fail, a new agreement between the state and CSEA calls for binding arbitration. But King said he would not be compelled to follow a CSEA promise not to strike.

"If the recommendations of an arbitrator were not acceptable to the membership, I would not hesitate to lead my members in a strike," he said.