

Dewhurst says tax deal close

Share-the-wealth
continues to be sticking
point with negotiators

Associated Press

AUSTIN — State lawmakers inched closer Saturday to reaching a deal on two parts of a school funding package that brought them back to the Capitol for a 30-day special legislative session.

Though no definite agreements were reached Saturday, leaders said they had agreed on a teacher pay raise and were discussing raising the homestead exemption by \$7,500 for Texas homeowners.

Negotiators were stumped, however, on the issue of recapture, which is the term for money that

CONTINUED ON
NEXT PAGE

cont. from "Dewhurst"...

property wealthy districts give back to the state to redistribute to poorer districts. The recapture element gave the system its nickname, Robin Hood.

The negotiating committee, charged with finding a compromise on a bill that proposes new education programs, met behind closed doors but broke up for the day late Saturday afternoon.

"The truth is, we're real close," said Republican Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, who presides over the Senate. "I think we're down to just one or two issues, the most important one being recapture."

The special session ends Wednesday and lawmakers are under pressure to reach an agreement to meet legislative timetables this weekend. They would need to have both compromise bills available for consideration by the full chambers on Monday or Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the Texas Supreme Court is considering an appeal of a previous court ruling that declared the current school financing system unconstitutional.