

## OSU survey team reports:

# Changes in Dover High principalship has created leadership void

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the sixth in a series of articles detailing the findings of an Ohio State University survey team which led it to the conclusion that the Dover and New Philadelphia school districts should merge.)

The survey team found that the administrative organization for the Dover school district is typical of many districts comparable in size across the state and nation.

The district is large enough to have schools of adequate size and to support a significant central administrative organization. It is too small, however, to em-

ploy many of the educational specialists who could benefit the district.

Survey team members noted the superintendent's interest and expertise extend to all areas of the school system — administrative, financial and curricular — and that these tasks have been performed extremely well by the incumbent (former superintendent Emmet Riley).

The assistant to the superintendent performs a multitude of tasks and the position has both staff and line functions, while the director of curriculum is responsible for program devel-

opment, kindergarten through grade 12.

In looking at building-level administrative personnel, the survey team pointed out that the senior high principalship in Dover has experienced many personnel changes within recent years, thus creating a leadership void for program direction and development.

"The presence of two administrators in one building and the problems that result from shared facilities creates an unsatisfactory condition," the survey team pointed out. "Administrative philosophies and styles tend to conflict because of the

program needs of the two different age groups.

"A strong feeling of identity is not present within the units, particularly within the junior high school. Teachers who work in both units are subject to different expectations.

"The program is very traditional, emphasizing college preparation. Although innovative practices are being discussed, changes are very slow to occur.

Survey team members observed elementary principals are concerned and active in educational leadership and educational improvement. However, the principals need addi-

tional professional support to release them, for more time for program improvements.

In looking at the mechanisms for decision-making, the survey team explained that the board of education has provided a handbook of policies for the use of school system personnel in the performance of their duties. The handbook was described as very comprehensive, but the team said policies should be separated and clarified to distinguish them from administrative procedures.

"There is evidence that administrators have not been involved in many of the decisions

that affect the operation of individual schools," the survey team found.

"Principals are frequently not involved in the selection of teachers who will be assigned to their buildings, although they indicate that the selection of teachers is a major decision of the school.

"Principals are not involved in the budgeting process and most do not understand it well or know how decisions are made. Many of the principals were not interested, preferring to concentrate on program."

There is evidence of administrative teamwork and educational leadership at the ele-

mentary level where principals have developed a team relationship. This has led to them working effectively together and with the central administration on program development.

"Teamwork and leadership in program development are not as evident at the secondary school level," according to the survey team.

"Both the physical and administrative arrangements mitigate against developing a good junior high and senior high program in the same building. No secondary school administrator devotes more than a small amount of time to developing the educational program."

"In summary, the adminis-

trative organization of the Dover schools is not unusual for a district of this size. Central office personnel perform multiple functions ordinarily performed by a larger number of specialized personnel in larger districts. Central office functions are being performed well, however.

"Educational program development is very uneven. The elementary school program has made excellent progress. The secondary program is doing little more than maintaining the status quo.

(NEXT: A look at New Philadelphia school district's administrative structure and operation.)