

Dover grade schools reorganization OK'd

By SANDY STEWART

The reorganization of the Dover elementary schools — to better equalize enrollment, to improve educational programs and to reduce operating costs — was approved unanimously by the board of education Monday night.

In September South, East and Dover Avenue elementaries will be primary schools for kindergarten through 4th grade students, while Park Elementary will be an intermediate school for all 5th and 6th grade students in the district. The plan was recommended by Supt. Bill Kinneer.

The board vote came after a last-ditch effort by members of the Committee of Concerned Parents to present an acceptable alternative to the reorganization.

Nearly 100 people, meeting in the high school cafeteria, heard the proposal, presented by Sandy Korn. The group's plan would not change the present elementary structure, would eliminate any additional busing and would make only one change in present busing routes — the Rt. 39 and Dover Township Rds. 367, 377, 374, 375 and 211 route. Those students would attend South school instead of Park school.

"THIS INVOLVES 50 students and leaves no split classes in either of those buildings, and two teaching positions

can be eliminated here also," Mrs. Korn explained. "Two teachers (one from each school) also can be dropped from East and Dover Avenue schools, leaving only one split class between those two buildings. No changing of school areas would be needed here. If only three teachers would be eliminated there would be no split classes in any building."

Mrs. Korn explained there was no guarantee that the plan, which she said was given to board members earlier in the day, would present any long-range solutions to the district's decreasing and shifting enrollment problems or to its financial problems.

She urged board members to delay making a decision on the reorganization for a few days until they could thoroughly study the proposal. Board member Jim Zifer, before the board approved the reorganization, explained to Mrs. Korn that the committee's plan was very similar to one previously studied by the board.

IN ADDITION to the committee's proposal, Jim Gee, a committee member, presented petitions signed by 1262 Dover residents opposed to the reorganization. One set of petitions with 798 signatures listed 16 disadvantages of the reorganization, including a short academic day but a longer school day because of busing, unsafe stairs at Do-

ver Avenue for 1st and 2nd graders, parental attitude on future bond issues, inconvenience for parents, playground changes and materials transfer.

A second set, signed by 464, was identical to the first with the exception that it called for a reduction of cost in operating the high school by eliminating "unnecessary courses."

Board member Isabel Moore, speaking of Kinneer's recommendation, said: "I support this because it is the most educationally sound of all the plans presented. We have spent many hours in thought, listened to many objections and plans, but throughout we have tried to keep the education of the children — not busing or parents — our foremost concern."

One resident, Florence Stofan, spoke in favor of the reorganization, explaining she felt it would be very beneficial to students to have the 5th and 6th grades housed in one school. She asked parents to consider their children's welfare first in making a judgment on the reorganization.