

less layers between the schools and the minister...we now have two superintendents looking after four schools as part of the government initiative to simplify government operations and have less hierarchy," Bartu said.

Bartu, who lives in Burlington, will spend two days every week at Sir James Whitney and two days at the London school. And every Wednesday he'll be in Toronto to meet with the provincial schools team as it continues to study the future of the specialized provincial schools.

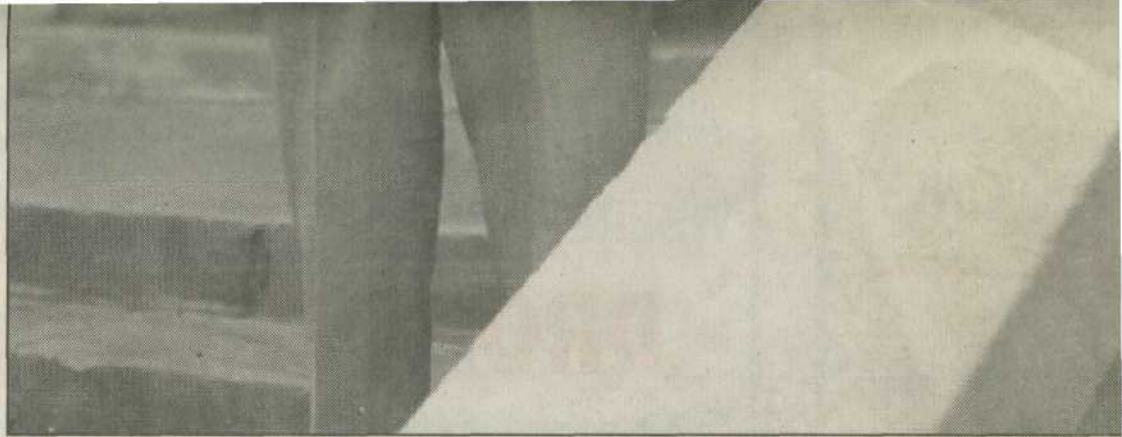
The Whitney superintendent also said he doesn't see the ministry's re-organization of provincial schools "as a kind of hidden agenda where there's going to be precipitative action as for the future of Sir James Whitney. The school is here to stay as far as I'm concerned."

Susan Young welcomes Bartu's appointment as superintendent. Young, who's on the superintendent's advisory council and the provincial stakeholders committee, said Bartu's appointment is not seen, by parents, as a "negative or political decision" to some day close Whitney.

"I don't believe it's a political ploy to have Sir James Whitney closed. I don't see him as being used that way."

A meeting of parents was held recently and the consensus, noted Young, was that "we feel he's here not as a part-time superintendent but as a person responsible to make bottom line decisions."

For his part, Bartu said he's looking forward to his years at Whitney.



Intelligencer photo by Henry Bury

**New Sir James Whitney superintendent Paul Bartu will spend two days each week in Belleville as part of his duties at the local school for the deaf.**

"There's a real effort to look forward, not back, in terms of meeting the needs of students and planning this for the future...there are over 100 students here and they need to have their educational needs met. I have to ensure the viability of programs."

Bartu said he doesn't see any major changes for the Dundas Street school.

The biggest effort, he noted, will be to enhance the "signing environment" at the school, now that American Sign Language has been recognized as the official language of instruction for deaf students.

Bartu acknowledged there are "challenges and frustrations ahead" at the Sir James Whitney.

"We do, however, have the commitment of staff members and strong links with parents which will enable us to meet these challenges."

### Fast facts...Paul Bartu

— Paul Bartu, 46, is the new superintendent of Sir James Whitney School for the deaf.

— He will also continue to be superintendent of E.C. Drury School for the deaf in Milton — a position he's been in since 1985. He'll spend two days a week at each provincial school.

— Bartu taught public school in Peel County for three years.

— In 1972-73 he came to Sir James Whitney to train as a teacher of the deaf.

— From 1973 until 1993, he worked at the Milton school for the deaf as teacher, elementary principal, resource services program director and, since 1985, as superintendent.

— Bartu's parents, Nick and Kathleen, attended Sir James Whitney for a decade in the 1930s.

— His mother's parents both attended Whitney in the late 1800's and early 1900s.

— Bartu lives in Burlington. He and his wife Nancy have two children.

— Bartu succeeds Guy Buller as Whitney's superintendent.

## Bartu part of Provincial Schools team

By Henry Bury

The Intelligencer

Sir James Whitney's new superintendent will have a say on the future of provincial schools for the deaf and blind — including his own.

Paul Bartu, who's been at Whitney since Sept. 1, is a member of the Provincial Schools team that's now studying the fate of eight provincial and demonstration schools.

(He's also superintendent of the provincial school for the deaf in Milton).

The team, he said this week, will release an options paper in early November detailing alternatives to the schools' current operations.

"The options paper may not deal necessarily with the closing

of schools," Bartu said. "It's to deal with equity, accessibility and accountability in the programs for all our students."

The review team, which began discussions this past summer, is looking at the eight provincial schools — Sir James Whitney and the Sagonaska demonstration school for learning disabled; the E.C. Drury School for the deaf in Milton and its demonstration school for learning disabled, Trillium; the Robarts School for the deaf in London and its demonstration school for learning disabled; the W.R. MacDonald School for the blind in Brantford; and the Francophone school for the deaf and blind in Ottawa.

Those eight schools have a total student population of 500 —

down from 1,000 over the past several years.

Sir James Whitney has 126 kindergarten to Grade 13 students while Sagonaska has 30; the Milton school has 269 students and another 35 in its demonstration school.

Last year, the education ministry issued a "future directions" paper suggesting the three provincial schools for the deaf be consolidated into one large operation and, possibly, two smaller satellite campuses.

The government's discussion paper fuelled concerns from local parents, students and staff who wondered about the future of Sir James Whitney.

Bartu stressed the discussion paper "is no longer being used"

by the review team in its study of provincial schools.

"The provincial schools team was created to deal with the future of schools. We're to develop options which will ensure that there's an excellent quality of programs, stable management and governance of the programs in our eight schools," Bartu said.

The review team's options paper will be distributed in early November to parents, staff and students at all eight schools.

"After that, there will be a series of forums and meetings at each of the schools to get feedback from the stakeholders' groups," noted Bartu.

When that's completed, the review team will prepare its final report to Education Minister David Cooke for future action.