

Temporary home found for new school

By Abbe Smith

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NEW HAVEN — The opening of New Haven's future Engineering and Science University Magnet School is one step closer to reality after the Board of Education approved a lease agreement for a temporary home for the new school.

Starting this fall, the magnet school will be located for one year in a school building owned by St. Louis Roman Catholic Church at 89 Bull Hill Lane, West Haven.

The school, a collaborative effort between the New Haven district and the University of New Haven, will eventually be built on land adjacent to the UNH campus. Though it will include just a sixth-grade class in its first year, the magnet school eventually will accommodate grades 6 through 12.

"The importance of the school is that Connecticut, like most other states, is facing a very serious shortage of engineers and scientists. Our goal in establishing this school with the city of New Haven is to generate interest in engineering and science and to train young people to be successful in those fields," UNH President Steven Kaplan said. So far, the school has received 154 applications from New Haven and nine other districts

for 88 seats in the class. Kaplan said the school eventually will house about 528 students when the new building is completed, hopefully by fall 2011.

Construction costs for the new school are expected to reach \$59 million, he said. New Haven is covering 5 percent of the cost with the rest coming from state funding. The school starts with sixth grade to ensure students have the ability to master advanced math classes in high school.

"This is one of the best things that happened to UNH in a long time," Kaplan said.

He added that New Haven is recruiting teachers on a national level for the school.

Marjorie Edmonds-Lloyd, the start-up facilitator for the magnet school, said after the first year at the St. Louis Church building, the school will move back to New Haven and be held at former St. Stanislaus School on State Street, the site of the temporary Hooker Middle School. She said the magnet school will be housed there for two years and then move into its permanent home next to UNH.

Edmonds-Lloyd said the new school is meant to "funnel students into UNH's engineering programs or engineering programs throughout the country."

She added that the school will include a "rigorous" preparatory element to prepare students for advanced math and science.

She said the school is a unique addition to the district's existing array of magnet schools.

"With all of their magnet themes, this is the first one that really focuses on the engineering component," she said.

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