

St. Thomas More Academy to relocate to rented site

By Elizabeth Lowe

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St. Thomas More Academy in Buckeystown expects to open for the 2012-2013 school year in a former school building in Middletown after plans for relocating to another location fell through.

The Frederick County school will open its doors for the 2012-2013 school year at the former Middletown Primary School Sept. 4, one week after Archdiocese of Baltimore schools open, said Margaret Lyburn, principal of St. Thomas More Academy (STMA).

In March, STMA announced plans to move down the road to the site of Alexander's, formerly known as the Catoctin Inn and Conference Center. The school planned to begin the 2012-2013 school year at the Alexander's property.

According to a news release, Sandy Lankler, "owner of Alexander's and many surrounding ... properties" was to give the buildings and related property to the school.

The owner "simply changed his mind," Lyburn said.

"We were finding ourselves in the most unusual position in early June," Lyburn said. "We feel very blessed that God has shown us a new way and we are very, very excited to get started."

No major renovations are needed at the new location, Lyburn said, only cosmetic changes that include new carpet and paint.

The building has been vacant for about a year, Lyburn said.

STMA, which serves pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, will rent the former Middletown Primary School for \$5.50 per square foot. Negotiations continue to purchase the property, Lyburn said. The school building is 15,700 square feet and STMA will pay \$86,350 over the year lease.

The school's Buckeystown location is 10,000 square feet, Lyburn said.

The March announcement came three months after St. John's Catholic Prep in Frederick announced it will move to the campus of STMA for the 2012-2013 school year.

STMA and St. John's Catholic Prep go to settlement this week, Lyburn said. The Frederick school expects to own the Buckeystown property by the end of the week, Lyburn said.

St. John's Catholic Prep now plans to move to the campus of St. Thomas More Academy in December, said Gordon Oliver, president of the Frederick school.

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