

LOCAL & STATE

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Church to buy Holmes' gym

Shiloh Baptist Church may use part of the center as a classroom for suspended kids.

By CHRISTOPHER KEOUGH
The Express-Times

EASTON — When a young parishioner told Shiloh Baptist Church Pastor Fred Davis he was going to serve his 10-day suspension from school hanging out at McDonald's, Davis decided there had to be a better place for idle youngsters to go.

Once the church buys the original Larry Holmes Training Center, which could happen Tuesday, Davis says there will be an alternative to running the streets, where he sees endless

temptations to get into trouble.

Davis wants to create an alternative classroom, with help from the Easton Area School District. Alternative classes would keep suspended students off the streets and provide them with continued instruction and supervised recreation.

"The youngsters would be able to come to the building and get the same instruction they would have had they not been suspended," Davis said. "In fact, the instruction would be better because there would only be four or five in the classroom."

Davis said Thursday he and Holmes have shaken hands and signed an agreement to turn the Canal Street building over to the church — Holmes has a second center, also on Canal Street.

Davis said the deal will be final on Tuesday. Holmes could not be reached for comment.

Davis said he has more plans for the building, but wants to talk about them after he closes on the property.

The Easton Area School Board still has to sign off on the idea because Davis said he would like to get a certified teacher, instructional materials and an aide for the classroom.

School board President Robert Litz said he and Superinten-

dent Joseph Piazza have talked about the idea, but the whole board has not yet discussed it yet.

"On the surface it sounds like it could be a workable thing," Litz said Thursday. He said the board will take up the matter in the near future.

If the plan works out, Davis said suspended students would be referred to the church by the school principal. Davis said he would in turn call the students' parents and tell them about the program. The decision on whether the student will attend the program is up to the student's family, Davis said.

The church also is looking into purchasing a bus to provide

transportation for students participating in the program, Davis said.

The idea has been knocking around in Davis' head for about 10 years, the pastor said.

When he approached Holmes about possibly buying the center three or four years ago, the church had trouble coming up with the money. Davis wouldn't say how much the church is paying for the building, but said "the church is committed to spending a few bucks."

Shiloh Baptist Church has taken on community projects before. With help from the city of Easton and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban De-



Rev. Fred Davis

... Has plans for Larry Holmes' old training center

velopment, the church in 1992 built a 58-unit, low-income housing unit for senior citizens.

Probe of county prison favored

By C.J. KARAMARGIN
The Express-Times

EASTON — Two Northampton County Prison commissioners say they welcome a probe into allegations of wrongdoing at the prison initiated last month by County Executive Bill Brackbill.

"I'm pleased the county is beginning this," said Commissioner Joseph Dell'Alba. "You can't live with this kind of cloud around."

Commissioner L. Anderson Daub agreed, saying "we've got

Sprucing up



Superintendent tells track coach rule too strict

The Wilson coach reinstates three teens booted from the team for suspensions.

By CHRISTOPHER KEOUGH
The Express-Times

WILSON BOROUGH — Wilson Area High School's first-year track coach Jeff Miller had a simple rule. Get suspended from school, get booted from the team.

But when three students fell victim to the rule earlier this year — one of them the son of a school board member — the district's first-year Superintendent

Lipari, was suspended for a day for violating the school's tobacco policy. The other two students, who have not been identified, were suspended for three days and 10 days.

When news of the athletes' banishment got back to Colarusso — via Russell Lipari — a meeting was called among Miller, Colarusso, Assistant Superintendent Mary Weiss and Athletic Director Elaine Dowd.

"It became apparent that my