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[Print this Page](#)

[←--back to story](#)

Hope House one step closer to moving

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POSTED: May 1, 2009

A move to East Campus Youth and Family Center just got closer to reality for Hope House.

On April 22, the Child and Family Services Board of Directors formally accepted a proposal to move Hope House into the building.

The building, formerly known as Alpena Community College's East Campus, was acquired in August by Word of Life Baptist Church.

The church, which only had to pay \$5,000 in legal and transferral fees for the building, offered to donate space to Child and Family Services, which would then refurbish their portion of the building for the Hope House.

CFS Executive Director Lyle Dorr said the project is expected to cost about \$1.5 million. He said there is already \$250,000 raised for the project, and some large grants are available for the project.

One grant, which Dorr said is hundreds of thousands of dollars, required CFS to use donated property.

"This gives us that major piece to the grant," he said.

If all goes well, he said renovations at the new location could begin in the winter of 2010 and be completed by the spring of 2011.

The Hope House is a place troubled teenage girls, usually from outside of Alpena County, are sent via a court order to straighten out their lives. The current facility is located on Halley Road in Alpena.

In the East Campus facility, the Hope House would expand from 13 beds to 15 beds. Dorr said that will help keep 12-13 girls in the house at all times. In the past, two or more girls could leave in a short amount of time and the house would not be near capacity.

Being able to bring in girls without having to wait for another one to leave will also be beneficial because it will give the new girls time to acclimate and get to know more mature Hope House members.

The new facility will also have an eight-bed abuse and neglect wing.

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