



THE YORK DISPATCH
York County's Afternoon Paper

YorkCounts has a home for proposed charter school

ANDREW SHAW -- *The York Dispatch*

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YorkCounts' Sue Krebs said she can hardly believe the good fortune she's seen so far in the organization's pursuit of a charter school.

They received a \$75,000 grant from York County Community Foundation to help pay for application expenses.

They've received support from Central York and York Suburban school boards.

And, in an announcement on Monday, YorkCounts has found a home for its proposed York Academy Regional Charter School.

Kinsley Construction has agreed to lease up to 40,000 square-feet of renovated space at the Smyser-Royer complex in York City. The former ironworks building is part of the Northwest Triangle redevelopment area, near Sovereign Bank Stadium at the corner of Beaver and North streets.

Timely: Krebs, co-chair of the YorkCounts committee overseeing the charter school application, said YorkCounts has been running short on time and options in finding a location.

YorkCounts, a nonprofit quality-of-life group, wants to open a K-12 charter school in York City

to help connect inner-city and suburban families, but has had trouble finding such a site within their price range.

Krebs grew up in the northwest portion of the city, and had always admired the 1860s-era Smyser-Royer building, a former ironworks factory.

"It's always been my favorite façade," she said she told Kinsley president Bob Kinsley at a recent meeting. "Without blinking an eye, he said, 'I'll give you a real good deal on that property,'" Krebs said. "That's how

quickly it happened."

The complex had already been destined for renovation as part of the \$50 million-plus overhaul of the Northwest Triangle. Including a school in the plans made sense, said all the parties involved.

Good fit: "It's a great sort of groundbreaking for the triangle," said Kevin Schreiber, York Economic Development director. The additional student foot traffic and job creation is ideal, he said, plus the schools would help highlight one of the city's "hidden gems."

"It's one of the stellar architectural gems we have in the city," Schreiber said of Smyser-Royer.

The York Academy Regional Charter School will have an International Baccalaureate program, which focus on multicultural awareness and group problem solving.

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What's next: So far, Central York and York Suburban have pledged interest, and York City will get a presentation on the school on Wednesday, Oct. 14.

The charter school application must be submitted to interested schools by Nov. 15. To get a charter approved, the applicant must have an adequate location for the school.

Charter schools are independently operated but are funded primarily by chartering schools.

Financial details of the lease were not released, but Krebs said it fits into YorkCounts' budget. Kinsley officials said the building would likely be ready in 2011.

The location in the business district also should fit into YorkCounts' goal for the charter school -- attracting inner city and suburban families.

"It's a location that would be attractive to parents of all the districts involved," Krebs said.

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