

WATSONVILLE DOWNTOWN

Charter school seeks space at Cabrillo campus

Ceiba no longer plans move to Watsonville High

By **DONNA JONES**

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WATSONVILLE — Ceiba College Preparatory Academy has shifted its plans for expansion from Watsonville High School to Cabrillo College's downtown campus.

The charter school, which has served students in sixth through eighth grade for three years in the historic Porter Building, is seeking space to add a ninth grade in the next school year.

"We're talking to Cabrillo," said Tom Brown, president of Beacon Educational Network, Ceiba's parent organization. "Nothing's signed, but we're hopeful."

Rachel Mayo, dean of Cabrillo's Watsonville campus, said the two parties are working on a lease that would allow Ceiba to use classrooms not needed during daytime hours. She declined to provide further

details in advance of a final agreement.

Ceiba leaders plan to eventually serve 550-600 students from sixth grade through 12th. The addition of a ninth grade with 50 students is a step toward that goal. The school enrolls 250 middle-school students this year, and many of the eighth-graders will be part of the first freshman class.

Ceiba had been in negotiations with Pajaro Valley Unified School District to occupy vacant portable classrooms between Blackburn Street and the Watsonville High School gym.

Brown said Cabrillo has more space — Ceiba hopes to lease four classrooms instead of three at Watsonville — and it's just a block away from the Porter Building. The proximity would facilitate interaction between middle school and high school students, a Ceiba goal.

KIDS DAY AT SHERIFF'S POSSE HOUSE



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

SANTA CRUZ — Miranda Donahue brings Bud to Kids Day at the Sheriff's Posse House on Friday, Donahue said Kids Day is the most exciting day of the year for the children.