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Site unknown; opening is planned for 2003

BYLINE: Linda Linley

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BODY:

A new Jewish community high school that will embrace all branches of Judaism will open next year in northwestern Baltimore County, according to members of the school's board of trustees.

A location has not been selected for the school, but board President Stewart Greenebaum said the logical place would be Owings Mills, the fastest-growing area with a large Jewish population. The board is seeking a permanent site on which to build and a temporary site for the first students when the school opens for the 2003-2004 academic year, he said.

The school will be named for its board chairwoman, **Shoshana S. Cardin**, a local philanthropist and advocate of Jewish education. Cardin said the coeducational school, the first of its kind in greater Baltimore, will allow students from the different Jewish traditions to intermingle and learn to respect the diversity in their religion.

"It is more than just a high school," Cardin said. "The leaders of our community will come from here and it is important that they understand the diversity in our religion."

The **Shoshana S. Cardin** Jewish Community High School of Greater Baltimore will open in 2003-2004 with one or more ninth-grade classes, with about 20 students in each, Cardin said.

The school, which will add the 10th, 11th and 12th grades in subsequent years, will include secular and Jewish studies and will offer a full curriculum, including arts, sports, culture, theater and intramural activities.

Greenebaum noted a pressing need for a high school that would combine secular and Jewish studies and welcome all branches of Judaism. He said the Cardin school will develop a curriculum that will be acceptable to all Jewish people, including the Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and Reconstructionist branches and those who are unaffiliated.

"This will be a first-class school in the next three to four years," Greenebaum said. "A quality high school is vitally important to students."

Cardin said that because the school will not follow one branch of the Jewish faith, a rabbinical council will set up principles for students and will determine the philosophy.

"There has been great interest in this community about the new school," Cardin said. "It is very encouraging."

The school's board has received about \$3 million in donations, including \$2 million from the Rosenbloom Foundation.

Greenebaum said the board hopes to find 25 to 30 acres for the campus so that the school could expand and eventually accommodate 250 to 300 students.

The board has hired a head of school to set up a curriculum and hire faculty. Lillian Howard, director of curriculum at the Jess Schwartz Jewish Community High School in Phoenix, Ariz., will assume her duties Aug. 1.

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Board member Paul Schneider, head of Krieger Schechter Day School at Chizuk Amuno Congregation, said the Cardin school will have a few teachers when it opens, but he is confident that the school will grow rapidly.

"People have been waiting years for a high school to meet the needs of the entire community," he said.

Rabbi Mark Loeb of Beth El Synagogue said there is a movement in more than a dozen cities, including Boston, Atlanta and Detroit, to create Jewish community schools.

"It's not only academics," Loeb said. "It's about looking for an environment to learn effectively, where there is a solid religious foundation to create a positive religious experience."