

'Last chance' schools to merge

Village students to attend Frontier

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A local "last chance" school will mesh with a former Christian alternative school next fall.

On Monday night, the Poudre School District Board of Education unanimously approved closing its alternative junior/senior high school, the Village School, 2540 LaPorte Ave., in favor of sending students to Frontier School.

Both schools have a similar "last chance" approach. Students at each often have had difficulties at traditional schools; many at the Village School are about to be or have been expelled.

Frontier will discontinue its religious curriculum in favor of a secular program, said Steve Bolton, co-founder of the nonprofit at-risk youth organization Wingshadow, which opened Frontier.

Frontier is moving from First Christian Church to 1225 Redwood St. in early 2003. The school will grow from 65 students to approximate-

ly 110 students next year, including the 25 to 50 students who attend the Village School annually.

Now, district and Frontier officials will look at blending the two schools, Bolton said. Frontier is a high school, but the Village School has junior and senior high students.

But the transition is expected to go well, said Bolton, adding that the combination of programs is a dream come true for Wingshadow. "We're excited beyond words," he said of the board's approval.

Board officials echoed those sentiments.

With budget cuts looming, combining programs with another agency is a great opportunity, board President Steve Fobes said.

Due to state budget cuts, the Village School is losing \$375,000 from its annual budget of \$558,000, but PSD can send Village students to Frontier for about \$150,000 a year.

"It's nice to have a viable alternative," Fobes said.