



News

Local ethanol producer chips in to assist M-G Schools

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Madison-Grant United School Corp. will have \$10,000 more than it planned this year because of a recent donation from Central Indiana Ethanol.

The Fairmount-based school system is the second in Grant County to receive a sizeable donation from the ethanol producer. CIE donated \$110,000 to Oak Hill United School Corp. in September. The company is within Oak Hill's taxing district.

"We are both flattered and grateful," Madison-Grant Superintendent John Trout said.

Trout said administrators and board members aren't sure what the money will be used for yet, but he anticipates using it for one-time expenses. He said it could be used to enhance academics or security.

"There are a lot of different things we're going to look at," he said.

Gary Drook, chief executive officer of CIE, said Madison-Grant farmers have supported the company from its inception and CIE wanted to give back.

"We get a lot of corn from the Madison-Grant area," Drook said. " ... We thought that was the next logical place for us to lend some support."

Oak Hill already has put CIE's donation to use, Superintendent Joel Martin said. Money went toward resurfacing the track and installing a new phone system at the junior/senior high school and administrative offices. Some cash was used to pay for a new electronic sign in front of the junior/senior high school, though some money for that project came from fundraising by the area's Lions Club.

Martin said Oak Hill is considering using some of the CIE money to purchase benches, trash cans and other miscellaneous items to finish the high school renovation project. Oak Hill officials are also considering creating a fine arts display area in the high school with the money.

Oak Hill's been happy to have the donation, Martin said. "We would have struggled to have made these things happen without their money."

Drook said schools are struggling just as business and residents are having financial difficulties.

"We're trying to do what little bit we can to get our name out in the community and support those things that eventually end up supporting us," he said.

Many CIE employees attended local schools, Drook said, and the company wants an educated work force.