

Oakwood school's summer projects completed

By Kevin Philo

Oakwood Schools Treasurer

The Oakwood Schools recently completed major summer projects in preparation for the opening of school on Aug. 20th. These improvements were completed in a timely manner and under budget with some projects more typically contracted out completed by school employees resulting in cost savings for the Oakwood taxpayers. Projects included new bleachers at the high school stadium, roof replacements at the high school and Smith Elementary, asphalt work at all of the buildings, renovation of a storage area into a classroom at Harman Elementary, installation of additional security cameras at the high school, and electrical upgrades at the junior high school. Three new Chevrolet Suburbans were also purchased.

The most recognizable upgrade was the replacement of the visitor football, softball, and baseball bleachers at the high school stadium, which was completed within budget. The new football visitor bleachers can seat 1,000, are handicapped accessible, and cost \$172,000 to complete. These bleachers were replaced because of their age and for safety reasons. The cost of the new baseball and softball bleachers was \$28,000, which was generously donated by the Oakwood Athletic Boosters. This

project included an improvement to our baseball facility with the installation of a new (and higher!) center-field fence.

The fact that stadium renovations were completed on time and within budget is a direct result of several district partnerships of which we are very appreciative. Members of our district Facilities Committee, comprised of community volunteers, took field trips to other school sites, reviewed design components, and helped monitor progress during construction. Local architects Mark Wiseman and Tom Thickett of Levin and Porter assisted with the project. The Oakwood Athletic Boosters helped to complete the bleacher projects by funding 100 percent of the new baseball and softball bleachers.

Two school roofs were replaced this summer – one over the Smith gymnasium and the other over the middle wing of the high school.



School board member and Facilities Committee Board Liaison Sam Davis (center) thanks Diane Scott, 2008-09 Oakwood Athletic Booster president (left) and Lisa Garner, 2007-08 Oakwood Athletic Booster president (right) for the donation of new baseball and softball bleachers.

These roofs were completed on time and under budget at a cost of \$172,700 for both. All roofs on all buildings were inspected and evaluated in accordance with a new state law and deficiencies were corrected. Permanent improvement levy funds were used for both the roofing and the bleacher projects.

Asphalt work was completed at Harman, Smith, and Lange elementaries, but instead of contracting

with an outside company to do the work, the Oakwood Schools utilized summer workers (current and former students hired by the district) to complete the jobs at a substantial cost savings to the district. These workers were trained and supervised by school staff and worked very hard in the hot summer sun to complete this work. Building custodians restriped the necessary lines.

Harman Elementary custodians also renovated a previous storage space into a very nice instructional space for students. Custodians, who are also the district's trained maintenance staff, completed additional electrical upgrades at the Junior High at a cost less than outside contractors. In addition, every classroom and space throughout the district was thoroughly cleaned and disinfected during the summer, with carpets

cleaned, desks scrubbed, etc. to make Oakwood classrooms the cleanest possible.

For additional safety and security reasons, twelve new video security cameras were installed at the high school in the hallways adjacent to the "Pit" (East gymnasium). Local contractor Digital Video Security was used for that project. These cameras are used to monitor hallway activity twenty-four hours a day and have proven to be a useful component of our security plan.

After a competitive bidding process, we purchased three 2008 Chevrolet Suburbans from White-Allen Chevrolet. The state required bidding process ensured the lowest possible price and our new vehicles were purchased at 21 percent below list price. These vehicles, delivered in mid August, are now in use and replaced 1993 models that were at the end of their useful life (averaging 172,000 miles each).

In conclusion, the major summer building projects for the Oakwood Schools were completed in a timely manner and under budget resulting in cost savings for the taxpayers. It is challenging to maintain buildings that range in age from 50 to 100 years. We are committed to meeting our community's expectation that we have facilities that support the important work of our teachers, coaches, and students and to do so in the most cost effective manner.

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