



# Growing Mangrove Propagules at Muller Magnet

First grade students Nico and Madelaine from Mrs. Sipe's class

## Where it begins

Have you ever heard of mangrove propagules? Well, the students at Muller Magnet have. They are the site of the pilot project for the Nurseries for Resilient Communities campaign with the Sierra Club Florida Chapter. I had the privilege of joining in on the planting of around 100 propagules at Muller, and the collaborative effort and all around joy was inspiring.

Denise Dookeran knows just how important mangroves are. Her research and planning on this project led the administration at Muller to lead the way with this project at their school. Sarah Driggers, the magnet lead teacher at Muller Magnet in Tampa, has taken the initiative and turned it into hands-on learning for her students.



Kindergarten students from Mrs. Justin's class work together with 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from Mrs. Robbins' class to mix soil and sand to fill bags for propagules.



From left to right. Michelle Turcios, Denise Dookeran, Meredith Hungerford, Callie Getchel, Sarah Driggers, Roger Getchel, M. Vasquez

## Continued

When it came time to plant, Denise, Sarah, and I worked alongside students and PTA members who jumped in to mix soil, combine sand, and plant the propagules. The students and parents were so excited and can't wait to watch them grow.

You might be wondering how Muller plans to care for these propagules. Sarah Driggers hopes that teachers "take their classes out to the mangrove nursery area to observe, tend to, and learn about the mangrove's impact on Florida's environment." She added, "I will also have a small gardening group that will meet with me for 'Mangrove Mondays' every Monday morning so we can tend to the mangrove nursery throughout the school year!"

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