



NEWS RELEASE

News from Orange County Public Schools

Wekiva High School awarded for cutting edge technology in Apopka

Wells Fargo will present the school with a big check for Aquaponics system

Oct. 28, 2016 – Orange County Public Schools is celebrating the announcement of a \$50,000 grant that has been awarded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Wells Fargo to OCPS in support of the Aquaponics STEM Learning project at Wekiva High School. The Wells Fargo Environmental Solutions for Communities grant is funding an expansion of the school's aquaponics project, enhancing their agriscience magnet program and experiential learning for students in STEM classes.

The media is invited to a check presentation and demonstration of the unique aquaponics system at Wekiva High School, 2501 N. Hiawassee Road, Apopka, FL 32703 Monday, Oct. 31, 2016 at 8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. in the media center and garden.

Through the grant, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Wells Fargo have expressed their support of the expansion plans that have been laid out through 2018. The initiative will also provide professional development for teachers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through aquaponics, real-world STEM learning opportunities for students, community service (donations to the Second Harvest Food Bank Apopka food pantries), and parent and community engagement. The result will be healthy and efficient food production shared within the community, water conservation, and, ultimately, enhanced teaching and student learning through aquaponics.

There are many key partners and participants, including: Apopka Aquaponic Farms, LLC, Owner Huy Tran, University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Professor Frank Chapman, Ph.D., Dr. James Rakocy, the world-renowned "Father of Aquaponics," Dr. Wilson Lennard of the Aquaponics Doctors, Dr. Fred Petitt, Agriculture and Water Sciences Director for Walt Disney World, and the St. John's Water Management System.

About Orange County Public Schools

Orange County Public Schools is the 9th-largest school district in the nation and the fourth-largest in Florida. Close to 203,000 students are enrolled. Currently, there are more than 242 school sites including alternative centers and charter schools. OCPS is the second-largest employer in Orange County, Florida with more than 22,000 full- and part-time employees. The district was the recipient of the 2014 Broad Prize for Urban Education, the largest education award in the country. The district also received the Governor's Sterling Award in 2014 and 2015. It is the highest award an organization can receive for business performance excellence in Florida.

About Wells Fargo

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(For more information, please contact Media Relations at 407.317.3458)

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