

Nova elementary to go native — with landscaping

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Nova Blanche Forman Elementary School received a \$5,000 Christmas present last week: lots and lots and lots of plants.

The school at 3521 Davie Rd. is one of the most recent beneficiaries of county matching funds for landscape improvements.

The Broward Beautiful grant matched \$5,000 put up by the Blanche Forman PTA. By mid-January, the school will spend the other \$5,000 on new benches in front of the school and to replace a rotted wooden school sign.

"We just wanted to beautify the school," said Mariana Yi, a PTA parent from Davie.

The PTA commissioned Botanical Visions of Coconut Creek to help them identify and plant native Florida foliage. The Botanical Visions staff also will teach students about habitat loss and the importance of native species in Florida.

On Monday, about 20 students and PTA volunteers broke ground and spent part of their first day of winter break yanking out old tree roots and overturning dirt to make way for the new plants.

Looking out at the trees and plants already in the area, Bill Reeves of Botanical Visions stressed how important it is that the landscaping include native plants. Although they can be beautiful, many non-native plants do not have natural predators in the area and they do not attract native animal life, he said.

"The plants we're planting will attract hummingbirds and butterflies," Reeves said.

In his selection for the school, Reeves included beautyberry, firebush and necklace pod. The main walkway of the school will be framed by two palms.

While the PTA's goal is to beautify the campus and educate students about Florida flora, students simply enjoyed planting a garden with friends.



CHRIS SINGER/FOR THE HERALD

DIG IT! Children and parents spent part of Monday digging up old vegetation at Nova Blanche Forman Elementary in Davie to make way for new landscaping.