

Dear Consul General Toko,

The eighth grade class at the Evangelische Gesamtschule "Philipp Melanchthon" would like to propose an Earth Day Project to help combat Climate Change.

*We, the class 8a, believe that every one of us plays a vital role in preserving the world we live in. We have developed a project to help our community and our environment and would like to team up with a school in the United States who would be interested in joining our campaign and multiplying our impact. Our concept starts at our front door and reaches into our community. Every day, plastic shopping bags and various plastic packaging gets blown into our school yard. We have determined to clean this up and protect the wildlife in the area from the dangers of this plastic trash. But that will not solve the problem, it will simply clean it up our little corner. So, we brainstormed about how we could get to the root of the matter.*

*If fewer plastic shopping bags are used, there would be fewer bags to be blown into our schoolyard and fewer plastic bags in the landfill. In order to encourage the use of washable fabric shopping bags, we have a two-step plan. In the first phase, we will produce informative flyers for our community and videos for our website. Phase two will begin with the production of fabric shopping bags. We will sew our own environmentally friendly totes and offer them for sale in our neighborhood. This will allow our neighbors to make an informed decision to take an active role in protecting the environment in our neighborhood. Shopping bag awareness however is simply the beginning of a much bigger idea.*

*With the money earned from our shopping tote sales, we want to pay it forward. Keeping plastics out of our lawns and dumpsters helps to keep the situation from getting worse, but we asked ourselves how we could go a step further and actually make an improvement. We will be growing flowers and plants and re-homing them in the area. Many of our elderly neighbors would gladly accept a flower bed makeover. By filling our area with new plants and flowers, we can improve the local environment and provide for local bees and beekeepers as well.*

*This still only addresses the issue locally. But what if we found partner schools who would join our campaign? Could we form a network of environmentally friendly students who could work together to make a global impact? Honestly, we don't know, but we are willing to try.*

Attached, please find pictures from the first spring flowers that we have planted and the results of our first clean-up campaigns from the end of March and the beginning of April.

Kind regards,

Michelle Sudbrock

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