

Dalian American International School

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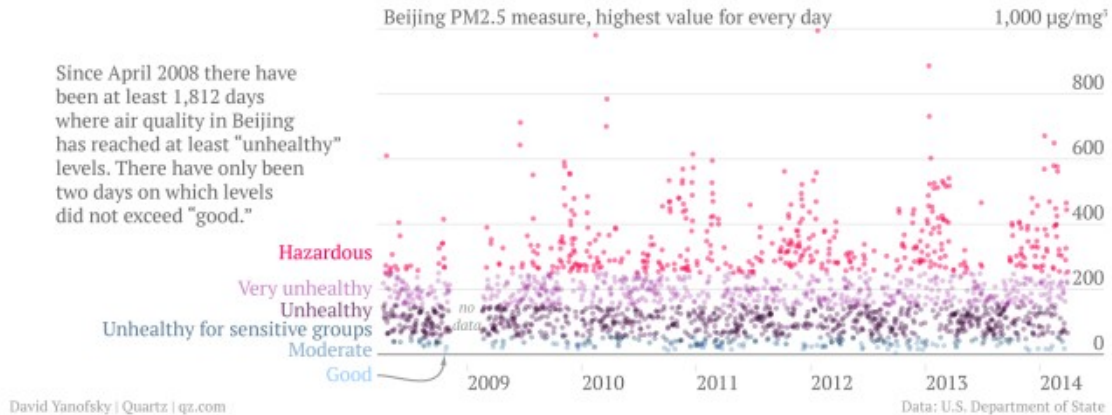
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A. Background

A. After having lived in China for two years, I noticed that the Air quality has gotten worse every year. This trend is shown in the graph below which shows the pollution measurements of Beijing as calculated by the American Embassy.



B. Situation in China

B. Lily Kou, in her article called *Six years of Beijing air pollution summed up in one scary chart* mentions that the average pollution indexes in Beijing since 2008 have been 6 times what the US Environmental Protection Agency deems safe. This is the cause of numerous chronic respiratory problems, and lung cancer. Between 2002 and 2011 lung cancer patients doubled. (Moore) In the MIT Joint Program on Science and Policy of Global Change, Martus, Nam, Selin, Lamsal, Reilly, and Paltsev mention that the elevated levels of urban air pollution in China results in substantial adverse health impacts. People die prematurely or have a poor quality of life due to air pollution. The article *China's "Airpocalypse" kills 350,000 to 500,000 each year* states the following:

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"Studies by the World Bank, WHO, and the Chinese Academy for Environmental Planning on the effect of air pollution on health concluded that between 350 000 and 500000 people die prematurely each year as a result of outdoor air pollution in China"

(Moore)

Poor air quality has harmful effects on children and it warrants considerable public health attention in China. (Xiao-ming)

C. Basic Plan

C. These facts and our own experience with increased pollution rates led a group of students in my environmental studies class to seek out ways to clean up the air quality in our school. Our plan is inspired by a Ted-talk called "How to grow fresh Air," in which Kamal Meattal describes an easy way of improving air quality inside buildings. The purpose of the project is to create a better learning environment for the students, by minimizing the CO₂ in the air. In the Ted-talk ,that inspired us, Kamal Meattle says that research concluded that by adding pollution eating plants to his company that incidences of eye irritation was reduced by 52% , respiratory problems were reduced by 34%, headaches by 24% , lung impairments by 12% and incidences of asthma by 9%. His company was voted as the healthiest building in New Delhi, India (Meattal). We wanted to stuff our school with these plants and wanted to get the word out how important fresh air was to our education and health. We had no funds to get these plants in our school so we implemented a project to raise money to buy plants, and at the same time people would become aware of how to clean up their air.

In our school I had multiple opportunities in which I could tell our community about this project. I presented during earth day to a number of students, and was a member of a Eco forum

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that our school started in which we presented the pollution eating plant idea. We gave staff members and parents in our community the opportunity to buy sets of these pollution eating plants. The set consisted of 6 Mother-in-Law-Tongues, 4 Areca palms and one Money Plant. These arrangement of plants produce just the right amount of oxygen for one person to be healthy. During our project we had several presentations in which I could explain this Project, and afterwards all the attendants had the opportunity to buy these plants. I had a sign- up sheet in the front foyer in our school with signs and information for parents to buy these plants. Lots of parents pick up their kids in the front office of our school, so this was a great place for this information.

When the plants arrived at our school we arranged them in units and gave each family information about how to properly take care of the plants. We gave each family this information in both English and Chinese. This way it was easy for the people to take care of the plants even if they were not primarily English speakers. The costs for the plants were actually less than the cost so this is the way we are raised money to buy plants for the school.

D. Future Plan

D. If we win this contest, we plan to buy more plants, tell other schools about our idea and help create an O₂ rich environment. This not only helps the students and teachers to feel better but also helps our earth and decreases the CO₂ footprint of our community. My future plans are that we can do this project not only in our community, but extend it to other schools and communities. I hope that our project will be a model for a lot of schools and communities, so we

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can create a better environment, not only here at our school but also everywhere else. This will help keep the bad polluted air outside and create healthy inside environment. All these plants around also creates a good feeling. For me putting pollution eating plants as well as good ventilation systems in place are most important in schools and kindergartens, because our children are our future. We should do whatever we can to increase the likelihood of having a generation that finds a better solution to our problems on earth. And a first step is to create a clean learning environment in which children have a better chance to learn, without having headache or other terrible sicknesses. Someday buildings will be built with filtration systems, and skylights so the many plants will thrive. Someday, we will not need all these gadgets as our air will become cleaner as we get more aware of the importance of our environment.

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E. Work Cited

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