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SUBJECT: Engaging Students to Reduce Litter Pollution in Tacoma
DATE: June 10, 2021

GMS MPS

PRESENTATION TYPE:

Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

EnviroChallenger Educators have recently developed a Litter Pollution Prevention Project (or Litter Project), in which nine Tacoma schools participated. Through this project students learned about litter issues, conducted a litter audit near their school or home, and wrote proposals for solutions to litter pollution based on scientific data. This presentation summarizes the findings of the Litter Project and aims to amplify the voices of students in Tacoma.

BACKGROUND:

Pollution from litter is a topic of growing concern for our community and has implications for multiple City services including solid waste, surface water, and public health and safety. After hearing from many residents concerned about litter impacts, the EnviroChallenger team developed the Litter Pollution Prevention Project – a community science and engagement project.

ISSUE:

Litter – or trash that is left lying in an open or public space – is an issue of growing concern around the world and in our local community. Litter leads to surface water pollution, waste of valuable resources, lowered property values, and public health concerns. Community members and Tacoma students have expressed concerns about the increasing amount of litter on public streets and sidewalks, in parks, and in waterways. Litter impacts the City’s solid waste, stormwater pollution, and public health and safety efforts, and therefore, there is not one action that would resolve this problem. Rather, many actions could help us to prevent and clean-up litter pollution in Tacoma. Continued education is key to preventing litter pollution.

ALTERNATIVES:

This is an information briefing only. There are no alternatives presented.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is an information briefing only. There is no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information briefing only. There is no recommendation.