

For Immediate Release

Nanaimo – May 6, 2019: This spring, students in schools across Nanaimo are learning that there are many ways to be innovative when it comes to running a business. These young people are challenged to think outside the box and use their creativity to design products to sell to their school communities. They are participating in PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs, a real-world learning program sponsored in Vancouver Island schools by Coastal Community Credit Union.

At McGirr Elementary, Kim Dawson and Leah Paziuk have challenged their grade 5 classes to come up with quality products made from upcycled materials. The students have responded enthusiastically, designing eco-friendly wooden bracelets made from tongue depressors, beach rock and wire photo holders, sock puppets and seed paper bookmarks to plant in the garden.

For Leah's students, asking their peers for constructive criticism has been an important step in refining their designs. "They're learning to give feedback in a diplomatic way," she commented, citing the story of one young man who in response to his classmates' advice, added a ball and cup accessory to the mechanical hand he had created, turning his product into a game and dramatically improving its marketability.

"From product design and packaging to marketing and sales, PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs is full of opportunities for creative self-expression," says Allyson Prescesky, Senior Manager, Community and Communications. "With this real world project, students are willing to step out of their comfort zones, experiment with new ways of thinking and discover that mistakes are learning opportunities. Coastal Community Credit Union is proud to help local youth develop the innovation skills they need to reach their full."

Down the road at École Hammond Bay, Kevin Levesque and Curtis LaBounty's students are promoting their Young Entrepreneur Show with presentations, posters and flyers designed digitally on Google Docs and Google Slide. Kevin has found that features like formatting and spell-check have helped his students surmount challenges that impede their creativity. "With these tools, even kids who think they don't like to draw can make fancy posters and advertisements," he shared. "When students with trouble writing see their words underlined in red, they know the spelling is off. They can ask a classmate for help or even use a suggestion on their computer."

The PowerPlay students are now busy putting the final touches on their marketing strategies. They will be selling their products to real customers later this week. To find out more about PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs, visit www.cccu.ca or www.powerplay4success.com, or call 1-888-880-0816.

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Schedule for Showcase Events

Cilaire Elementary
25 Cilaire Drive, Nanaimo

Wednesday May 8th
10:45 to 11:45 am & 12:30 to 2:00 pm

École Hammond Bay Elementary
1025 Morningside Drive, Nanaimo

Thursday May 9th
8:45 to 11:45 am and 12:20 to 2:27 pm

McGirr Elementary
6199 McGirr Road, Nanaimo

Thursday May 9th
10:15 - 11:45 am and 12:15 - 2:00 pm

For more information contact:

Allyson Prescesky, Coastal Community Credit Union 1-888-741-1010 or 250-741-3268
Bill Roche, PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs 1-888-880-0816