Hello, I am Graeme Arkell, and I am currently in my final semester studying at Vancouver Island University to become a teacher.

One of the great privileges I enjoy as a beginning teacher is working with my colleagues in the Bachelor of Education program to make a positive difference in Nanaimo public schools. Currently a group of seven new teachers (including myself) are working on a project to build an Aboriginal garden at Fairview Elementary School.  We are taking an important step in an environmentally-friendly direction for the school. The grounds are being beautified, air quality is being improved and a habitat is being established for birds, bees, butterflies and other wildlife seeking food and shelter. Furthermore, by featuring local aboriginal artwork and indigenous plant species, the garden will become a gathering place where students can relax and learn key aspects of aboriginal culture.

My colleagues and I are very passionate about this project and we are investing a lot of time to make sure the garden is done right. In fact, we have received tremendous support from Aboriginal Elders in residence at Vancouver Island University as well as professors in the Faculty of Education. But, in order for our vision of an Aboriginal garden to become a reality, we are reaching out to generous, community-supporting businesses like yours for any donations that we could use for constructing our garden.  Your commitment to help with this project would be much appreciated.

Respectfully,

Graeme Arkell