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## Students at city school bear down for grizzly cause

By JENNA MCMURRAY, SUN MEDIA

Everybody loves their childhood teddy bear and perhaps it was this affection that encouraged 36 local students to take a particular liking to the real deal.

A group of Grade 3 and 4 students at University elementary school are among 1,000 students in Calgary to become bear guardians by promising to do their part to protect Alberta's grizzlies.

"The kids feel empowered and feel like they can really make a difference," said teacher Krista Moriarity, who with fellow-teacher Donna McLeod-Huynh arranged for the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) to come to the school to teach their students about endangered species.

In addition to raising \$1,175 for CPAWS by auctioning artwork they created, the students embarked on a letter-writing campaign to voice concerns about the province's grizzly bear recovery plan.

Letters were sent to Sustainable Resource Development Minister Ted Morton and Premier Ed Stelmach, as well as Prime Minister Stephen Harper and federal Environment Minister John Baird.

Harry Chase, Liberal MLA for Calgary-Varsity, caught wind of the campaign and went to visit the students.

He then took the letters and presented them to the legislature, which the students watched on live feed.

"Thank heavens for children and their direct connection to nature," said Chase.

"Here we have children educating adults and showing us that grizzlies are... non-renewable."

There are only 177 known grizzlies in southern Alberta.