

# Restoring Iowa’s Prairies



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## Part I: Overview of Workplace

The Tallgrass Prairie Center (TPC) was established at UNI in 1999. The center advocates for the preservation and restoration of native vegetation for environmental, economic, and aesthetic benefits for the public good.

## Part II: Workplace Focus

Employees at TPC strive to produce pure seed for a variety of native plants that will be part of Iowa’s yellow tag program to be used in Iowa’s IVRM program and for landowners all over the state.

## Part III: Introduce the Problem

Research has suggested that students are more creative and involved with their learning when they are outside of the traditional classroom environment. We will propose a location on the new school campus to till, seed, and maintain a prairie to serve as an outdoor learning environment.

## Part IV: Background

Students will need to research native plants and their ecological benefits they will have on the environment. They will collect seed and work with the TPC to create the outdoor learning environment (OLE) for the benefit of the school district and community. The OLE would also benefit the physical education program for hiking and snowshoeing. It can also serve as inspiration for art students to draw the the diversity of life that surrounds their school.

## Part V: Workplace Solution

In the early 90’s there was a native seed shortage in Iowa. A UNI staff member started to the TPC to produce seed to help bring back Iowa’s native landscape. They now provide seed to larger seed dealers across the state to help grow the remaining 0.1% of Iowa’s native landscape.

## Part VI: Educational Pathways

By gaining experience through restoring a prairie this will provide pathways for students that are interested in ecology, research, and community outreach to promote the use and benefits of prairies for biodiversity, water quality, and outdoor learning.