

Ellen Hopkins Elementary Nature Play Park History

- Ellen Hopkins Elementary School (Hopkins) is in Moorhead, MN. At this time, Hopkins was a Title I school with more than 74% of students on the free and reduced lunch program.
- The fruit orchard began as expanse of turf grass.



- We were able to add 30 fruit trees and bushes so students at the elementary school would have access to an outdoor educational space, as well as fresh food.
- Because our Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) did not qualify for many grants (we are not a 501(c)3) and the school was limited as well, we had to do our own fundraising to support these efforts.
- We held a large event in September 2016 to plant 30 fruit trees and bushes (12 apple, 6 plum, 6 cherry, and 6 pear) with Hopkins children and families. At this same event, we expanded our community gardens from 3 to 9.





- It has been 5.5 years since we planted the fruit trees (apple, plum, and pear) and bushes (cherry). We've had incredible success with the plants.
- Our PTAC and community donors continue to support the Ellen Hopkins Nature Play park (fruit orchard, community gardens, and a rain garden/prairie planting).
- The space is maintained (tree trimming, wood chips around the base of trees, etc.) by a collaborative effort of the school and volunteers.
- It has been a wonderful addition to our school and community.

