

RREV's Innovative Pilot Template

As part of the **Innovative Mindset and Pilot Development** courses being offered through several of Maine's institutions of higher education, the RREV project uses a consistent template for the creation of all future pilots. Because every pilot created and tested with RREV funds WILL BE published in EnGiNE, we want all of Maine's educators to have the assurance of consistency.

This template provides an outline of the components required of an Innovative Pilot. The information in this template will serve as the basis for requests for school/district level project funding.

Section 1: Define the Need

A. Describe the need for your innovation.

Consider what evidence supports the need for an innovation, and the evidence that suggests your innovation will improve the current situation. at least 200 word count.

What problem are you solving? Meeting one and two: system map, insight and future mining and blue card.

There is a global movement where a reconsideration of what high school graduates should know and be able to do are based on the new economy of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This shift requires schools provide learning experiences that are a blend of personalized and project based learning with advisory teams guiding students on what to learn next and prepare them for career pathways. It is important to think of ways to provide ideal learning experiences in order to prepare our students for the world ahead of them. If, we as a school system, do not make changes in the way we offer learning, then our students will be grossly underprepared to be successful in their new world. In addition, our forced remote learning experiences during the pandemic have highlighted the need for new ways to teach remotely and new ways to reach remote learners. Student and teacher surveys highlight the fact that remote learning directly correlated with significantly disengaged students. If we offer hybrid education, or if we are forced into more remote learning, failure to engage students can lead to a generation of undereducated and unprepared adults.

Last spring, when all of Maine was forced into online remote schooling, many lessons were learned. First, and most importantly, we learned that it could be done. But almost as importantly, in Brewer we learned that extremely unpopular because it was overwhelmingly unsuccessful. A survey of 7th and 8th grade teachers found that 100% reported an increase in student disengagement as well as student absenteeism. A survey of Brewer 8th graders who experienced remote learning last spring as 7th graders (n=89) found that over 75% reported being disengaged during the remote learning process. Students reported many reasons for this, but the most salient, and the most addressable in the future, were: (1) teachers who didn't adapt their pedagogy to the online realm; (2) finding it hard to connect with teachers who were continuing to push academics despite such radically different educational circumstances; and (3) confusion over the organization of the online experience--every teacher used different methods of communicating, sharing work, sharing grades, and interacting during class time.

The problem in Brewer seemed clear: remote learning could work, but changes had to be made. We needed to find a way to connect with students, to communicate with students, and to educate students in new and engaging ways that were more appropriate for the online world. And feedback from the community that they wanted to see remote learning options in the future, when the world around us has "returned to normal,"

meant that we needed to create a plan that would address the needs of families who continued to want their children educated remotely.

B. Identify which students would be impacted, targeted, or supported by the innovation.

Review the evidence – quantitative and qualitative data and research – that indicates this group of students is considered the most vulnerable and would benefit from the described innovation.

Data you can use to inform your innovation, rationale, and targeted student population include the performance of various groups of students (e.g., students in rural locales, students from low socio-economic conditions, students with disabilities, students who are EIs, students at risk for dropping out, student who are homeless) with regard to academic achievement, graduation rates, social emotional and mental wellness, economic data, and/or workforce participation.

250 word count.

Meeting one and two: system map, insight and future mining and blue card.

Our research indicates that Brewer middle schoolers, with one-to-one computing devices, experience with online remote education, and experience using online educational tools such as Google Suites, stand to benefit the most from a revised remote learning experience. These students were surveyed about their remote learning experience last spring, and over 75% reported being disengaged during the process. 100% of grades 7 and 8 teachers reported seeing the same thing. Students surveys successfully identified multiple areas of the online experience that need to be addressed to increase student engagement and attendance during remote instruction. Using the data from student surveys, teacher surveys, family questionnaires, and extensive research into best practices around remote learning, we believe that we have come up with a solution that will not only work for Brewer, but is also adaptable for other districts as well.

Additionally, we have used the above mentioned metrics to focus on students for whom an in-person education is not a good fit. This includes families that have until now chosen to homeschool, as there was no remote option in Brewer, as well as families of children who experience serious anxiety when forced to attend in person, those who found having students home during the pandemic worked better for their family's needs, and those independent learners who thrived during past remote learning times. Our initial focus on just 7th and 8th grade means that we have the capacity to enroll a maximum of 25 students in this program during the pilot year.

Brewer's Remote Learning Pathway curriculum will be uniquely designed using the UDL framework where instructional goals, assessments, methods and materials are customized to meet the students' needs as well as meeting the state standards. With these customizations, students with IEP's, 504's and other accommodations will be able to be successful in this environment, as well. Because they are considered a Brewer student, they will also have access to all the programming that in person students have. For example, speech therapy, occupational therapy, & adaptive physical education to name a few. Accommodations will be easily met as the Remote Learning Specialist will tailor lessons and assessments based on students in their class. With this unique curricular design, the full remote pathway will not only be engaging and enriching but once again meet student and family needs.

Finally, in addition to increasing student engagement, our approach also leverages student schedules to allow remote students to attend school with their in-person peers, thereby supporting students' social and emotional health. It is critical for students to be able to have the involvement of school activities like sports, clubs and events. Just because the instruction is not in the building, does not mean that students can not be involved in the school environment. With this multi-pronged approach, students can experience learning anywhere and still be a part of the school's culture.

Section 2: Describe the Innovation

A. Describe the goals of your innovation.

Consider how your innovation will meet the needs of the identified target student population(s) and how you plan to achieve your goals. Additionally, consider any changes in policy, practice or structures you expect as a result of the innovation.

250 word count.

Yellow card - Promise, proof and also data from some PDSA cycles.

The problem in Brewer is that families have not had a choice of what learning environment is best for their children. If parents did not want to send their child to school, they would have to homeschool and unenroll their child from the district. In person schooling was the only option that Brewer families had, and therefore the only option they had ever known until the pandemic closed down school buildings.

With our new Brewer Pathways plan, parents of 7th and 8th graders will now have the choice of what type of learning environment is best for their student: at home or at school. And research indicates that allowing students to choose their educational path can increase student engagement by over 20%.

If families of middle school students feel that a home learning environment is best for their students, they will now have that option. Students that choose to be a part of the Remote Learning Pathway will have access to a full time multi-age teacher for instruction. This will be a brand new position, filled by a Remote Learning Specialist. If families like having their students at school for instruction they will also have that option. Both Pathways will provide engaging and high academic instruction to meet student and family needs. Both Pathways will offer students enrichment and extracurricular activities. Both Pathways offer 4 days of core subject instruction and the 5th day will be enrichment and personalized instruction. On that 5th day, remote students can come to the school to be with friends and participate in the activities if they choose. This schedule adaptation not only increases interactions and builds relationships among peers, it is also supporting the social and emotional learning of all 7th and 8th grade students.

Brewer's Remote Learning Pathway ensures that students who didn't thrive in person--the anxious, the awkward, the easily distracted, those with incompatible home responsibilities, and more--will still have access to a high quality education while now engaging with curriculum in a modality that fits their needs.

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B. Describe activities included in your plan for each stage – preparation (P) or implementation (I) – of your innovation. **Yellow card Proof.**

- **Preparation** includes building stakeholder awareness, establishing routines and processes, and coordination of logistics.
- **Implementation** includes planned implementation activities, as well as professional development for the educators participating in the innovation.

Activity	Purpose	Stage (P or I)	Date of Completion	Person Responsible
1. Survey teachers to find areas of remote instruction that need improvement	To find areas of instruction that can be improved for remote instruction	P	Feb. 2021	Bob Kumpa (8th grade teacher)
2. Survey students to determine areas of need to improve remote learning	To find areas of remote instruction that need to be improved to maintain student engagement	P	Feb. 2021	Bob Kumpa (8th grade teacher)
3. Survey community to determine if there is interest in offering remote learning pathways going forward	To determine if there is community need for improved remote instruction offerings	P	Mar. 2021	Renita Ward-Downer (Director of Instruction)
4. Conversations with district superintendent and administrators	To determine if future remote instruction is something that is desired and will be supported in Brewer	P	Feb. 2021	Renita Ward-Downer (Director of Instruction)
5. Planning remote learning pathway for after the pandemic ends, including grade levels, teacher needs, target students, and scheduling possibilities	To have a fully formed plan to present to administrators and the school board	P	Mar. 2021	Bob Kumpa (8th grade teacher) and Renita Ward-Downer (Director of Instruction)
6. Write & post help wanted ad for new 7/8	To hire new teacher for Remote Pathway	I	May 2021	Renita Ward-Downer (Director of Instruction) and

remote teaching position				Deborah Brooks (Administrative Assistant)
7.Hire new remote teacher	To fill new position	I	June 2021	Hiring committee
8. Recruit new Learning Pathway students among families of incoming 7th & 8th graders	To fill new Learning Pathway slots	I	July 2021	Brewer Community School/Brewer School Department administrations
9.Create a parent/student contract that outlines the expectations for full remote learning.	To maintain fidelity to the full remote learning pathway.	I	August 2021	New teacher and administration
10. Establish and complete curriculum templates and road maps for full remote students.	To provide a curriculum that meets the needs of the students in the full remote pathway.	I	August 2021	New teacher and Director of Instruction
11.				

Section 3: Define Innovation Outcomes & Measure to Assess Outcomes

- A. Identify the outcomes (*i.e., student outcomes, changes in instructional practices, changes in student practice*) that you expect to see as a result of your innovation. *350 word count.*

Consider both short-term and long-term outcomes, at different points in the time (e.g., at 6 months, 12 months, 2 years and 3+ years).

Impact math game plan and yellow card promise and proof and PDSA cycles

There are several success criteria outcomes for the implementation of the learning pathways.

For student outcomes, we will use local and state assessments to track the growth of students compared to the growth of students that are in person. State assessments will be given both in the fall and spring using NWEA and local assessments will be given accordingly. For the first year, the expectation is that students in the full remote pathway will perform equivalently or higher than their peers that are in the other pathway according to NWEA scores. For the following years, it is expected that the growth of students from year to year will be the same or higher than peers of the in person pathway.

Another outcome will be an increase in student participation with the full remote program. If we continue to attract students from sending district districts as well as students in our own system, this will not only support the sustainability of the program but will also support that this pathway of learning is engaging for students to want to participate in it. To be fiscally sustainable, we will need to have at least 6 tuition students and at least 10 Brewer students to support a full time specialist. Additionally, if we were to add more teachers or specialists to the full remote pathway, we would only need 10 more students to cover the costs of salary and supplies. We would also need to make sure stipends for in person teachers are covered to “sign off” on the full remote students’ learning. This allows for us to hire a teacher without having to worry about certification in multiple areas.

Another expected outcome for the full remote pathway will be expanding to the high school with families continuing to ask for this option. The unique design of this pathway will allow for students to accelerate through the learning standards in more of a credentialing structure versus a seat time, credit based structure. Once students have met the learning criteria, they will move on to the next learning requirement. With this type of structure, we anticipate that families of gifted and talented students may also want to participate. A long term outcome would be that more students at the high school level will want to be a part of this pathway, therefore, in person instruction will need to think about restructuring the learning experience that they offer so that students are not “stuck” in a credit based/seat time structure.

- B. Describe your plan for collecting and reviewing data to assess your innovation outcomes. **Fermi estimating impact game plan.**

Potential data to collect includes qualitative and quantitative data (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, exit tickets, and on-demand assessment(s) that can be considered.

Data Type	Baseline (B)- System map Interim (I) Summative (S)	Frequency of Data Collection	Person(s) Responsible for Collection and Data Quality

1. Academic Assessments: State and Local	B, I, S	The state standardized testing will be in the fall and spring windows. Local assessments will be throughout the year. We will track to make sure students are performing at the same level as their peers in the other pathways.	Teachers and administration
2. Student Social & Emotional Engagement	B, I, S	This will be assessed yearly through the number of students participating. Also, throughout the year attendance will be tracked to make sure students are engaged in the pathways. Surveys will be given to students yearly to gain feedback on how to better meet their needs.	Teachers and administration
3. Fiscal sustainability	I, S	Tuition money will be tracked yearly to make sure there is enough revenue to support the cost of teachers, stipends and curriculum supplies.	Director of Finance, Superintendent & Director of Instruction
4. Recruitment of future students	I	We will survey parents (particularly homeschoolers) in the community and surrounding areas to see if there is interest in choosing a full remote pathway for their children where they don't have to purchase a curriculum but could access a superintendent's agreement. We will also advertise on our website this pathway so that if families are interested they can fill out the form and we will reach out to them.	Director of Instruction, Superintendent
5. Teacher Evaluation	S	An evaluation of staff will be done yearly to make sure they are effective in their instruction, management, communication & planning. We are expecting that	Administration

		teachers will professionally grow in order to meet the needs of their students and be up to date in current practices.	
6.			
7.			
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- C. Describe how you will **scale and sustain** your innovation, including necessary policy changes, changes in mindsets, capacity-building activities, and **long-term financial sustainability**. *250 word count.*

Consider the systems changes that this innovation will require and promote.

PDSA and Fermi estimates (first year and long-term estimates)

See attached document to understand the projections for sustainability.

The first 2 years of costs are in green and will be supported by the award funds. The top start up projections of tuition students will be revenue collected to pay for the third year of implementation with 2 teachers. The rest of the table shows the cost of adding additional teachers and how many minimum tuition students would be needed to support the increase in costs.

During COVID times we had 10 families at the middle school level un-enroll their children and 12 families at the high school level. It is predicted that the school district will have these students enroll again, whether it be a full remote pathway or in person. This will account for additional Brewer revenue. When the pathway expands to the high school, it is anticipated that the majority of tuition students will be from other communities. This will increase the revenue of tuition by \$2000 per student. Because our high school is 50% tuition based, we expect that some of those students from sending districts will want to participate in the full remote pathway. With these potential additions of revenue, the full remote pathway costs will be paid for with this tuition money. As long as we have we continue to recruit students from area districts that want to be able to pursue a remote pathway, it will sustain itself.

- D. Describe the feasibility study you engaged in during the development of your innovative pilot plan, including which aspects of the plan for the pilot were reviewed, which stakeholders were engaged, feedback received and revisions made to the plan as a result of the feedback. *150 word count.*

Summary of PDSA cycles (including prototyping PDSA cycles)

One of our first PDSA cycles involved teacher buy-in. We were concerned the 7th and 8th grade teachers, who would be peripherally impacted by our plan, might not support it. We created a flyer that explained our Idea, shared it in an online Meeting, and asked for feedback on whether they thought the Idea would increase Remote engagement and if they liked the idea of participating in the revised 7/8 schedule that is also part of our Idea. We learned that every teacher liked our idea except for one, and their objection was not to our Idea, but to the entire idea of remote education. We sent an Exit Ticket that asked teachers to use a 10-point Likert scale, and the average score for estimating student engagement was an "8".

We also worried that the middle school and high school principals might balk at the newness and uniqueness of our Idea. To address this we brought those principals into the planning process, to revise the Idea into a shape that all could support. There are lots of different variables with high school. It is harder with teacher certification. We can't simply have a multi-age teacher so we will have to have more remote teachers available for students. This significantly impacts cost, which impacts sustainability, especially if the award funds are no

longer available. We also talked about how many students would be needed to make it sustainable. If we had too many students sign up, we would also need to cap the numbers because we can't have too many for the amount of teachers. Who would get first priority if we capped the numbers? This might create a problem because if we offer to Brewer students first, then we wouldn't get the tuition money needed to sustain the pathway. Our Superintendent also said he wanted some sort of counselor to be dedicated to our full remote students too. He feels strongly that full remote students will need some sort of social/emotional support. He wants to make sure that families are choosing this pathway appropriately and that students are not being "abused" in any way. This has another impact on costs because this will mean we would need money for contracted social work. Our next steps were to do some more threat assessments. Mainly, surveying our current full remote students and also families that chose the home-school model to determine if we will have parents interested in choosing a full remote pathway. We also need to plan out the high school model with more detail. We need to think of how this model is going to look differently than the middle school model to determine costs. If we need to hire more staff for the high school, how can we do that without a huge cost increase. Breaking this down so that it is more incremental will allow for sustainability.

We next created a full remote sustainability projection and a slideshow that summarized our results [attached elsewhere]. This was shared with peers and stakeholders. We met the goal of answering the question of what is the minimum number of students needed to keep this sustainable for when grant monies are no longer available. We now have a baseline of minimum costs to keep this running and we have identified what student body that we need to target for this remote pathway. In looking at our feedback, we were surprised that we had a handful of teachers that were not interested in pursuing this learning pathway. We were surprised by this because we didn't think that it would impact them that much so they would not really "care" if we offered another learning pathway. However, the majority of people were interested in exploring this pathway. Our next step was to survey potential students to see what the interest is out there and if we will have any "new" tuition students interested as well.

We sent potential full remote pathway student families a survey asking if our Idea is something they would want to have available to them. While not all families responded, the responses we did get were positive in that they would want to participate or they wanted more information. There were not any "No" responses to participating in the full remote pathway.

Section 4: Identify Key Expenses

- A. Identify the key expenses associated with the preparation, implementation, and ongoing refinement of your pilot. 150 word count.

Expenses could include staff time, materials, professional development activities, facilities, and other related expenses. This section does not need to include specific costs, but rather list out the different costs that should be considered to implement the innovation.

Fermi estimation

Funding for this project will need to fund the first two years in order to build revenue from tuition students or Brewer students that want to come back and have access to Brewer's activities and curriculum. For the first year we will hire a full remote teaching specialist. The anticipated cost of this would be \$65,000. We also anticipate that we will need to make sure this specialist has curriculum supplies and technology at the cost of \$10,000. First year total costs will be \$75,000. Second year, we will expand the full remote pathway to the high school which we will need to add another specialist as well as provide stipends for high school in person teachers so that they can "approve" the assessments and standards for students. This way we won't need to hire multiple certified content area teachers. The additional teacher would bring salary/benefits costs to \$130,000 for 2 specialists, \$10,000 for supplies again, and \$10,000 in stipends. The second year costs will be a total of \$150,000. The total costs for both years would be \$225,000. First year costs will support up to 15 students with a minimum of 8 students attending. Second year will support up to 30 students with a minimum of 20.