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 your innovation.

Consider what evidence supports the need for an innovation, and the evidence that suggests your innovation will improve the current situation.

What problem(s) are you solving? System map, insight and future mining and blue card.

Statement of Problem:
Summary: There exists in RSU #34, and in partner school districts, a small population of students who meet this set of criteria: 1) they are not typically successful in the "normal" school environment, 2) they are - or share characteristics with - students who reached greater success in pandemic-forced remote learning, and 3) their circumstances are such that they can overcome the barriers of remote learning. This population of students is largest in the middle and high school grade spans. In RSU #34 we currently lack a program to support such students in middle school, and have modest programs to support such students in high school.

Our work in this effort is an iteration on the work of Brewer School Department; we have worked closely in development of this proposal through the online accelerator and our colleagues at Brewer described the problem well: "There are concurrent reconsiderations of what high school graduates should know and be able to do, and reconsiderations of the mode in which students should learn based on newfound experiences of students and schools prompted by the pandemic (e.g., remote learning, increased technological capacities, increased normalization of atypical routes to success). These shifts require schools to provide learning experiences that are a blend of personalized and typical learning modes with skilled staff guiding students on what to learn next and prepare them for post-secondary pathways." In our district, as described below, we extend that reconsideration as described by Brewer into the middle school age range.

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 that there exists a population of students who yield greater success remotely (at least in the short term), which creates a need to identify learning modes addressing previously unmet needs.

Evidence that Supports the Innovation:
Summary: Our interview and survey data supports what partner districts have found through survey data.

In Spring 2020, when all of Maine was forced into online remote schooling, many lessons were learned; we solicited both interview and survey data (family responses=390, staff responses = 70). In analyzing our interview data, we have recognized several conclusions similar to those a local partner district identified through student/staff survey data. First, and most importantly, we learned that it could be done. But almost as importantly, we learned for most students that remote learning was unpopular because it was not as successful as in-person learning. (see, e.g., Brewer School Department's surveys noting increases in student disengagement, increases in student absenteeism). Lessons learned from this experience include the need to develop specialized pedagogy for remote learning success (via staff and family surveys), the need for close connection between teacher and student (via staff and family surveys), the need for minimal technological barriers (via staff and family surveys, and the need for a common organizational structure (via staff and family surveys, e.g., communicating, sharing work, sharing grades, interacting).

A partner district's student and teacher surveys highlight the fact that our forced entry into remote learning generally correlated with disengaged students; our interview data supports this finding. If we offer hybrid education, or if we are once again forced into remote learning, determining how to engage students will be essential in yielding the ultimate outcome of educated, engaged, and prepared adults. We see, as well, local family survey data seeking things that students can engage in at home with their families.

Addressing these needs can yield ways to educate students in new and engaging ways, that are more successful for some students than the typical pre-pandemic offerings, and that offer resiliencies absent in our district (e.g., pathways for medically fragile students, pathways for students with other barriers to in-person participation, preparation should hybrid/remote learning be once again forced upon us). Feedback from the community indicates desire for some level of remote learning options in the future, even when the world around us has "returned to normal," necessitating creation of a plan that would address the needs of families who continue to want their children educated remotely.

Note: This description builds upon the work previously done by Brewer School Department.

The Innovation:
Summary: RSU #34 proposes a program, initially serving a small group of middle school through early high school students, that provides a carefully constructed and supported hybrid or remote option for identified students. This program will:
- *Be grounded in the mission, values, and expectations of Leonard Middle School and Old Town High School*
- *Be connected to a local alliance / collaborative*
- *Be connected to what is happening in in-person schooling*
- *Be flexible in the delivery of instruction to meet the needs of varied learners*
- *Require time and coordination*
- *Focus on sustainability*
- *Be dependent on the buy-in of stakeholders*
- *Be planned with adherence to legal guidelines*
- *Address the necessary technology needs*

As a side benefit, this effort will continue development and enhancement of remote/hybrid pedagogies, which will be immediately crucial should we again need to return to remote learning for all students.

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 Els, 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.

System map, insight and future mining and blue card.

Our internal research indicates that a subset of our middle and high school students are likely to benefit from a refined and guided experience with remote learning. At both the middle and high school levels, in the past two years we have seen a greater-than-normal population of home-schooled students (n= approximately 20); our counseling and administrative staff recognize that some of these students had reached out to schools to request remote options. Our internal data also indicate that a small percentage of our students achieved greater success in the remote and hybrid settings then they had achieved in pre-pandemic in-person learning; discussions with such students or their caregivers indicate that contributing factors include bypassing anxiety-prompting settings, greater comfort in their setting, home support, being able to sleep later, and avoiding some day-to-day "drama".

Each of our students is now experienced with one-to-one computing devices, online tools such as GSuite, and videoconferencing.

Through our experience in forced remote/hybrid learning we developed a rubric that indicates factors needed for success, thus we are well-positioned now to guide interested students through a process to determine if they are likely to achieve success through a remote or hybrid model. Additionally, 25 months into pandemic-forced remote and hybrid learning, we have good understanding of the case management approach needed to help students succeed in such settings.

Using the data, and building off of Brewer School Department's experience, we believe our solution will address a need of a number of students, by providing options ranging from full-remote to a hybrid experience where students attend some classes with their in-person peers, thereby supporting students' social and emotional health.

We anticipate serving 12-18 students per year (3-year average).

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.

How the innovation will meet the needs, changes in policy, practice or structures:

The innovation will meet the needs of the identified student population because it will deliver what some students need and hasn't been fully accessible: a personalized learning program with both in-person and remote options, offering both one-on-one support and community inclusion. Prior to this innovation, families at the middle school level (and largely also at the high school level) who sought a remote/hybrid experience for their child largely needed to homeschool and unenroll their child from the district (in-person schooling was the only option that families had). With this new remote/hybrid pathway, carefully identified students will now have a choice as to what type of learning environment is best for their student. This ensures that students who did not 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.

Families will apply to have students participate in this program (and be supported as necessary in that application process). The purpose of the application process is to carefully review the student's likelihood of success, identify any barriers to that success, and determine if the supports in this program are sufficient to address those barriers.

Students in the program will be served in combination through a Case Manager and through the core teaching staff. Core teaching staff identify for all students in the grade the instructional standards, themes and units of instruction, and create instructional expectations which are hosted on Google Classroom. Students may participate fully remotely, or in a hybrid fashion by which they attend some classes in-person and others remotely. The Case Manager is the hub for the student: building relationships with them, helping them to take ownership of their own learning, helping them to meet the learning expectations of their grade, providing direct instruction/supports in some areas, and connecting them to direct instruction or supports in other areas. Participating students will have full access to the co-curricular and extra-curricular programs of the school.

Success will be defined as a three-year rolling average through which 12-18 students are served, and 75% of participating students meet academic standards.

How you plan to achieve your goals:
RSU #34 will find/hire a teacher (Case Manager) to be part of this program, who will also work in collaboration with our partner schools. They will be a team member both on our school's faculties and with these partners, assisting and supporting students in this innovative model of education.

Planning and building the program will be strengthened by collaboration with other area schools. This model will include access to staff solely dedicated to this pathway and provide a case study model of academic-social-emotional support for students. As each school builds its program, the collaborative will benefit from shared experience and possibly shared staff.

Much of the thought and planning is in process to achieve our goals. In this, as in all steps of the program, the focus must be on the anchor of goals and beliefs and the flexibility of how services are delivered to meet that goal. Essential is ongoing data gathering. The program would benefit from continual data collection about best practice in similar programs as well as gathering data on the needs of the population it will serve. We must also stay current on research and professional experience concerning responding to the particularity of student social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs that have been amplified by the pandemic.

The next steps will be soliciting community, parental, and teacher knowledge and support of the program. The program demands a teacher/leader with a strong and varied skill set to direct and manage the program. A timely search and hiring may allow that person to contribute to the planning process. As the program is composed of many moving parts, beginning the work of assembling the mechanism now will assure it is ready for launch for the new school year.

Changes in policy, practice or structures:
Part of the strength of the program is that it does not change the core experience and goals of our schools: Students are challenged to learn, work, engage, and think as members of a community so that they may open their possibilities for post-graduation. We already have some policies in place which enable flexibility (e.g., graduation requirements policy). This program increases the voice students have in the design of their

individualized educational plan. What works best for students may involve further changes in policy, practice, and structures as the program evolves.

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.	Describe the Program	Focus our goals, communicate clear expectations for our plan, engage stakeholders	P	Winter 2022	Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
2.	Conversations with RSU 34 superintendent, administrators, teachers, school counselors, and community members	To determine if the support for improved remote/hybrid learning is a community need.	P	Winter 2022	Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
3.	Interview/survey students, parents and teachers	To gather feedback on remote learning improvement and student engagement	P	Winter 2022	Scott Gordon, OTHS Principal Amy Ketch, OTHS Asst. Principal Jeremy Bousquet, OTHS Asst. Principal Kim Ketch, OTHS School Counselor Jami Martell, OTHS School Counselor Dr. Gert Nesin, LMS Principal Shane Barker, LMS Asst. Principal Bethany Gerrish, Remote Learning Specialist
4.	Write Teacher Job Description	To hire new teacher for remote learning pathway	P	Spring 2022	Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
5.	Post ad for new Case Manager (teacher) position	To hire new teacher for remote learning pathway	P	Spring 2022	Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director OTHS and LMS Administration Teacher Representatives

	Hiring process				
6.	Create Student Profile	To aid communication for our student expectations and fit for the services.	P	Spring / Summer 2022	School Administration, Case Manager
7.	Student Application	To maintain fidelity to the remote learning pathway	P	Spring / Summer 2022	School Administration, Case Manager
8.	Timeline for Implementation	To communicate plan and expectations with all district partners	I	Spring 2022	Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
9	Choosing Learning Platforms	To ensure students, teachers, and schools have the platform for remote learning pathways	I	Spring / Summer 2022	School Administration, Case Manager
10	Identify and purchase technology equip.	To ensure students, teachers, and schools have the equipment for remote learning pathways	I	Spring / Summer 2022	School Administration, Case Manager Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
11	Identify synchronous activities	To provide engaging learning activities that meets the needs of the students in the remote learning pathway	I	Spring and Summer 2022	Case Manager, collaborating partner teachers, School Administration
12	Deciding what professional development is needed	To meet with collaborating district partners and roles to identify professional development needs	I	Ongoing	Teachers, Case Manager, School Administration, Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
13	Identify Opportunities Team and Community Building	To meet with collaborating district partners and roles to identify team building	I	Ongoing	School Administration and Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
14	Update Community Partners to support the program	To provide updated information to gather ongoing community support	I	Ongoing	School Administration and Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director

15	Create an evaluation plan with collaborating partners	To collect data on plan effectiveness and use results for program improvement and decision-making.	I	Summer 2022	School Administration and Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
16	Ensure there is time for ongoing collaboration and discussion between all partners	To connect at monthly Penobscot River Education Partnership meetings	I	Ongoing	School Administration and Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
17	Sustainability when the grant money runs out	To communicate with MDOE representatives the lessons learned to integrate remote learning into school pathways.	I	Ongoing	School Administration and Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
18	Establish and complete curriculum templates and roadmaps for remote learning students.	To provide a curriculum that meets the needs of remote learning students in this pathway	I	Summer 2022	Case Manager, in participation with partner teachers and school / district administration
19	Get together with partner districts to make agreements as a collaborative	To aid communication between partnering districts and share resources	I	Ongoing	School Administration and Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
20	Communication with each district's Alternative Education program	To aid communication with all district education partners	I	Ongoing	Case Manager, School Administration
	Holistic Student Assessment - annual survey/scale	To support students with social emotional learning activities	I	Annually	School staff and Case Manager

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.

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. The primary focus of its goals are on reaching individual students and engaging them in school and seeing its connection to their futures, but the program also has the potential to enrich the school and the community.

Short Term outcomes:

● Students and parents feel as if the school recognizes and values them as individuals

● Students feel empowered to re-engage in education

● Students develop the intrapersonal communication skills necessary to plan a pathway toward their goals

● Students can articulate their goals and break down the steps necessary to achieve them

● Students acquire and practice skills in time management

● Students are pro-active partners in maintaining their physical and emotional health and well being

● Students have a safe and supportive environment

● Students can express their learning in a variety of ways

● Students can problem solve and recover from setbacks

● Students will have a relationship with a supportive adult

● Students will develop skills in self-directed learning, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving

Long Term Outcomes:

● School reexamines practices based on the success of the program; successful practices from the program are introduced and practiced in the regular program

● Teachers develop skills in effective remote/hybrid learning

● Teachers acquire skills in learning platforms

● Students acquire skills in self-management

● Students are successful in academic achievement (learning standards, acquiring credits)

● Students value and connect to community

● Greater use of Holistic Student Assessment data to inform practice with students

● Collaborative programming development increases shared services and growth

● Graduation rates for participants equal or exceed cohort rates

● Deepening of community involvement in schools

A. 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.	Student Enrollment	B, I,	Information on our student requirements for this program will be shared with our administrative team, school leadership teams, staff meetings, and families to aid in student enrollment in remote learning.	School Administration
2.	Students engaging in experiences across collaborative districts	B,I	Our teacher will track student participation in experiences in and across districts	Case Manager
3.	Attendance	B, I, S	Our schools track daily attendance, we will adhere to the in person attendance policy in our district for expectations for remote students	School Administration
4.	Achievement of Learning Standards / Credits	B, I, S	Our hired Case Manager will work with our Guidance Departments to ensure students enrolled in remote/hybrid learning are on track	Case Manager, School Administration and Guidance

			for course completion and course credits.	
5.	Shared Professional Development Opportunities Setting and Keeping Collaborative Meetings	B	Our partnering districts are all members of Penobscot River Education Partnership (PREP) and meet on a monthly basis. Information will be shared in this network.	Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
7.	Student academic assessments: State and Local	B, I, S	The state assessment testing are given in the spring and fall for ELA and math, spring testing for science. Local assessments are given according to our local assessment plan throughout the school year. We will track student academic performance to ensure students are at the same level as their peers.	Case Manager and Dr. Jon Doty, C/I/A Director
8.	Capturing the experience through qualitative data	B, I, S	Remote learning students and families will be interviewed throughout the school year for feedback	Case Manager and School Administration
9.	Social Emotional Data PEAR Assessment ($10/student) https://www.pearinc.org/	B, I, S	Our hired Case Manager will integrate social emotional data collection into the instruction. We will work with our partnering districts to all use the same tools and timeline for data collection.	Case Manager and School Administration
	Coordinating with our special education services, social work	B, I, S	Monthly updates at administrative and staff meetings will	School Administration and Case Manager

			communicate student progress with all educational partners.	
Teacher Evaluation	S		An evaluation of staff will be done on an ongoing basis and summarized yearly to be sure our Case Manager (teacher) is effective in instruction, online engagement, management, communication and planning.	School Administration

B. Describe how you will **scale and sustain** your innovation, including necessary policy changes, changes in mindsets, capacity-building activities, and **long-term financial sustainability**.

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

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

The initial costs will be supported by the award funds. An advantage of the model we are proposing is we have two options to move forward, the first is to work to recruit students in our district and hire a full time teacher in our local district to provide remote learning. The second advantage is because we are working in partnership with four PREP districts, and if after two years, our local district student numbers go below sustainability for a full time teacher in our district, we can purchase seats with another district. This is a unique aspect of our application with four partnering districts. If we do purchase student seats in partnership with another district, the expectation is our RSU 34 students will still participate in RSU #34 activities and events.

One of our PDSA cycles was sustainability, is this remote learning pathway sustainable after the life of the grant? We propose the following ongoing steps to ensure sustainability.

Task/step 1 – Identify the successes from the pilot year. (i.e. # of students, # of credits earned)
Task/step 2 - To the greatest extent possible, quantify these successes in regards to impact on local budget
Task/step 3 –Provide data gathered above to the Superintendent of Schools to make the case for continued funding for the collaboration.
Task/step 4 – Identify other potential revenue sources
● Grants
● Tuition students
● Reallocation of local resources

As long as we recruit and support a sufficient number of students (e.g., 12-18 students per year on a three-year average), the outlay of funds will be sustainable relative to the potential for lost tuition / subsidy.

C. Describe the feasibility review 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.

Summary of PDSA cycles (including prototyping PDSA cycles)

We have a distinct advantage through working with our community partners; we have the written Brewer document, staff, and their experience with students to share with our teacher leadership teams, administration, and local School Board members. During these feasibility review conversations, the major topic of conversation became one of our PDSAs, student recruitment: "Will RSU 34 be able to recruit the number of middle and high school students needed whose educational needs match our criteria for our remote/hybrid learning collaborative?"

Our desired outcome is to recruit and serve 12 – 18 students on a rolling three-year average, beginning fall 2022, whose educational needs match our criteria for our remote learning collaborative, and our community partners support the following steps:

    Task/step 1 – Finalize our local school plan and our partnership with our area remote learning schools.

        Task/step 2 - Finalize our student participation criteria for our remote learning collaborative.

        Task/step 3 – Meet with our school teacher leadership teams to update them on our remote learning collaborative and request student referrals.

        Task/step 4 – Have our teacher on board and students recruited to participate by fall 2022.

During our conversations with teachers, administrators, and community members, another topic of conversation that became another PDSA is scheduling. We will look to establish an asynchronous program for students. Students will access the instruction for their courses through a common, online platform among the partnering districts. Students will access synchronous sessions with teachers/case managerswho will be a content specialist, more as a tutorial session. These can be scheduled around courses taken in person in school or at CTE centers.

Our desired outcome is to provide remote learning pathway for our students that meet the established criteria for this pathway and our community partners support the following steps:

        Task/step 1 – Decide on a platform that will address the academic needs of all students.

        Task/step 2 - Identify content specialists available to everyone in the collaborative.

        Task/step 3 – Create a schedule of tutorial blocks that students can access based on their individual schedules.

        Task/step 4 – Monitor to ensure students are getting the support that they need.

Students will successfully complete the courses needed to succeed / graduate while simultaneously being able to access in-person courses that meet their individual needs at their own school.

Section 4: Identify Key Expenses

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

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

Initial funding for this project will enable building/sustaining revenue/tuition from students who want to continue with our remote/hybrid learning pathway.

1. Full-time Case Manager (teacher):
    a. $90,407.47 salary / benefits
    b. Technology and curriculum supplies: $1,222.53
2. Stipends for other school staff working to develop / implement the program: $3,000
3. Participating Students:
    a. Technology supplies: $1800 (18 students @ average of $100 in supplies needed for successful implementation)
    b. WiFi / MiFi Service: $1620 (estimated ⅙ of 18 students needing this support, @ $45/month)
    c. Online subscriptions: $450 (18 students @ $25 for specialized platforms not purchased for typical students)
4. Program Evaluation: $1,500 (contribution to a collaborative evaluation)

The total proposed costs are $100,000.00