

RREV Academic Innovation Sustainability Template

This template provides an outline of the components required of a RREV Innovative Pilot Sustainability Plan. The information in this template will serve as the basis for requests for schools/districts to proceed with an individually designed RREV Pilot Sustainability Plan.

Section 1: Define the Primary Sustainability Need

Sustainability for your pilot innovation can be described in three different levels of impact which we will define below.

Maintain – Least amount of contextual change. You are basically working with the same group of students and teachers to solidify the potential impact of your pilot and gather enough data to consider the pilot’s potential in new contexts.

Spread – Innovation or reform implemented in greater numbers of **similar grade level classrooms** and includes the activities, structures, materials, and underlying beliefs, norms, and pedagogical principles associated with the change strategy. –Coburn, 2003

Scale - Innovation or reform is implemented in greater numbers of **diverse grade level classrooms and schools** and includes the activities, structures, materials, and underlying beliefs, norms, and pedagogical principles associated with the change strategy.

- A. In the table below, select the level of implementation and **describe the pilot-identified student needs / problems that your plan will continue to address** for both the 2023/2024 school year and for the next 3-5 years.

2023 / 2024 School Year

Identify: MAINTAIN / SPREAD / SCALE

The underlying reason for maintaining, spreading, and eventually scaling our innovation is to meet the needs of our students by providing research-based effective and engaging educational opportunities to increase learning; our most recent strategic plan recognized the importance of place-based learning to our students.

Two of our elementary schools have been identified as Tier III schools: Deer Isle-Stonington Elementary School with percentages of only 50% of our students meeting the standards in Reading and 42% in Math, and Sedgwick Elementary School with only 42% of students meeting the standards in Reading and 28% in Math.

At Deer Isle-Stonington High School, our latest SAT test data shows proficiencies of only 39% in English Language Arts, and 35% in Math.

Our Tier III schools need new avenues to reach disengaged students and address truancy and behavior issues. Research shows that the benefits of outdoor learning cross many landscapes, many subjects and many ages. We plan to elevate and prioritize outdoor learning, leveraging connections to our Nature Trail in order to raise student scores and improve student health and wellness. A structured and supported plan will promote the health and wellness of staff as well as students. Our Nature Trail measures 0.3 miles through a red maple swamp - an ecosystem not readily traversed anywhere else on Deer Isle. Two tenths of a mile is ADA accessible. Student accessibility to the Nature Trail and outdoor learning is a high priority so that all students can experience the benefits of outdoor learning.

3-5 year plan

Identify: MAINTAIN / SPREAD / SCALE

Define sustainability need(s):

Students need more opportunities to participate in meaningful experiences that build on character. By providing greater access to authentic work, we hope to decrease the disconnect between what students learn in school and students' lived experiences. In addition, students need opportunities to be able to fully realize their academic potential as outdoor and place based educational experiences center around the specific context of their community and its rich "oral culture."

In the years beyond the RREV funding we will need minimal funding to support the systemic changes that we have made. The following will be implemented to maintain, spread, and sustain this pilot program beyond the RREV funding:

- training at new staff orientation will be developed and in place
- a pool of outdoor learning and place-based lesson plans with grade levels and standards will be established
- Maine Community Funds will have renovated the minikitchens in the cafeteria which will increase the capacity for After School and other programs to do food-prep and clean up service for groups and community events
- Classroom and Community Coordinator position will be combined with the After School Program site manager and fully funded by the school district
- the local budget will support trail maintenance and equipment replacement/repair

We will also be using our local budget for a portion of the costs that will be required to maintain, spread and sustain this systemic change. The local budget will cover costs to ongoing trail maintenance, replacement of outdoor learning gear and equipment as well as repairs that may be needed for our equipment.

- B. Identify which additional students would be impacted, targeted, or supported as a result of your sustainability plan.

Review and describe the evidence (quantitative and qualitative data and research) that demonstrates the impact your pilot had on the original student populations and describe how this data informs your choice to Maintain / Spread / Scale.

Use data that will provide evidence your innovation supports the target student population. This may 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.

It is clear, based on our recent teacher survey data (see section 2B) that right now only pockets of students are experiencing outdoor learning with frequency, based on their teacher's comfort level with classroom management and their ability to tie outdoor learning to standards. Moving ahead with our sustainability plan, we will be using inexpensive structural supports to spread access to outdoor learning so that it isn't

something that just happens in a couple of classrooms, but throughout the school and across every content area.

With the goal of reaching more staff, students would have the opportunity to participate in outdoor learning as they progress through their educational years.

Section 2: Data Informed Sustainability

A. Provide the Logic Model your school used to implement your Pilot

Here is the current district logic model.

Resources	Strategies & Activities	Outputs	Short-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact
RREV \$ Partnership with Island Heritage Trust Access to 15 preserves on Deer Isle that can be used as outdoor learning classrooms, including our own red maple swamp nature trail SU76 teachers RREV coach Community partners, including Healthy Island Projects and the Evergreen Garden Club Retired SU76 middle school science teacher has initiated many outdoor and place based education experiences for students as well as co-creating the school's first nature trail on campus grounds - still involved	Re-hire the ½ time specialist who implements outdoor education experiences Expansion of current nature trail to increase the Americans with Disabilities Act portion Expansion of the DISES greenhouse into an Edible Schoolyard Continue to incorporate community partners Integrate outdoor and place based education experiences into the curriculum Professional development opportunities that support teachers, helping them to identify and increase engaging, relevant, outdoor and place based education opportunities (especially during the new staff orientation and August PD days) Outdoor and place based education	100% of students participate in expeditionary learning and outdoor and place based education instruction Over the third year, each grade level will expand to provide at least three outdoor and place based education events per month Outdoor and place based education lesson plans will become a staple of teaching in our community	The time required to plan and coordinate outdoor and place based education opportunities is decreased Teachers have access to units, models, and lessons that incorporate outdoor and place based instruction, resulting in more opportunities for students throughout the year Teacher confidence in drawing connections between core content and activities outside the classroom is increased	More teachers will incorporate expeditionary learning into their teaching practice Students that "meet the standards" average will increase Higher student performance related to complex academic content Students will have greater access to authentic work, decreasing the disconnect between what students learn in school and students' lived experiences Students will participate in meaningful experiences that build character Teachers view outdoor and place based education as a vital component for meeting student needs related to academic outcomes and positive character development	Students will have greater mastery of knowledge and skills Students see themselves as meaningful contributors to a better world Students fully realize their academic potential as outdoor and place based education learning opportunities center around the specific context of their community and an "oral culture" Changing community mindsets about the value and impact of expeditionary learning

	specialist works with classroom teachers 5X/month			Number and quality of school/community partnerships that support meaningful real-world learning is increased	
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- B. Describe the data you collected about your innovation pilot outcomes that will be used to inform and shape your plan to MAINTAIN / SPREAD / SCALE

An independent consulting firm ICF.com has conducted two site visits and created an evaluation of RREV at DISES which revealed several exciting insights about Classrooms in the Community. These include: Students show high levels of engagement and socio-emotional well-being. Students described outdoor learning as “calming,” “interactive,” “useful,” and “more fun.” These students said being outside helps them focus more on their tasks, as well as learn life skills such as cooperation and teamwork.

We recently administered the spring NWEAs in Reading and Math and we will be able to use time over the summer to analyze the data for any positive growth, and see if it correlates to classrooms/grades that spend more time engaged in outdoor learning or recreational time on the nature trail. Out of a total of 204 students, 174 students (85.3%) showed academic growth. Out of a total of 62 students with an IEP or 503 plan, 48 students (77.4%) showed academic growth.

We also created and distributed a survey to teachers. What was very clear from this feedback was that the teachers felt that the impact of the nature trail, greenhouse, and other improvements made with the RREV award has a highly positive impact on the students, and indeed, their own well-being. What was equally evident was that many staff members are not yet utilizing the infrastructure which limits access for students. We believe the RREV Sustainability funds will maintain and spread use of these resources to more of the student population.

The data from this survey gave us some granular feedback about how certain pieces of the RREV infrastructure are or are not being utilized, and why. It makes it easy to identify what is going well, so that we can maintain it, and then tailor and target professional development in the areas where students are not being reached.

Below are examples of questions and results from our teacher survey.

We measured how often they were using the nature trail, the green house, the vans, and the support of the Classroom and Community Coordinator. We asked them to describe how they perceived the impact of those elements on the students, and also in their own job satisfaction levels. For each element of the initial pilot, we also asked them about barriers to using the RREV resources, and for tips/tricks re: successful use of the resources. This information has been a huge help in determining what we need to focus on for sustainability, and will be worth distributing year-to-year in the spring to help us determine if our efforts are gaining traction.

As a result of collecting and analyzing this data, we are confident that students are benefiting from our outdoor learning pilot, teachers value outdoor learning, yet, there are still barriers that are preventing a greater number of our students from accessing outdoor learning and as a result we are addressing these in our sustainability plan, namely our goal of increasing the number of students participating in outdoor and place-based learning.

- C. List new data that you will need to collect to further inform and shape your plan to MAINTAIN / SPREAD / SCALE

The Superintendent is considering implementing Waypoints as a data collection tool to measure student growth in SEL (with the CASEL-6 standards). If SU76 does move forward with implementing this assessment, we will be better able to measure SEL growth in the student body, and weave that into our reflection and planning process.

The Union is also looking at moving from the NWEAs as a universal screener/progress tracker and using AIMSweb instead. Obviously if this switch is made, we'll be looking at AIMSweb scores rather than NWEA and there will be a period of adjustment.

As we move beyond the window of ICF reviews, it makes sense that we will develop in-house surveys for students and parents to be delivered on the same timeline as the teacher survey.

We also wanted to boost the visibility of place-based learning and get more granular data about K-8 engagement in place-based learning, without bogging teachers down with logs, forms, or surveys. The end of year teacher survey gives us a general sense of how often the teachers use certain resources, but it would be preferable to have more accuracy about total instances. Our idea was to have a marble-drop display. See Milestone #6 below for details.

Section 3: What is the intended impact of your sustainability plan

- A. Describe the goals/milestones of your sustainability plan.

Consider how your plan will continue to meet the needs of the identified target student population(s) and describe changes in policy, practice, or structures necessary to MAINTAIN / SPREAD / SCALE your innovation.

2023 / 2024 School Year

In order to reach students, we must increase the number of staff members participating in outdoor and place-based learning. We need to construct a shift in district culture and systems, so that our students' access to outdoor education is not dependent upon a few specific people, because staff turn-over may continue to be a trend. Students only gain the deeper benefits of outdoor education if they regularly experience outdoor education: teachers are the gate-keepers. It was clear from our staff survey that we need to take action to build staff comfort with and expanded content-area connection to place-based learning. While many teachers see the value for students, a solid 25% of respondents seemed not to see that they could or should incorporate place-based learning into their own practice.

While teachers are the gatekeepers, we believe our students will be the best long-term advocates for outdoors and place-based programming. Elementary children who spend increased amounts of time learning outdoors will serve as the ambassadors for outdoor learning as they move on to high school.

Milestone 1:

Embed place-based learning PD and resource familiarization as a permanent part of the SU 76 New Staff Orientation. We've already begun planning the session and have secured a half-day of the 3-days scheduled.

Milestone 2:

Embed monthly PLC work dedicated to teachers supporting teachers through brainstorming, design, implementation, and reflection on place-based lessons. Teachers may opt into sessions over the course of the year. We will require representation from each grade level wing (K-2, 3-5, 6-8) in the Elementary School, so that they will be able to report back during wing meetings. Given our teacher survey results, we'll be looking to give math and social studies content areas targeted attention. Many teachers easily see the connection between our campus resources and Science/ELA/Art, but don't immediately see the potential connection to math and social studies standards.

Milestone 3:

Teachers will be paid a stipend for writing place-based lesson plans so that we've created an in-house bank of them for other teachers to implement or use as examples/inspiration as they begin to create their own plans. These will be of additional benefit if they tie into Milestone 4.

Milestone 4:

Create a "phenology" chart of projects that can or should happen to make best use of the greenhouse and edible schoolyard. Some of the projects may also have a lesson plan attached, thanks to Milestone 3. We will work on creating the chart during 23/24 so it can be used as a planning resource in future years. Teachers and admin will be able to see at a glance some of the learning opportunities- and yes, service learning- that needs to happen to sustain our campus garden. We will set up a system of calling dibs, and making sure necessary work is covered.

Milestone 5:

A new elective entitled "Stewardship" will be offered in the Middle School 2023-2024. This will be a pass/fail course taught by the Classroom and Community Coordinator. The goal is to increase ownership and awareness through the weekly maintenance of the Nature Trail and Greenhouse areas by the students. This elective will continue during ensuing school years.

Milestone 6:

Create a fun, visible system for grade levels to display how often they are getting out of the classroom to learn. The current idea is that each grade level will have a jar, and each time they come back from an expedition outside of the classroom, they will drop a marble into their grade's jar. We can color code for recreation, academic use of the garden, academic use of the nature trail, service learning, and field trips off campus. The jars can be housed in a lobby display, and the placing of the marble when the class comes back into the building could be a ritual. Everyone who walks into the school will be able to see the progress we are making... and yes, we hope to foster a healthy sense of community pressure to get out there and get learning. The RREV team will also be able to easily clock who needs more support, and who is comfortable/self-motivating, and partner teachers who need support/inspiration with teachers who are comfortable/inspired. At the end of the year, classes can tally the data for us.

Milestone 7:

Organize an Outdoor Learning Library, create procedures for using it, and familiarize staff with contents and procedures.

3 – 5 Year Plan

- Embed outdoor and place-based learning into the Deer Isle Stonington elementary and high school curriculum.
- Spread this implementation to the three smaller elementary schools in our district (Sedgwick, Brooklin and Isle Au Haut)
- Continued partnerships with the local land trust, libraries, and Haystack Mountain School of Craft
- Revise policies around curriculum and time outdoors
- Work with administration to address the expressed scheduling barrier that class periods are not long enough.
- Create in-house PD and support to summer school teachers to help them increase the amount of place-based education that occurs in the summer school program.
- Work with Superintendent to create stipended Place-Based Learning Leadership Team to ensure that every year there’s a clearly defined group of staff focused on on-going implementation and improvement of place-based education.

B. SU76 GANTT Chart:

Cultural Actions & Milestones	Jun. '23	Jul. '23	Aug. '23	Sep. '23	Oct. '23	Nov. '23	Dec. '23	Jan. '24	Feb. '24	Mar. '24	Apr. '24	May. '24	Jun '24
Organize Outdoor Learning Library													
Planning for ASP Volunteer Orientation													
ASP Volunteer Orientation													
Planning for New Staff Orientation													
New Staff Orientation			8/16										
Review Policies & Procedures													
Develop Lesson Plans/Units: Stipended individual work													
Develop Math learning opportunities													
Develop Social Studies learning opportunities													
Build and Run a Stewardship Elective (grade 6-8)													
Develop Harvest-Use education/learning opportunities													
Develop "Phenology" Project Chart for Edible School Yard													
Create Marble Data Display													
Introduce and Use Marble Data Display													
Develop Pitch Deck													
Elaine, Nick, et al!					10/26								
Partner Interviews													
Student Surveys													
Teacher surveys													
Parent surveys													

Infrastructure Actions & Milestones	Jun. '23	Jul. '23	Aug. '23	Sep. '23	Oct. '23	Nov. '23	Dec. '23	Jan. '24	Feb. '24	Mar. '24	Apr. '24	May. '24	Jun '24
Increased ADA (ish) access on nature trail													
Survey/site plan for Edible School Yard (ESY)													
Soil & drainage analysis, site work engineering, DEP permitting													
Wind break engineering design													
Site work for drainage, gravel, underground water system													
Deer fence													
ADA walkways													
Orchard trees, herbaceous perennials planned & planted													
Raised bed construction													
Order improved culinary equipment													

Section 4: Identify Key Expenses and Necessary Resources

- A. Describe budget expenditures and necessary resources required to MAINTAIN / SPREAD / SCALE your innovation through June 2024.

Essential Expenditures:

- Classroom and Community Coordinator salary \$32,000
- Staff stipends for lesson plan creation \$3,000
- Expansion of Greenhouse area into an ADA accessible Edible Schoolyard \$45,000
- Expansion of ADA accessible portion of Nature Trail \$20,000

Necessary Resources:

- existing Nature Trail
- existing Greenhouse
- Haystack Mountain School of Crafts
- Healthy Island Project
- Island Heritage Trust (land trust)
- High school student volunteers seeking community service hours

- B. Describe budget expenditures and necessary resources required to MAINTAIN / SPREAD / SCALE your innovation BEYOND June 2024

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.

Essential Expenditures:

- Classroom and Community Coordinator position combined with the After School Program site manager as a full time position: \$32,000.
- replacement of gear - rain pants, warm/waterproof gloves, boots: \$1,000
- replacement of equipment used for outdoors (e.g. wooden benches, storage containers, binoculars, hand held microscopes, hand lenses): \$1,000
- buildings and grounds staff time for trail maintenance: \$3,000

Necessary Resources:

- expanded Nature Trail with two ADA accessible classrooms
- Greenhouse and Edible Schoolyard
- Haystack Mountain School of Crafts
- Healthy Island Project
- Island Heritage Trust (land trust)
- High school student volunteers seeking community service hours
-