

Supporting Maine's Education Innovation and Improvement Through Rethinking K-12 Models Education Grant

ED# 2020-R1-U-0009



High-Leverage Problem

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, there were large gaps in high school graduation rates, high school dropout rates, college persistence, and college completion across socioeconomic status, racial and ethnic groups, English learner status, and disability status in. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and further exacerbated existing inequities and challenges, especially for rural students and students of color who disproportionately represent the state's COVID-19 cases. To help to address this issue, Commissioner Makin and her administrative team have committed to finding innovative solutions to these problems. As a result of these efforts, Maine DOE was awarded a Rethinking K-12 Education Models Grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support districts in designing and implementing innovative solutions to systemic challenges. The R1CC was asked to support the Maine DOE in implementing the grant.



R1CC Approach

Because the grant team was small and new within the department, the R1CC technical assistance activities prioritized supporting the Maine DOE in developing the infrastructure for the innovation grants, including serving as a thought partner and materials developer as the Maine DOE made critical decisions related to the grant. Activities included co-developing the district innovation pilot application grant, co-developing innovation course criteria for Maine institutions, co-developing a communication plan and supporting materials to promote awareness of the grant, and co-developing a district training module series that supported district teams in designing an innovation model based on their specific problem of practice, data, student population, capacity, and goals.

Key Partner(s): Maine Department of Education

Key Milestones

- Defined Rethinking Responsive Education Ventures (RREV) innovation application criteria.
- Developed innovation pilot course proposal criteria and template for Maine's institutions.
- Developed resources to promote RREV grant awareness.
- Developed a training module series to deepen understanding of the components of an innovation pilot.

→ Outputs

- District innovation application template defining the criteria for quality innovation plans
- Innovation pilot course criteria and template for Maine's institutions
- Webinar to build awareness of critical components of RREV application and communication collateral (video, infographic)
- Training module series focusing on the components of an innovation pilot, including evidence-based strategies to support innovative solutions for local problems of practice

Outcomes

“There’s a million different things that we have learned from the individuals that are working [at R1CC]. ... The level of professionalism that everybody brings is bar none. And so, I really appreciate the level of professionalism that everybody brings to this project. It’s created a culture of collegiality that I’m very grateful to be a part of.”