

## RREV School Snapshot – Lawrence High School

### Background

In June 2020, the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) was awarded a \$16.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Rethink K–12 Education Models program to implement the Rethinking Responsive Education Ventures (RREV) program. The overarching purpose of RREV is to support Maine educators to create, implement, and disseminate responsive and innovative educational models that help all students learn and thrive.

### Pilot Description

In September 2022, Lawrence High School (Lawrence) received an award from RREV to implement its pilot project that has two components: the Lawrence Education Alternative Program (L.E.A.P) and the interdisciplinary Community-Focused Project-Based Learning (CFPBL) Program. This pilot is in the Multiple Pathways category.

The goals of this pilot are to:

- Support students most at-risk for not graduating.
- Re-engage students who are currently disengaged with and who struggle with the traditional model of education.

Key activities of this pilot include:

- Teacher teams work with students to create authentic learning experiences in students' own communities.
- L.E.A.P. students develop an individualized learning plan that is centered on their interests.
- L.E.A.P. students complete a post-secondary plan that include college, career, and military options; all L.E.A.P. seniors will leave with a detailed plan and connection made to specific workforce, college, or military support professionals.
- Lawrence cultivates relationships with community partners (e.g., Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce, Alford Youth Center, Jobs for Maine Graduates, the Central Maine Growth Council, and Junior Achievement) to provide workforce exposure, career workshops, financial literacy education, and internship/apprenticeship opportunities to students.

### Exhibit: RREV Award Summary

#### Budget

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Personal Services – Salaries and Stipend	\$33,424		
Employee Benefits	\$21,576		
Purchased Professional and Technical Services	\$5,000		
General Supplies	\$22,500		
Property, Hardware, and Vehicles	\$165,000		
Miscellaneous – Instructional Field Trips	\$2,500		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>

- 12-22 students directly involved in L.E.A.P.; Over 100 students directly involved in CFPBL program
- Grades 10-12 served for L.E.A.P; Grades 9-12 served for CFPBL Program.
- Two teachers directly involved with L.E.A.P.; all teachers involved with CFPBL program.

### Responsiveness of the pilot

Lawrence's pilot is responsive to local needs and/or assets because:

- **It creates alternative pathways that are of critical need to students most at risk for not graduating.** A substantial minority of Lawrence students (approximately 20 percent) are at risk for not graduating based on myriad educational factors, including attendance, grades, home stability, and school behaviors. Many of these students have social, emotional, and behavioral needs that regular classroom teachers have struggled to address. For some of these students, the size and expansiveness of the physical campus is a barrier to their learning; for others, the traditional model of punitive discipline has resulted in suspensions that have disrupted their schooling. The L.E.A.P. program addresses all these barriers to graduation by creating alternative pathways that are of critical need for these students to meet graduation standards and requirements, to address their social and emotional needs, and to cultivate post-secondary aspirations.
- **It provides an engaging approach to learning that is in high demand amongst the Lawrence student body.** According to student surveys, there is a disconnect between the type of learning some students desire, and the type of learning that teachers provide. In a survey completed by 9th-11th graders, students were asked to rate how often their classroom lessons were engaging and interactive. The frequency average was 5.63 (the lowest of the survey). When asked how important this type of learning was to them on a similar scale (10 being most important), the average was 8.01 – the second most important statement in the survey. The interdisciplinary CFPBL Program addresses this gap by creating authentic learning experiences where students will identify, understand, and work to solve problems in their own communities.

### Innovativeness of the pilot

Lawrence's pilot is innovative because:

- **It encourages teachers to think beyond the boundaries of the traditional education model at Lawrence.** While providing responsive educational pathways to students that are tailored to their needs and aspirations is not necessarily new to the field of education, it is a significant shift for Lawrence High School. According to the Academic Dean of Students, the educational model at Lawrence as “mostly traditional” and this model is a significant “game-changer” for students, as it simultaneously includes a tier three intensive support program and a tier two targeted intervention program.

### Sustainability of the pilot

Lawrence's sustainability strategy includes:

- **The Ed Tech III position for L.E.A.P. will be included in the MSAD49 budget for the 2023/24 school year.** The intensive one-on-one nature of the L.E.A.P. program requires an Ed Tech position, which accounts for \$50,000 of Lawrence's total RREV budget. The Academic Dean of

Students explained that there was always a desire for an alternative program at Lawrence and that the school and the school board had already been working on an operational and budgetary plan for this program prior to the RREV funding announcement.

- **Secure a continual funding stream.** Throughout the pilot year, Lawrence intends to leverage community and higher education resources, as well as investigate other grant opportunities and the possibility of creating a foundation that will work as a funding stream for the L.E.A.P. and CFPBL programs.
- **Encourage teacher buy-in.** The Academic Dean of Students described how teachers do not have the capacity to devote ample amounts of time to matters outside traditional classroom functions. As a result, a key source of sustainability will come from a systemic approach to change wherein the teachers involved in the pilot projects share their experiences and act as mentors for their colleagues. Further, school leaders should work to develop ways to make these programs easier for teachers to implement, thereby creating more buy-in and creating a foundation for the projects to continue year after year.