Open Educational Resources Project

Project Background

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning resources that can be freely used, adapted, and shared.

OER enable continuous adaptation and updating of learning resources. By sharing and adapting educational materials, content acquisition costs can be cut dramatically, allowing schools to make better use of available resources.

Washington is proud to be the first state to pass legislation funding full-time staff to oversee the development of a library of reviewed resources and work with districts to explore OER as an important part of their instructional materials strategy

OSPI OER Project Information

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OER Program Manager
Learning and Teaching Department
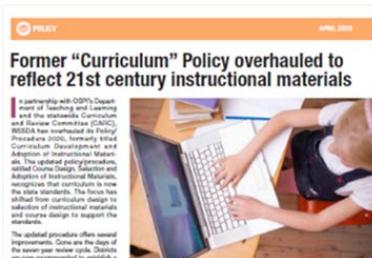OSPI
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OER Project
Reviewed OER Library
Learning and Teaching
Washington Hub on OER Commons

OER Project Efforts

Model Instructional Materials Policy

Former "Curriculum" Policy overhauled to reflect 21st century instructional materials

OSPI collaborated with the Washington State School Directors' Association to craft a new model instructional materials selection policy that includes consideration of OER and digital materials.

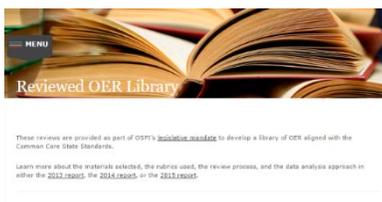2020 Course Design, Selection, and Adoption of Instructional Materials

OER Awareness

OER Summits and presentations reach district stakeholders and promote cross-district discussion around the benefits and challenges of implementing OER and strategies for effective OER implementation. Washington appears as a selected state OER initiative in CCSSO's OER Stories, Policies, and Resources and in the State Educational Technology Directors' Association's OER in Action: Implementation Case Studies.

OER Key Considerations for Districts

Helpful Resources for Using OER

OER Review

Reviewed OER Library

The Reviewed OER Library is a catalog of openly-licensed material that has been reviewed for alignment with state learning standards. Expert teachers from across the state reviewed OER using the same rubrics that would be used for traditionally published material. This library includes reviews and links to 24 full course mathematics curricula and 60 ELA units

Reviewed OER Library

OER Grants

Since 2013, 19 OER grants have been distributed, directly impacting 2,641 teachers and 69,176 students. These small, competitive grants are provided to districts developing their own OER core instructional materials or creating OER users' groups to share ideas, define best practices, and champion effective distribution and implementation of resources.

OER Grants

    Washington State Engage NY Math Users' Group

    Southwest Washington STEM Materials Collaborative

Visit other grantees and groups developing OER on the Washington OER Commons Hub

#GoOpen Washington

Washington is pleased to join the #GoOpen initiative, adding its voice to a cohort of states recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for their commitment to support school districts and educators transitioning to the use of quality, openly-licensed educational resources in their schools.

Due to Washington's experience the OER Project has played a large role in providing guidance to the initiative. Two Washington districts (Bethel School District and Puyallup School District) serve as ambassador schools in the #GoOpen campaign.

#GoOpen initiative

OER Commons Washington Hub

The OER Commons Washington Hub is the place where districts curating and creating OER can share their resources. Districts creating OER can either post links to their resources or use the authoring tools directly within the Hub. The Washington Hub is searchable across all districts and users may review materials using the platform-embedded EQuIP and Achieve OER rubrics.

OER Commons Washington Hub

OSPI Open Policy

OSPI has launched a new open policy that requires all copyrightable intellectual property created by OSPI employees, contractors, and grantees to be openly licensed. This policy will allow all stakeholders to realize the educational impact from the substantial investments the state, the federal government, and private foundations make in educational resources created by or for OSPI.

OSPI Copyright and Open Licensing Policy

More Information

In the news

Achieve the Core - Aligned guest blog: Introduction to Open Educational Resources & Open Educational Resources in Action

Education Week: Districts Put Open Educational Resources to Work

District Administration: Schools Maximize Free Content

Samsung Insights - Open Source Textbooks and Resources are Poised to Transform K-12 Education

THE Journal: How Washington is using OER to Support Common Core

State Educational Technology Directors' Association – Washington OER Case Studies

Council for Chief State School Officers – Washington OER Stories

Council for Chief State School Officers – OER YouTube channel

Open Educational Resources Project – Washington Success Stories

Open Educational Resources (OER) are learning resources that can be freely used, adapted, and shared.

Since legislation passed in 2012 (RCW 28A.300.803), the K–12 OER Project has advocated for OER as an important part of the instructional materials ecosystem. Washington is receiving considerable recognition nationally for this leadership -- from the Council of Chief State School Officers, the State Educational Technology Directors' Association, and the U.S. Department of Education.

Why OER?
- Provide equity of access to strong content material
- Empower teachers to update content and personalize learning
- Promote professional learning through collaborative materials adaptation and development
- Shift costs from content to other areas to support learning and teaching.
- Leverage technology

OER Summits, presentations, and trainings have reached educators in over half of Washington's school districts. Twenty-three district collaborations have received small, competitive grants for adapting, developing, or implementing openly licensed resources. To date, the state has invested $1.25 million to support OER. Four districts alone can account for nearly $1 million in cost savings, making OER an excellent return on investment.

Teachers Directly Impacted	Students Directly Impacted	Cost Savings *reported by 5 grant districts*
1,857	69,176	$ 1,074,000

Teachers and students directly impacted by 23 OER Project grants

Below are some highlights from districts implementing full-course OER.

PUYALLUP SCHOOL DISTRICT
OER Project Grantee 2017–2018

District panelists from Tumwater, Eatonville, and Puyallup at OER Summit.

While the financial savings have been significant, the money saved was utilized in the OER development process to provide genuine teacher collaboration around instruction which ultimately improves student outcomes.

I think that Open Educational Resources are key to having equity for all our districts.

Tracy Pitzer
Director of Instructional Leadership, Curriculum and Materials
Puyallup School District

Resources:
High School Civics
AP Human Geography
Spanish I-IV (in development)
Puyallup School District Group on OER Commons
Washington Hub

Approximate savings to district: $755,590

TUMWATER SCHOOL DISTRICT
OER Project Grantee 2016–2017

FEATURE

Administrators consider teachers' professional learning needs in using digital, OER resources
Education DIve, September 2017

Resources:

High School: Mathematics Vision Project

Middle School (piloting now): Open Up Resources Math by Illustrative Mathematics

Tumwater School District has implemented core OER math instructional materials for middle and high school students.
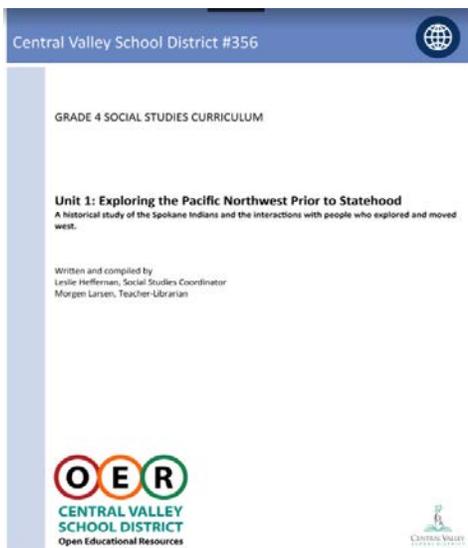
With the funds the district normally would have spent on textbooks, officials are giving teachers release time from class and paying them for extra hours so they can observe and learn from each other.

David Parascand
Math TOSA
Tumwater School District

Approximate savings to district: $68,000

CENTRAL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
OER Project Grantee 2016–2017, 2017–2018

This project utilizes the openly-licensed Since Time Immemorial (STI) curriculum to create engaging learning opportunities. Created materials are available to all districts for adaptation to their own region.

Teachers and students now know more about local Washington State history than they had before because we were able to dive into resources at a local level. We've also developed a relationship with the Spokane Tribe, which has been a HUGE benefit to our district teachers and students.

Leslie Heffernan
Social Studies Coordinator
Central Valley School District

Approximate savings to district: $106,000

Resources:

Central Valley School District Group on OER Commons Washington Hub

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT 112
OER Project Grantee 2016–2017, 2017–2018

Development and adaptation of OER acts as a model for district administrators to consider before rushing into purchasing published materials that may not uphold the NGSS standards. One unit was co-developed with a STEM school in South Florida.

As project director, I was able to connect groups of teachers here in Washington with the teachers at Jamerson to share the development of the unit...

Vickei Hrdina
STEM Director

Resources:
STEM Materials Collaborative website
Group on OER Commons Washington Hub

OAK HARBOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OER Project Grantee 2017–2018

Since chemistry and physics are not classes traditionally taken by the general population, Oak Harbor is using openly-licensed instructional materials and NGSS frameworks to develop a course that's targeted to a general audience.

Sinking our money into collaboration, planning and adapting means that we empower, engage, and excite our own people thereby increasing investment and efforts at responding to student need.

Peter Szalai
Director of Teaching and Learning
Oak Harbor Public Schools

EVERGREEN AND VANCOUVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Washington's OER Project played a pivotal role in the formation of the K–12 OER Collaborative, a group of 12 states with the goal of creating comprehensive, high quality, standards-aligned OER supporting K–12 mathematics and English language arts. Open Up Resources is the non-profit that evolved from this collaboration.

Their first offering, middle-school math, written by Illustrative Mathematics is now available for district adoption consideration. Both Vancouver and Evergreen Public Schools were beta-release pilot districts that provided invaluable feedback in the development of this resource.

We adopted the Illustrative Mathematics curriculum district-wide because we saw huge increases in student engagement with the materials. Students were constantly talking about math, using precise language, and constructing mathematically sound arguments. The curriculum facilitates productive struggle for our learners, and teachers have been excited to shift their instruction from being the 'sage on the stage' to the 'guide on the side.

Corrine Williams
Mathematics Specialist
Evergreen Public Schools

Resources: Open Up Resources Math by Illustrative Mathematics
Open Up Resources Webinar from Pilot Districts
Open Up Resources/Illustrative Math Review on EdReports

EFFICACY: Further examples of efficacy and OER implementation case studies are needed to measure impact of OER on student learning.

In a study from Utah, researchers looked at data to compare how students using open and traditional textbooks performed in their science classes. When examining specific courses, researchers didn't find significant differences in outcomes in earth systems and biology courses, but they did find that students using open textbooks in chemistry courses performed significantly better.[1]

ACCESS: Though print options are available for many OER, in order to take full advantage of digital open resources, a network and internet infrastructure is critical. As districts look to shift to a one-to-one computing environment, where every student has a tablet, laptop, or other device, OER is a cost-effective way to provide digital content.

STAFF CAPACITY: Teachers need opportunities for sustained professional learning in using digital tools, locating OER, evaluating quality, understanding licensing, and adapting resources. Many online professional learning communities focused on OER are evolving to help meet this need.

POLICIES: Local districts and school boards often have existing policies and practices related to instructional materials adoption that need to be revised in order to encourage the use, adaptation, and development of open resources.

WASHINGTON OER PROJECT

In 2012, the Washington State Legislature directed the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to create a collection of openly licensed courseware aligned with state learning standards and an associated awareness and professional development campaign. The Legislature saw this as an opportunity to both "reduce the expenses that districts would otherwise incur in purchasing these materials" and "provide districts and students with a broader selection of materials, and materials that are more up-to-date." Goals for the project are:

1. Ongoing OER awareness and capacity building.

2. Development support and review of district adapted and created OER.

3. Creation and maintenance of an OER Library

FOR MORE INFORMATION

OER PROJECT
k12.wa.us/oer

REVIEWED OER LIBRARY
k12.wa.us/oer/library.aspx

WASHINGTON HUB ON OER COMMONS
www.oercommons.org/hubs/washington

OER PROGRAM MANAGER
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[1] T. Jared Robinson, Lane Fischer, David Wiley, and John Hilton, III. "The Impact of Open Textbooks on Secondary Science Learning Outcomes." *Educational Researcher*, Vol 43, Issue 7, pp. 341 – 351.