Washington K-12 Open Educational Resources Project

Open Educational Resources
Considerations for School Districts

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Open Educational Resources (OER) are freely available teaching and learning materials that can be downloaded, edited, and shared to better serve all students. OER include content such as textbooks, lesson plans, assignments, games, and other educational materials. They can be produced in any medium: paper-based text, video, audio, or computer-based multimedia.

Since OER are free to use, adapt, and share:

- They give districts **flexibility to shift funds** from content acquisition to other critical areas that support learning and teaching.
- They **empower districts** to make adaptations to support their students.
- Most importantly, they **promote equitable access** to strong materials for all students.

What is the difference between OER and free digital learning resources?

Openly licensed and free digital educational resources both can be used for teaching, learning, and assessment without cost. However, only OER have permission from the copyright holder to download, adapt, retain, and redistribute the materials. So, while all OER are free, not all free resources are OER. See the table below for a comparison between OER, free digital learning resources, and proprietary textbooks.

Type	Cost	License	Flexibility
Openly Licensed Educational Resources	Free or minimal cost (i.e. non-electronic print costs)	Open license (Creative Commons or other similar)	Yes; generally licensed to allow free use and repurposing by others (some restrictions and exceptions apply)
Free Digital Learning Resources	Free	Copyright Restricted	Varies; limited ability to use and repurpose without permission from owner/creator
Proprietary Textbooks	Variable costs	Copyright Restricted	No; owner has the right to control the copying and dissemination of an original work

Open Versus Free table by SETDA, used under CC-BY 3.0/Modified from original

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS WHEN ADOPTING OER

Introduce OER to stakeholders

Engage local school and district administrators, curriculum specialists, technology specialists, school boards, teachers, and parents in the discussion about OER to increase awareness and clarify goals. Goals may include:

- Shift funds from content acquisition to increased professional learning
- Adopt more current, updateable instructional material
- Fill curricular gaps in order to meet Common Core standards
- Leverage technology and provide digital content to students

Resources:

[Washington K-12 Open Educational Resources Project](#) | Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

[OER Basics](#) | Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)   *short YouTube videos*

[Navigating the New Curriculum Landscape: How States are Using and Sharing Open Educational Resources](#) | New America, CCSSO

[Introduction to Open Educational Resources](#) | Aligned Blog, Student Achievement Partners

[#GoOpen District Launch Packet](#) | US Department of Education Office of Educational Technology

Recognize the need for ongoing professional learning

What professional learning will be required to teach how to effectively locate, evaluate, adapt, and implement open resources?

What supports are in place to provide clarity on licensing types, understanding levels of permission for remixing open resources, and providing proper attribution?

If necessary, what technology training will be required?

Consider the creation of OER User Groups to support teachers implementing a specific resource and create a community of practice that shares implementation resources and best practices.

Resources

[Open Washington](#) | State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

[OER Commons Washington Hub: OER Development Group](#) | Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

[EngageNY Washington State Math Users' Group](#)

[District and State Leaders Discuss Lessons Learned from OER Implementation](#) | International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and New America   *short YouTube videos*

Discuss how OER will be delivered

Openly licensed content can be produced in any medium: paper-based, video, audio or computer-based multimedia. What material format will you need to provide - digital or print? If digital, make sure educational technology staff is pulled into these discussions early on.

Digital

Consider what device will be used to access the material. Does the material need to be incorporated into a learning management system (LMS)?

Will increased broadband capacity or technology infrastructure be required? How will students without home devices or internet connectivity access the materials? Are there other student accessibility issues that need to be addressed?

Though the material licensing is free, will technology purchases/upgrades be required for access or delivery? What sustainable funding for devices is required?

Print

What are the printing costs involved with having material published? Explore options and compare pricing through a print-on-demand service, in-house print services, OER developer partnerships, or existing state or district agreements with printers/copy centers.

Resources:
[Navigating the Digital Shift 2018: Broadening Student Learning Opportunities](#) | State Educational Technology Director's Association (SETDA)
[Instructional Materials Review – Technology Questions](#) | Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Strategize determination of quality and alignment to standards

How will materials be vetted? What instruments will be used to gauge alignment to state learning standards and district priorities?

If school board policies require the same resource across the district, consider an annual review cycle of OER instructional material, with an agreed upon version for use by teachers during the school year. Consider allocating ongoing staff development time for the updating and adaptation of resources, if new curricular versions will be rolled out on a regular basis.

Who will be trusted to approve material – will reviews from other districts/states be accepted?

Discuss how much teacher adaptation of approved material is allowed or encouraged.

Resources
[Course Design and Instructional Materials Adoption Guidance](#) | Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)
[Achieve the Core Toolkit for the Alignment of Materials](#) | Student Achievement Partners
[EdReports](#) (reviews of both traditionally published and OER core instructional materials in math, ELA, and science)

Discuss changes to existing policies that apply to the usage and creation of OER

Update instructional materials adoption policies that rigidly define textbooks or curricular materials with more flexible language that includes consideration of OER.

Enable more flexible use of instructional materials budgets. This funding could support development and adaptation of OER and technology infrastructure.

Clarify the current district policy regarding copyrighting of created material and emphasize that materials created by state, regional, or local entities using public funds will hold an open license for sharing, collaboration, and access for all educators and students.

Resources

OER Resources for Policy Makers | CCSSO

Model Policy on Instructional Materials Selection and Adoption | Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA)

Discuss how the impact of OER will be measured

How will the effects of OER on student learning be measured –standardized test results, teacher and student observations and suggestions?

How will the cost shifting potential of OER be determined?

What is the process improvement pathway? How will feedback be used to strengthen teaching and learning over time?

Resources

The Impact of Open Textbooks on Secondary Science Learning Outcomes | Robinson, Fischer, Wiley, Hilton

Creating and Adopting Open High School Science Textbooks |Wiley and Young

Review case studies of districts implementing OER

Take OER out of the realm of the theoretical and see how districts are addressing the effective implementation of open resources.

Resources

[OER Commons Washington Hub](look in content area groups for district-developed OER courses and units)

[PreK-12 Districts Using OER](#) | New America

[Districts Put Open Educational Resources to Work](#) (Education Week 2015)

NOTE: THE USE OF OER DOES NOT PRECLUDE THE USE OF COMMERCIAL CONTENT

Many high-quality educational materials are available for purchase and, in certain circumstances; their use may be more affordable than attempts to produce that content openly or address content areas not well represented by existing OER. Thus, the most cost-effective way to develop and procure resources for use in teaching and learning is to explore all available options.

WHAT IS THE K-12 OER PROJECT?

The [Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction](#)(OSPI) OER Project raises OER awareness and provides support for school districts adapting, developing, and implementing openly-licensed instructional materials. Our goals include:

- Ongoing OER awareness and capacity building.
- Development support and review of district adapted and created OER.
- Creation and maintenance of an OER Library

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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