OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Considerations for School Districts

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials that are freely available that can be downloaded, edited and shared to better serve all students. OER include all kinds of 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.

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:

- Save money on content acquisition to enable shifting funds to other critical areas
- Adopt more current, updateable instructional material
- Fill curricular gaps in order to meet Common Core standards
- Adapt resources to localize content or personalize learning
- Provide equitable access to quality instructional materials
- Leverage technology and provide digital content to students

Resources:

Washington K-12 Open Educational Resources Project Resource Page | Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Why Open Education Matters Contest Winners (video)

OER YouTube playlist | Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

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

P2PU School of Open

Open Washington | State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

OER Commons Washington Hub: OER Development Group | OSPI

EngageNY Washington State Math Users’ Group
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, or existing state or district agreements with printers.

Resources:
Navigating the Digital Shift 2018: Broadening Student Learning Opportunities | State Educational Technology Director’s Association (SETDA)
Instructional Materials Review – Technology Questions | OSPI
Print On Demand Services: Lulu, CreateSpace, Lightning Source

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
OER Review Process and Rubrics | OSPI
Course Design and Instructional Materials Adoption Guidance | OSPI
Achieve the Core Toolkit for the Alignment of Materials | Student Achievement Partners

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.
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?

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.

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.

REFERENCES:

FOR MORE INFORMATION
OER PROJECT
k12.wa.us/oer

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

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

OER PROGRAM MANAGER
Barbara Soots
barbara.soots@k12.wa.us
@waOSPI_OER

This work by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.