



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

## UPDATE: Open Educational Resources (OER) Project

December 2017

**Authorizing legislation:** RCW 28A.300.803

(<http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.300.803>)

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## Executive Summary

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning resources that can be freely used, adapted, and shared. They have the capacity to provide equitable opportunities to access strong content materials for all students and enable flexibility to reallocate resources to support teaching and learning.

RCW 28A.300.803 authorizes OSPI to identify and develop a library of openly licensed courseware aligned with Washington State K–12 Learning Standards. It also requires OSPI to advertise the availability of openly licensed courseware, identify an open courseware repository, and provide associated professional development programs.

During the 2015–17 biennium, OSPI accomplished the following:

- Expanded the [Reviewed OER Library](#) to include K–2 ELA full courses in addition to 6–12 ELA units and mathematics full courses.
- Created a [Washington Hub on OER Commons](#) for districts to share developed OER.
- Continued a grant program to support districts as they adapt, develop, or implement OER. This biennium, 924 teachers and 23,655 students have been directly impacted.
- Hosted seven OER Summits in eastern and western Washington, reaching educators from 66 school districts.
- Delivered OER awareness presentations at professional conferences, meetings, and webinars across the state and nationwide to over 3,700 attendees.
- Joined the [#GoOpen initiative](#), with Washington adding its voice to a cohort of twenty states recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for their commitment to support school districts transitioning to the use of quality OER in their schools.
- Acted as co-lead for #GoOpen Initiative Content Vetting and Acquisition Workgroup - jointly sponsored by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the US Department of Education.
- Developed [OSPI Copyright and Open Licensing Policy](#), becoming the first K-12 state department of education that requires open licensing for all educational materials created by staff, contractors, or grantees.

Since the OER project inception, professional learning events have been attended by participants from over half of Washington’s school districts. Twenty-three school district collaborations received small, competitive OER grants. To date, the state has invested \$1.25 million to support OER. Four grant districts reported savings on their final reports (Tumwater, Puyallup, Mead, and Selkirk) that alone can account for nearly 1 million in cost savings, making OER an excellent return on investment.

RCW 28A.300.803, which outlines the Open Educational Resources (OER) project, is set to expire June 30, 2018. The loss of a dedicated program at the state level will limit OSPI’s ability to provide ongoing guidance about the effective inclusion and successful implementation of OER as an important part of the instructional materials ecosystem.

## Background

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license. These resources may be used free of charge, distributed without restriction, and modified without permission, 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.

OER show promise in improving student outcomes<sup>1</sup>. They provide more empowerment opportunities for teachers and are available to all districts.

Additional benefits of OER are as follows:

- **Equity of access** - OER have the capacity to provide opportunities to access strong content materials for all students. In a letter from NAACP, the organization states that “OER can help school districts in their efforts to close elusive achievement gaps by providing resources that many educational institutions could not otherwise economically afford.”<sup>2</sup>
- **Freedom to update content** - OER quality improves over time by enabling continuous adaptation and updating of learning resources.
- **Professional learning** - Collaboration on the creation of up-to-date material designed to meet student needs provides an incredible professional learning opportunity and promotes educator ownership in district instructional materials and their effectiveness.
- **Cost-shifting** - By sharing and adapting educational materials, content acquisition costs can be cut dramatically, allowing schools to reallocate resources to support learning and teaching.
- **Leverage technology** - 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.
- **Reduce duplication of efforts** - As more districts develop or adapt openly licensed instructional materials, there is a tremendous opportunity to share knowledge on a wide scale.

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<sup>1</sup> Lane Fischer, John Hilton, T. Jared Robinson and David Wiley. "The Impact of Open Textbooks on Secondary Science Learning Outcomes." *Educational Researcher* 43.7 (2014): 341-51. Web. <<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/0013189X14550275>>.)

<sup>2</sup> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Open Educational Resources: Equity & Opportunity. <<http://www.naacp.org/campaigns/open-education-resources-equity-opportunities/>>

Based on legislative directive and educator input, the OER Project workgroup planned a three-pronged strategy:

1. **OER Awareness and Capacity Building:** Increase district awareness of openly licensed resources and provide districts with the resources to locate, evaluate, and implement OER.
2. **OER Review:** Develop a review process to evaluate alignments to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and act as a model for districts considering OER.
3. **OER Library Creation:** Develop a catalog of openly licensed material reviewed for alignment with the CCSS. Include links to other open courseware available to school districts free of charge.

## Update Status

### OER Awareness and Capacity Building

#### OER Summits

During the 2015-17 biennium, OSPI partnered with regional Educational Service Districts to host seven OER Summits in eastern and western Washington reaching educators in 66 school districts.

These events explored the benefits of OER, highlighted instruments to review materials for alignment to state learning standards, and provided content specific sessions to support integration. Each event featured interactive sessions with districts on the front lines of OER implementation. District teams representing curriculum, administration, and technology expertise were encouraged to attend.

After attending the OER summit, 90 percent of participants said they would recommend OER to their district, with only 10 percent uncertain, and no negative responses.

#### Grants for OER Implementation and Development

During the 2015-17 biennium, ten school districts or ESD collaborations received grants totaling \$175,319. These small, competitive grants were awarded to districts adapting, developing, or implementing openly licensed resources.

Though these grants directly impacted 924 teachers and 23,655 students, any developed resources were openly licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution](#) license. This provides a tremendous opportunity to share resources widely across districts and reduce duplication of efforts.

Dates	Teachers Directly Impacted	Students Directly Impacted	Cost Savings <i>reported by 4 grant districts</i>
2015-2017	924	23,655	
Total since grant program inception (2013)	1,857	69,176	\$ 968,000

Table 1: Teachers and students directly impacted by OER Project grants.

Below is a partial list of projects:

- Tumwater School District: Adapting OER to Support Struggling Students
- ESD 112: [Regional STEM Instructional Materials Collaborative](#)
- Central Valley School District: [Since Time Immemorial Elementary Integration OER Project](#)
- ESD 121: [EngageNY/Eureka Math User Group](#): A Shared Framework for Cooperative Effort

Visit other grantees developing OER on the [Washington OER Commons Hub](#)

- [2015-16 Grant Awards](#) | Final Report
- [2016-17 Grant Awards](#) | Final Report

## OSPI Open Policy

Working with OSPI contracts, grants, and legal units, the OER Project led the development and implementation of 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](#)

## #GoOpen

In 2016, Washington joined 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.

OER Program Manager, Barbara Soots, acted as co-lead for #GoOpen Initiative Content Vetting and Acquisition Workgroup—jointly sponsored by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the US Department of Education. This group worked with the State Educational Technology Director's Association (SETDA) on an online Guide to Quality Instructional Materials that highlights OER.

- [#GoOpen Initiative | U.S. Department of Education](#)
- [Guide to Quality Instructional Materials | SETDA](#)

## Additional Collaborations

- In collaboration with Washington's Curriculum Advisory Review Committee (CARC), OER Program Manager Barbara Soots developed the [Course Design and Instructional Materials Selection and Adoption Toolkit](#). This guidance for districts weaves in OER options for instructional material selection throughout the resource.
- The OER Project collaborated with the OSPI Social Studies Department and Cadre to create the openly licensed [Washington Quality Review Rubric for Social Studies Lessons and Units](#) and the [College, Career, and Civic Life \(C3\) Hub](#) on OER Commons.
- OER Program Manager Barbara Soots acted as a state advisory board member for [Open Up Resources](#), the non-profit that evolved from the K-12 OER Collaborative, where Washington was a lead partner. Full-course open mathematics from Illustrative Mathematics and ELA from EL Education are now available for the 2017-2018 school year.

For a partial list of OER Project presentations, interviews, and articles, see [Appendix B](#).

## OER Review

RCW 28A.300.803 requires OSPI to identify and develop a library of openly licensed courseware aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The OER Project facilitated a fourth review of OER in Spring 2017. For this review cycle, OSPI evaluated full-course K-2 English Language Arts (ELA) from [Bookworms – Comprehensive Reading Solutions](#) and [Core Knowledge Language Arts \(CKLA\)](#).

Ten ELA reviewers with subject matter expertise and deep familiarity with the CCSS were selected from a competitive pool of applicants. Reviewers were chosen from across the state, representing a variety of teaching environments from large districts to small schools in both rural and urban areas. All reviewers demonstrated deep expertise in K-2 ELA/Literacy and experience with the review instruments being used for this effort.

Overall, the findings indicated strong choices for educators seeking K-2 core instructional material with alignment to the CCSS.

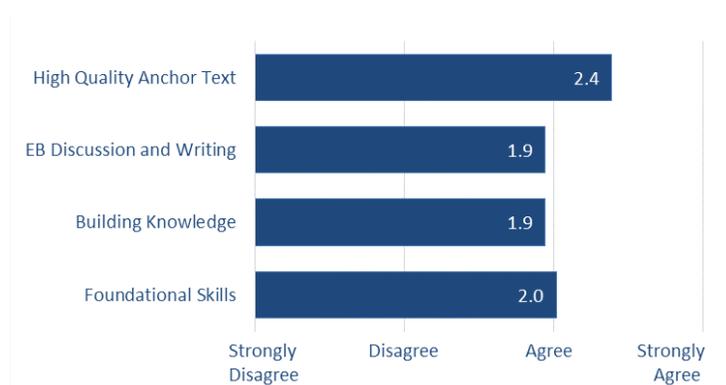


Figure 1: Average of all reviewed K-2 resources using the Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET) from Student Achievement Partners.

Reviewers found that each of the reviewed resources met many to all of the criteria for CCSS alignment and addressing the key shifts in the CCSS. In addition, high quality texts were a strength for both developers. For detailed review findings, see the 2017 OER Review Report.

- [2017 OER Review Report](#)

## OER Library

### Reviewed OER Library and Links to Other Open Courseware

OSPI’s reviewed OER library includes detailed information for each resource included in the OER project’s four review cycles, including scores on all rubrics, extensive reviewer comments, and supplemental metadata. Currently, information is available for:

- 15 full-course mathematics OER for grades 6-12
- 6 full-course English Language Arts OER for grades K-2
- 58 English Language Arts/Literacy OER units (3-6 week) for grades 6-12

GRADE SPAN	RESOURCE   DEVELOPER	REVIEW	IMET: Freedom from Obstacles to Focus scale 0-3	IMET: Focus and Coherence scale 0-3	IMET: Rigor and Balance scale 0-3	IMET: Standards for Math Practices scale 0-3	EquIP: Overall scale 0-12
K-2	<a href="#">Bookworms Grade 1   Comprehensive Reading Solutions</a>	<a href="#">Review</a>	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.5	7
K-2	<a href="#">Bookworms Grade 2   Comprehensive Reading Solutions</a>	<a href="#">Review</a>	2.4	1.8	1.6	1.6	6
K-2	<a href="#">Bookworms Grade K   Comprehensive Reading Solutions</a>	<a href="#">Review</a>	2.6	2.0	1.7	2.1	7
K-2	<a href="#">Core Knowledge Language Arts Grade 1   Core Knowledge Foundation</a>	<a href="#">Review</a>	2.5	2.0	2.4	2.4	11
K-2	<a href="#">Core Knowledge Language Arts Grade 2   Core Knowledge Foundation</a>	<a href="#">Review</a>	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.5	10
K-2	<a href="#">Core Knowledge Language Arts Grade K   Core Knowledge Foundation</a>	<a href="#">Review</a>	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.5	10

Figure 2: Screenshot of Reviewed OER Library.

- [Reviewed OER Library](#)

### OER Commons Washington Hub

As more districts develop or adapt openly licensed instructional materials, there is a tremendous opportunity to share resources and reduce duplication of efforts.

OSPI has partnered with [OER Commons](#) to create a Washington OER Hub. This is an online repository where OSPI grantees and collaborating groups can share their developed materials with districts across the state. Grantees 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](#) (Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products) and [Achieve OER rubrics](#).

OSPI has shared instructional materials from legislatively-mandated initiatives on the Washington Hub. Both the Since Time Immemorial – Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State and KNOW HIV/STD prevention curriculums are openly-licensed and linked to the

Hub. Future additions will include resources identified in the Digital Citizenship and Computer Science initiatives.

In order to ensure adherence to open licensing permissions and attribution requirements, the OER project provided professional learning opportunities to both internal stakeholders at OSPI and to districts developing or adapting OER.

- [OER Commons Washington Hub](#)

## Conclusion and Next Steps

Washington is the first state to pass legislation funding full-time staff to oversee the development of a collection of K–12 OER instructional materials aligned to state learning standards and promote OER awareness and adoption. The state is receiving considerable recognition nationally for this leadership.

Washington has advocated district consideration of OER. This message has been amplified by a similar push from the U.S. Department of Education encouraging districts and states to move away from traditional textbooks and toward freely accessible, openly licensed materials. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) specifically encourages states to support local efforts on making instructional content widely available through OER.

OER enable flexibility to reallocate resources to support teaching and learning and have the capacity to provide equitable opportunities to access strong content materials for all students, regardless of the fiscal situation in their school.

RCW 28A.300.803 is set to expire June 30, 2018. The loss of a dedicated program at the state level will limit OSPI’s ability to provide ongoing guidance about the effective inclusion and successful implementation of OER as an important part of the instructional materials ecosystem. [HB 1688](#), a bill to make the OER project permanent, will be reintroduced in the 2018 Legislative session.

Below are recommended next steps in the evolution of the OER Project, if this project were to continue. Each of the areas of OER focus—Awareness/Capacity Building, Resource Review/Development, and Library Expansion—include elements that help address Superintendent Reykdal’s top priority areas:

### **Improve academic achievement and close opportunity gaps**

1. Expand the library of high-quality openly licensed courseware by collaborating with districts on the adaptation and development of openly licensed instructional material that is aligned to state learning standards.
2. Include an additional target area on OER grant solicitations focused on development of assessments, core instructional material guidance resources for parents, and adaptations for at-risk student populations.
3. Continue OER Summits and other outreach events that provide critical guidance to the field about the selection of high-quality instructional materials and encourage

exploration of OER options that provide equitable opportunities to access strong content materials. Some of these events may be targeted to struggling schools to highlight open resources from exemplary schools and districts helping every student succeed.

### **Increase pathways to graduation**

- Assist districts and other content developers in making transition courses and supplemental instructional materials in support of ESHB 2224 openly licensed to the extent possible. These courses can be linked to the [Washington OER Commons Hub](#), ensuring equity of access to the materials. Openly licensed pathway courses would give districts more local control of content by providing the freedom to adapt materials to meet the unique needs of students and communities.

### **Improve our statewide assessment system**

- Continue to lead OSPI's instructional materials copyright and open policy implementation and support building staff in policy compliance, ensuring that all OSPI-developed model content assessments are openly licensed and available as templates for district adaptation.

# Acknowledgements

## OSPI OER Project Team

- Barbara Soots, OER Program Manager
- Anne Gallagher, Mathematics Director
- Katy Absten, Mathematics Specialist
- Aira Jackson, English Language Arts Director
- Molly Berger, ELA Specialist
- Carol Coe, Ph.D., Social Studies Supervisor
- Dennis Small, Educational Technology Director
- Kathe Taylor, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent, Learning and Teaching

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Legislation

Legislation: [Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 2337](#)

Revised Code of Washington

[RCW 28A.300.803](#)

### Appendix B: Washington OER Project Press and Video

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 (featured speaker)

Digital content leader shares plans for managing Washington's education resources – [EdScoop Interview \(2016\)](#)

[State Support for Open Educational Resources](#): Key Findings from Achieve's OER Institute [Update](#) from Achieve

EdScoop: EdTech Heroes - [25 State Leaders Making a Difference](#) (October 2017)

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