



The #GoOpen Initiative

The U.S. Department of Education's #GoOpen initiative encourages states to help school districts transform learning through open education resources. District and state leaders are working alongside education technology companies and nonprofit organizations to share the best strategies for educators to find, adapt, create, and share resources.

OER, or Open Educational Resources, boast a cost savings that improves educational access for hundreds of thousands of students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Using openly licensed educational materials has enabled many school districts to utilize funds typically spent on traditional textbooks for other needs. Statewide #GoOpen initiatives support school districts as they transition to the use of openly-licensed educational resources in their schools.

#GoOpen States will:

- Adopt/Implement a statewide technology strategy that includes the use of openly licensed resources as a central component.
- Develop and maintain a statewide repository solution for openly licensed resources.
- Develop the technical capability to publish OER to the Learning Registry.
- Participate in a community of practice with other #GoOpen states and districts to share learning resources and professional development resources.
- Create a webpage to share the commitment to #GoOpen and document the state's progress.

The #GoOpen initiative kicked off in October 2015 with 10 school districts pledging to use OERs during the 2016-2017 school year. Since this launch, school districts from 15 states have worked with #GoOpen Ambassador districts and innovators from education technology companies and nonprofit organizations. Companies and organizations including Microsoft and Edmodo have also made commitments to make OER materials from the Learning Registry more easily accessible.

The Department proposed new regulations that any tool developed with its federal grant funds will be required to have an open license, would which allow schools to use and modify those resources for free.

Nearly 40 community colleges throughout the U.S. made commitments in 2016 to establish entire degree programs based solely on OER. Governor Jerry Brown set aside \$5 million for OER degree programs in California community colleges. And these resources can create more personalized learning scenarios.

And it's not just educators that are utilizing open education resources. A Wiki Education Foundation report reveals that, in April 2016, students contributed 6 percent of all edits across all science-related articles on Wikipedia: creating—not just consuming—knowledge.

The need to increase access and reduce the education is clear, and OER offers a compelling solution. And, by raising awareness of traditional textbook alternatives, the #GoOpen campaign is a significant step toward achieving the promise of open education.