AN UPDATE TO THE OER INSTITUTE STATE PROFILES
ABOUT ACHIEVE

Achieve is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit education reform organization dedicated to working with states to raise academic standards and graduation requirements, improve assessments, and strengthen accountability. Created in 1996 by a bipartisan group of governors and business leaders, Achieve is leading the effort to make college and career readiness a priority across the country so that students graduating from high school are academically prepared for postsecondary success. When states want to collaborate on education policy or practice, they come to Achieve. At the direction of 48 states, and partnering with the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, Achieve helped develop the Common Core State Standards. Twenty-six states and the National Research Council asked Achieve to manage the process to write the Next Generation Science Standards. Achieve has also served as the project manager for states in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, which are developing next generation assessments. And since 2005, Achieve has worked with state teams, governors, state education officials, postsecondary leaders and business executives to improve postsecondary preparation by aligning key policies with the demands of the real world so that all students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to fully reach their promise in college, careers and life. For more information about the work of Achieve, visit www.achieve.org.
Open Educational Resources (OER) offer a solution for states and districts that seek low-cost solutions for instructional materials that are quality; are aligned to new, higher standards; and can be easily shared and modified to meet specific classroom needs. The advent of common, college- and career-ready standards creates opportunities to share OER across schools, districts and state borders.

To leverage these parallel efforts and support states and districts in implementing new college- and career-ready standards, Achieve continues to work with a collaborative of seven states that participated in the Achieve OER Institute: California, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota, North Carolina, Washington and Wisconsin. This work builds off of Achieve’s previous efforts to create a series of rubrics measuring OER alignment to standards and other attributes of quality.

The goals of the OER Institute are to:

- Facilitate discussion about the opportunities, challenges and implications of using OER in college- and career-ready standards implementation;
- Assist states in developing action plans to use OER; and
- Share tools, resources and recent developments in the field of OER.

In 2013, after a year of working with these states, Achieve released a policy brief that provided information about the OER Institute and listed key findings from this work and opportunities for cross-state collaboration. In addition, this policy brief included seven short appendices profiling each state’s plans for supporting the use of OER.

In the short time since, states have made significant progress in advancing the use of OER in classrooms. The field of OER is fast changing and focused on innovation, and Achieve thought it appropriate to compile an additional volume of state profiles to share more broadly the OER-focused efforts being made across some of the OER Institute states.

Each state profile will be separated into key updates on progress and future opportunities. Some examples of future opportunities include ongoing collaborations, plans for training teachers and technology tools under development.

As a reflection of the progress made in states using different strategies for supporting the use of OER as well as new, innovative ideas for changes in policy and practice, Achieve released a set of state policy recommendations for OER in 2015. These policy recommendations are intended to help administrators and policymakers advance the use of OER in their states. Both this set of updated state profiles and the OER state policy recommendations aim to help all states and districts use OER as part of their college- and career-ready standards implementation plans.

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1. OER are high-quality, openly licensed, online educational materials that offer an extraordinary opportunity for people everywhere to share, use and reuse knowledge.
2. These recommendations are available here: www.achieve.org/oer-rubrics
Key Updates on Progress

State leaders in California have identified a need for a central location where they can direct educators and administrators in need of quality resources aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Part of this need stems from the fact that in 2014, the state legislature elected to no longer fund the California Learning Resource Network (CLRN). CLRN was a project of the Stanislaus County Office of Education, supported by the California Department of Education, which provided an online resource for educators in search of supplemental, digital and openly licensed resources. The CLRN website and its resources are still accessible; however, future evaluations of resources will not occur, and new resources will not be added due to the lack of funding. Previously, a website called Brokers for Expertise also aimed to provide educators in California with digital instructional and professional development resources.

California has begun the process of finding a new web solution with educators and students in mind as the users. In October 2014, California launched the beta of its Digital Chalkboard website, which includes updated resources from the Brokers of Expertise website. The state wanted to provide this website to educators before it was completely finalized to receive feedback from intended users and further refine this tool. Additionally, California will seek feedback from other public and private groups to improve Digital Chalkboard.

Future Opportunities

State leaders see the launch of Digital Chalkboard as an important first step in ensuring that teachers have access to quality, openly licensed digital resources to help support the implementation of the CCSS in California. One next step for this work involves encouraging users to collaborate on this website and share resources and information about resources.

California is also participating in the K–12 OER Collaborative, a group of states that recently launched a request for proposal (RFP) process to create comprehensive, high-quality OER aligned with CCR standards in grades K–12 for mathematics and English language arts (ELA)/literacy.
Key Updates on Progress

Illinois has focused many of its OER efforts in the state on collecting resources for the content library included in its Illinois Shared Learning Environment (ISLE) system. ISLE is an online system meant to provide teachers and students with tools to support personalized learning. Included in this system is the IOER online library of resources, which allows educators to find and share resources and is beginning to be deployed across the state. The IOER library is connected to the Learning Registry, a project developed by the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Defense, and a number of other private and nonprofit groups to create a framework to assist educators in the sharing of data that describe resources, including reviews and alignment to educational standards.

A tool on Illinois’ OER website allows educators to evaluate and provide feedback on the resources included on the website. This tool uses rubrics that are based on the Achieve OER rubrics and the online evaluation tool developed by OER Commons.

Future Opportunities

Soon, Illinois hopes to bring together a group of educators to vet the quality and CCSS alignment of OER materials to be included in the ISLE system. This commitment to ensuring that materials shared with educators are appropriately aligned is important. Such aligned materials can support implementation efforts and can help teachers and students meet the demands of higher standards.
Key Updates on Progress

Minnesota has been able to do much of its work supporting OER through a unique partnership of different organizations called the Minnesota Learning Commons (MnLC). This partnership includes projects specific to OER and is supported by members from many different groups, including the Minnesota Department of Education, the University of Minnesota, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, library systems, and public school districts. MnLC has publicly shared its goals for the 2015 fiscal year, which include purpose statements, specific outcomes and appointing individuals to lead the work on each goal.

Minnesota developed a beta website in 2013 for its Digital Curriculum Referral Catalog. The creation of this catalog of digital resources was mandated by the state legislature. Since that time, the department has explored and worked with the MnLC to implement the Minnesota OER Commons. The digital catalog collection now resides in a hub on the OER Commons website. This hub provides users with the ability to review resources and comment on the alignment of these resources to Minnesota’s state standards. The Minnesota OER Commons will also provide a space in which to build a community of state teachers, staff and subject matters members who can contribute to and rate the digital content. As the collection grows, subject matter experts and peer review teams can use tools and processes on OER Commons to assess the quality and alignment to standards of the digital content submitted to the catalog.

On the policy front, in both 2013 and 2014 Minnesota’s Online and Digital Learning Advisory Council submitted a report to the state legislature in which it recommended that the legislature provide support for OER. In the 2014 report, the council asked the legislature to determine a funding mechanism to advance OER and to support OER initiatives that ensure quality and provide structures to assist in classroom adoption.

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A unique initiative in this state is the Minnesota Partnership for Collaborative Curriculum. This collaborative effort of more than 180 school districts supports the development and use of OER. Through this partnership, each district agrees to provide $1 per student to fund the development of full-course OER materials in a variety of subjects. Educators from these districts volunteer to create these openly licensed materials. Currently, materials under development are being piloted in classrooms so that feedback on these materials can help shape the final versions created through this partnership. A full list of the materials planned and their development statuses is available online.

Future Opportunities

A number of aspects of the work that Minnesota is doing related to OER make it unique from other state efforts. Through the MnLC, a formal, mutually beneficial relationship between the state’s public higher education community and K–12 educators has been established. Additionally, a grassroots initiative of the Minnesota Partnership for Collaborative Curriculum to promote open digital content is already providing resources for teachers to use in classrooms. A number of curricular resources are expected to be finalized and approved in 2015.

The MnLC is a supporter of the K–12 OER Collaborative, a group of states that recently launched an RFP process to create comprehensive, high-quality OER aligned with college- and career-ready standards in grades K–12 for mathematics and ELA/literacy.
NORTH CAROLINA

Key Updates on Progress

North Carolina has launched and begun deploying its Home Base system across the state. Home Base is both a student information system and an instructional improvement system for teachers, students, parents and administrators. Included as part of the instructional improvement system component is a library of quality, standards-aligned and openly licensed instructional resources for teachers. To support its effort to populate Home Base with quality resources, North Carolina has used a modified version of the Achieve OER rubrics called the NC Summary Rubric and has trained teachers to use this rubric to evaluate the quality and alignment of materials included in the system. North Carolina also uses the EQuIP rubrics to evaluate the alignment of lessons and unit to the CCSS. Vetted materials include resources created by educators within North Carolina and by other creators of OER or other licensed content.

In an effort to share resources with other states in an efficient manner, North Carolina was one of the leading states in the development of the Multi-State Content Tagging Initiative, which identifies a small set of primary metadata and a larger set of optional metadata that each participating state agrees to have for each instructional resource in the state content collections. Following a common schema will help avoid the time-consuming process of having to map one state’s metadata schema to another schema in the sharing process. Many of the participating states are also developing instructional support systems similar to North Carolina’s Home Base using Race to the Top funds. This work is being supported by the Council of Chief State School Officers’ (CCSSO) Education Information Management Advisory Consortium (EIMAC).

In addition to helping develop the Multi-State Tagging Schema, North Carolina has also helped share this schema with other states and has begun sharing metadata about resources with Iowa and Georgia. Many of the resources that North Carolina has vetted for mathematics and ELA/literacy and made available in Home Base can be found in Iowa’s IowaLearns digital repository for teaching and learning resources. This collaboration is also supported through the CCSSO’s EIMAC.

Future Opportunities

Sharing of data about resources was noted as an opportunity for cross-state collaboration in Achieve’s first policy brief for the OER Institute. This kind of collaboration is a key way for states to leverage the opportunities created by technology innovations, open education resources and common college- and career-ready standards.

Additionally, North Carolina has drafted language that can be used in future policy or legislation around the use of OER to further extend the work with OER in Home Base, which was funded by the state’s Race to the Top grant.

North Carolina is also participating in the K–12 OER Collaborative, a group of states that recently launched an RFP process to create comprehensive, high-quality OER aligned with CCR standards in grades K–12 for mathematics and ELA/literacy.

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More information on this schema is available here: [www.ccsso.org/documents/2015/Multistate%20Content%20Tags_v1_3.xlsx](http://www.ccsso.org/documents/2015/Multistate%20Content%20Tags_v1_3.xlsx)
Key Updates on Progress

Since the Washington state legislature passed legislation in 2012 to support the implementation of OER in the state, Washington and its Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) have been leaders in providing support statewide for OER.\(^7\) This legislation provided funding for this program and mandated that OSPI develop a library of CCSS-aligned OER.

As part of this effort, Washington hired an OER program manager to lead OSPI’s OER activities. In 2014–15, Washington will review full-course OER in mathematics and unit-length OER in ELA/literacy for the third year in a row. To date, reviews have been conducted of full-course OER in Algebra I, Geometry, and Integrated Math I and II and of select, unit-length OER in ELA/literacy for grades 9–12. This year, the state seeks to evaluate middle school mathematics and ELA/literacy resources. Washington has made information about its review process and the content of its reviews available online. To review materials, a group of select educators in Washington have used the EQuIP rubrics, the Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET) and some of the Achieve OER rubrics.

Additionally, in the 2013–14 and 2014–15 school years, Washington’s OSPI OER program gave a total of $170,000 in grant funds to five districts or groups of local education agencies. More information about each of these district projects is available on OSPI’s website. These initial grant-funded projects have already led to successes. One example is the Southwest Washington Math Consortium, a group of districts that worked together to develop, pilot and implement a full-course set of OER curriculum for Algebra I classes. While adoption and implementation of the OER curriculum developed is voluntary for teachers, students in classrooms that used the OER materials displayed higher scores on end-of-course Algebra I exams than students in classrooms that used other, traditionally licensed curricula.\(^8\)

Future Opportunities

All materials created through Washington’s grant program for districts are openly licensed and available for the benefit of educators everywhere.

Washington is also one of the original states leading the K–12 OER Collaborative, a group of states that recently launched an RFP process to create comprehensive, high-quality OER aligned with CCR standards in grades K–12 for mathematics and ELA/literacy. In 2015, groups that respond to the RFP will work with these states to develop sample units, which will be evaluated before the full awards are given. Given its experience conducting quality and alignment reviews of OER, Washington is actively involved in planning this review process.

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\(^7\) Regarding Open Educational Resources in K-12 Education, H.B. 2337, 2012.

Key Updates on Progress

Wisconsin’s efforts to support the use of OER are focused primarily on the development of its WISELearn system and on deploying this system statewide. WISELearn is an online portal providing local educators and administrators with instructional and professional development resources to support the implementation of Wisconsin’s college- and career-ready standards.

The state hopes to begin seeking out and curating content to be included in this system in 2015. This process includes developing a vetting process for resources as well as timelines for these review processes. A key first step will be developing a leadership team to spearhead this effort. The state hopes to have these resources available with a tagging structure, which will allow for information about these resources to be shared easily across states already sharing OER metadata.

Future Opportunities

It is clear that Wisconsin is focused on providing quality and aligned resources to its educators through the WISELearn system. Wisconsin is currently developing a process to both identify and vet resources for their quality and alignment to CCR standards. Wisconsin intends to have the first phase of resources vetted and available to educators by the end of June 2015.

Wisconsin is also participating in the K-12 OER Collaborative, a group of states that recently launched an RFP process to create comprehensive, high-quality OER aligned with CCR standards in grades K–12 for mathematics and ELA/literacy.