

The Open Up Resources Story

Open Up Resources is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit developing the highest quality full-course curricula available to K–12 districts, provided for free as Open Educational Resources (OER) to promote instructional equity. We partner with the country's foremost materials experts to author superb curriculum and deliver essential implementation support, from professional development to printing.

Our organization evolved in response to educators' cries for high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials that enable deeper learning, critical thinking, and effective problem solving. Districts spend an estimated \$5 billion annually on curricula, yet materials sold by traditional publishers often lack the knowledge, skills, and dispositions embedded in the new state standards.

As a not-for-profit organization with a social justice mission, our goal is to put high-quality materials in the hands of as many teachers and students as possible. We achieve this goal by:

Tapping expert authors to create our curriculum.

Checking the materials against key rubrics, including highly-respected third-party rubrics (EquiP, IMET) and proprietary rubrics that maintain our quality standards for support of English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

Forging the curriculum through large-scale district betas.

Publishing the curriculum as Open Educational Resources (OER) to reduce implementation costs.

Providing comprehensive implementation support services, including comprehensive professional development, professional learning community engagements, and optional enhanced print services for non-1:1 districts.

Background

By 2012, 45 states had adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or materially-similar standards, which raise the bar for teaching and learning in the US. One of the founding principles of the CCSS movement was the assumption that the K-12 publishing market would rapidly align instructional materials—particularly textbooks—to the new standards. Unfortunately, that did not come to pass.

Today, school district leaders struggle with a lack of CCSS-aligned materials. The nonprofit curriculum review site [EdReports.org](https://edreports.org) highlights significant gaps: for example, in reviews of 16 middle school math programs, only one program was deemed Standards-aligned across all middle school grades (6–8).

Because textbook publishers have not shown a consistent ability to deliver materials that meet the evolving needs of K–12 districts, not-for-profit organizations have stepped in to support districts in their efforts to raise the bar for teachers and students.

Our Predecessor, The K–12 OER Collaborative

Open Up Resources evolved out of the K–12 OER Collaborative, a coalition of thirteen state education agencies that teamed up in 2013 to foster the development of comprehensive, high-quality, standards-aligned core programs. At the conclusion of a competitive RFP seeking curriculum-scale OER providers, the Collaborative tapped Illustrative Mathematics to author our first offering, a middle school math curriculum.

Open Up Resources launched in 2016 as a separate and independent entity furthering the mission of the Collaborative: partnering with organizations that have the capacity and expertise to produce curriculum-scale OER across content areas and grade levels; providing quality control and distribution for those materials; and providing the supports necessary for districts to implement our curricula with fidelity. We have a small core staff enhanced by an exceptional network of educators, partners, and supporters. The foremost experts in K–12 generate our content and ensure its quality and desirability.

Open Up Resources Curricula Core Values

All curricula developed and published by Open Up Resources are:

Expert-authored.

Quality reviewed against key rubrics like IMET and EQuIP.

Forged in classrooms via large-scale district beta implementations.

Freely and openly licensed (CC-BY), making it simpler and more affordable for educators to use and personalize the materials to their individual classroom needs.

Fully aligned to, and deeply rooted in, the new state standards.

Accessible to all students, with embedded supports for English Language Learners and students with disabilities, regardless of first language or special needs.

Supported by a full suite of customizable professional services, from unit-level professional development to PLC facilitation.

Available in print and digital editions.

Our first core programs—a middle school math curriculum (grades 6–8) and an elementary English language arts curriculum (grades K–5)—are available for 2017-18 district adoption.

Our Professional Development

Comprehensive professional development (PD) is the most essential element of a successful textbook adoption and implementation. A central motivation for publishing our curriculum as OER is to finally give districts the ability to shift dollars toward meaningful, engaging professional development that teachers will look forward to and learn from.

Open Up Resources offers ongoing, high-quality professional learning opportunities to school systems implementing its curricula. Our PD sessions fall along a continuum of services, meeting teachers where they are in the development of their professional practice; this scaffolded approach to professional learning establishes and builds on educators' prior knowledge. We support teachers making important instructional shifts by building their capacity while ensuring their success leveraging our curriculum to improve student outcomes.

With Deepest Gratitude to Our Supporters

Our work has been enabled and propelled by the most visionary, innovative organizations in K-12 education.

[The Learning Accelerator](#) incubated the K–12 OER Collaborative, and we are sincerely thankful to the thirteen states that comprised the collaborative, and who remain committed to our mission: California, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Open Up Resources have been developed with a deep commitment to quality as job one and with teacher collaboration as an integral part of development and curation. As a founding state partner, we are excited to see these materials in the hands of educators as they offer the ultimate in local control and help leverage small school district budgets to do great things for all students.

— Scott Cook, Director of Academic Services and Professional Development, Idaho State Department of Education

In 2016, we launched as a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization with philanthropic funding from the the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, the Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation, and the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation.

We use a rubric developed in partnership with **Stanford University's UL/SCALE** to review our math materials for ELL supports, and our quality review partners include [Achieve](#), [UnboundEd](#), and [Student Achievement Partners](#). We receive further support from the renowned organizations [Creative Commons](#) and [Lumen Learning](#).

Creative Commons is very pleased by Open Up Resources' plans to build the highest quality K-12 instructional content in a more equitable, affordable and accessible way than traditional all-rights-reserved copyrighted materials, by offering all of their content exclusively under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license.— Cable Green, Creative Commons

We at Lumen Learning are committed to harnessing the power of Open Educational Resources (OER) for colleges and universities and we are excited to see our friends at Open Up Resources on a similar mission for America's k-12 Public Schools!— David Wiley, Lumen Learning