



COLORADO
Department of
Higher Education

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Statewide council addresses future of open educational resources in Colorado

DENVER – Aug. 25, 2017: To address the high cost of college textbooks, [Senate Bill 17-258](#), Using Open Educational Resources (OER) In Higher Education, established the OER Council to evaluate the use of academic materials by Colorado’s public institutions of higher education. The bill was signed by Gov. John Hickenlooper in May.

Open educational resources are educational materials that are in the public domain or introduced with an open license. This means that anyone can legally and freely copy, use, adapt and share them.

“These resources increase access and decrease costs for college students,” said Dr. Tanya Spilovoy, WICHE Cooperative for Education Technologies director of open policy, a consultant to the OER Council. “It’s a potential game-changer for Colorado.”

Open educational resources are becoming popular on campuses across the country. Similar initiatives have gained momentum in [California](#), [New York](#), [North Dakota](#), [Oregon](#) and other states.

“I have used free and open textbooks many times in math courses at Colorado State University-Pueblo and find them a great benefit to my students,” said Jonathan Poritz, a member of the statewide OER Council and associate professor in the Department of Mathematics and Physics at CSU-Pueblo.

The statewide council is comprised of 14 members— including faculty, librarians and administrators—and represents two-year and four-year institutions of higher education as well as the Colorado Departments of Education and Higher Education. Members of the OER Council were nominated by their respective campus leaders and provide expert insight and act as advocates for the future of these resources in Colorado. To learn more about the OER Council and view meeting information, visit <http://highered.colorado.gov/Academics/Groups/OERCouncil/schedule.html>.

The council must report its findings and recommended initiatives to the Joint Budget Committee and the education committees of the General Assembly by Nov. 20.

A public [survey](#) is available now through Sept. 8 to gather public input on and assess familiarity with OER. A separate survey will be distributed to Colorado public institution leadership to assess current OER initiatives on college campuses.

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