

Open Educational Resources (OER) Grant Program

A Report to the Texas Legislature in accordance with the
General Appropriations Act, Senate Bill 1, 89th Texas
Legislature, Section 39

October 2025

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Agency Purpose

Our purpose is to strengthen Texas through higher education. By making higher education accessible to a wide range of people, we can ensure Texas remains one of the world's most innovative, valuable educational systems. By bringing together data, policymakers, and institutions, we can inform sensible policies that make a difference and make education beyond high school available to every person in our state. When we do that, we will improve lives, communities, and our shared economy.

Agency Vision

The THECB will be recognized as an international leader in developing and implementing innovative higher education policy to accomplish our mission.

Agency Philosophy

The THECB will promote access to and success in quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access and success without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access and success is unacceptable.

The THECB's core values are:

Accountability: We hold ourselves responsible for our actions and welcome every opportunity to educate stakeholders about our policies, decisions, and aspirations.

Efficiency: We accomplish our work using resources in the most effective manner.

Collaboration: We develop partnerships that result in student success and a highly qualified, globally competent workforce.

Excellence: We strive for excellence in all our endeavors.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.

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Executive Summary

Senate Bill 810, 85th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, established the Open Educational Resources (OER) Grant Program, which was designed to incentivize faculty at Texas institutions of higher education to adopt, modify, redesign, or develop courses that use only open educational resources. The General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, 88th Texas Legislature, Article III, Section 44, requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to provide a report to the Legislative Budget Board and the governor on the effectiveness of the program.

This report details the administration of the competitive grant program and provides information about cost savings for students from the use of OER by faculty grantees, as well as the number of students served by the first, second, and third rounds of grants (awarded in 2018, 2020, and 2023, respectively). The second round of grants in 2020 used appropriations allocated for the OER Grant Program during the 86th Texas Legislature. Additional funding in the amount of \$212,049 was appropriated by the 87th Texas Legislature in 2021 and funding in the amount of \$181,892 was appropriated by the 88th Texas Legislature in 2023. The third round of grants was released in early 2023 and executed in summer 2023. A request for applications for the fourth round of grants was released in October 2024 and were announced in June 2025.

Introduction

An “open educational resource” is defined in Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 51.451, as “a teaching, learning, or research resource that is in the public domain or has been released under an intellectual property license that permits the free use, adaptation, and redistribution of the resource by any person. The term may include full course curricula, course materials, modules, textbooks, media, assessments, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques, whether digital or otherwise, used to support access to knowledge.” Open educational resources (OER) are usually free or offered at a low cost for students.

A report by the College Board states that students at four-year institutions spend an average of \$1,290 for course materials and other supplies (Ma, Pender, & Oster, 2025). Students try to reduce textbook costs by buying used copies, sharing materials with classmates, using earlier editions, and finding a library copy (Pennsylvania Course Materials Survey, 2023).

In a 2023 study, faculty agreed that students were a driving force and the main priority behind adopting OER (Smith et al., 2023). In a study about educational resources, Seaman and Seaman (2024) found that more than half of their faculty respondents were aware of OER. The researchers also conducted a study of faculty and administrators from U.S. higher education institutions, concluding that OER awareness and its use has increased to the highest levels recorded in prior studies. Potential factors influencing the increase include concerns about the costs of materials and faculty being more comfortable using digital materials following their pandemic experiences (Seaman & Seaman, 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic spotlighted the importance of quality, reasonably priced, digital educational materials, as courses across the country transitioned to remote learning. From March 2020 into the fall 2020 semester, institutions experienced “large-scale digital materials adoption” (Seaman & Seaman, 2021, p. 25).

In a study of how institutions across the United States rapidly shifted from in-person to online delivery, Johnson et al. (2021) stated that within higher education, “these techniques created a sense of optimism toward digital materials in their instruction post-pandemic. For instance, more faculty are now familiar with incorporating video, digital materials, and OER into any mode of course delivery” (p. 7). In contrast to these findings, Elder and Alam (2023) surveyed instructors at a public research university in the United States and identified a disconnect between awareness of OER and the actual adoption of OER for courses. They also concluded that participants indicated a lack of a strong understanding of what OER are and the difference between OER and free online course materials.

Use of OER can lead to significant cost savings for students. For example, the *Affordable Learning Georgia* program, with the University System of Georgia, projects that since its inception, it has saved students more than \$195 million in textbook costs, funding more than 600 projects across all 26 institutions (Affordable Learning Georgia, 2025). The Maryland Open Source Textbook (M.O.S.T.) initiative estimates that students impacted by M.O.S.T. saved an average of \$137 per course and an estimated \$22.9 million in cumulative textbook costs savings, impacting more than 160,000 students since spring 2014 (2025). In a 2021 report, the U.S. Public Interest Research Groups Education Fund reported that in fall 2020, “65 percent of students surveyed reported skipping buying a textbook because of cost; 63 percent skipped purchasing one during the same period the previous year” (Nagle & Vitez, 2021, p. 8).

In 2017, the 85th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 810, which created the OER Grant Program to incentivize faculty at Texas institutions of higher education to adopt, modify, redesign, or develop courses that use only OER. The OER Grant Program has saved students an estimated \$2 million in course materials across its three grant-cycle reporting periods, serving approximately 20,000 students. The open education advocacy organization SPARC's (2025) OER State Policy Playbook states, "nearly half of all states and the U.S. Congress have passed legislation leveraging OER as a solution to higher education challenges, in some cases generating 10-20 times the return on investment" (p. 2). Beyond cost savings, OER are an accessible and affordable option, and the OER Grant Program facilitates OER use and adoption by Texas students and faculty. This report compiles data on student impact and cost savings from the first three rounds of the Texas OER Grant Program (2018, 2020, and 2023). Round 4 grant awardees were announced in June 2025.

Grant Awards

Fiscal Years 2018-2019

In Fiscal Years (FYs) 2018 and 2019, 41 eligible applications were received for the OER Grant Program. Grant awards in the total amount of \$152,000 were made to 15 faculty members at Texas public institutions of higher education. Faculty members who proposed to adopt, modify, redesign, or create one course using only open educational materials received \$8,000, and faculty members who proposed to adopt, modify, redesign, or create multiple courses received \$16,000. Materials developed under the OER Grant Program have been uploaded to the statewide OER repository, [OERTX](#).

Table 1 provides information about the 15 awards that ended in August 2021. Courses funded by the OER Grant Program were taught four times during the grant cycle using only OER.

Table 1. OER Grant Program Fiscal Years 2018-2019 Awardees

Faculty Name	Institution	Course(s)	Grant Amount
Karl Aho	Tarleton State University	Introduction to Philosophy	\$8,000
Veronica Amaku	Houston Community College	General Biology for Majors	\$8,000
Megan Collins	Prairie View A&M University	Social Problems	\$8,000
Brandi Falley	Texas Woman's University	Elementary Statistics I & II	\$16,000
Brittney Gillespie-Porter	Texas Southmost College	College Algebra	\$8,000
Richard Gosselin	Houston Community College	Introduction to Macroeconomics, Introduction to Microeconomics	\$16,000
Joseph Locke	University of Houston – Victoria	U.S. History II	\$8,000
Katherine Oser	Central Texas College	Introduction to Computing	\$8,000
Lamont Rodgers	Houston Community College	Introduction to Symbolic Logic	\$8,000
Amy Petros	University of North Texas	General Chemistry for Majors I & II	\$16,000
India Stewart	Eastfield College	Introduction to Sociology	\$8,000
Laura Villarreal	Texas Southmost College	Mathematics for Teachers	\$8,000

Faculty Name	Institution	Course(s)	Grant Amount
Virginia Villarreal Disraeli	Austin Community College	British Literature	\$8,000
Nicholas Webb	McLennan Community College	English Composition I & II	\$16,000
Ben Wright	The University of Texas at Dallas	U.S. History I	\$8,000
Total			\$152,000

Fiscal Years 2020-2021

In FYs 2020 and 2021, 45 eligible applications were received for the OER Grant Program. Grant projects that proposed to adopt, modify, redesign, or create one course using only open educational materials received Implementation Grants. Faculty or teams of faculty who proposed to develop new or substantially improve existing OER were awarded Development Grants. Faculty members or teams were awarded a maximum of \$5,000 for Implementation Grants and a maximum of \$25,000 for Development Grants. In all, 20 grant awards totaling \$208,620 were awarded, 6 Development Grants and 14 Implementation Grants, to faculty members at Texas public institutions of higher education. Materials developed under the OER Grant Program were uploaded to the statewide OER repository, OERTX, in June 2021.

Table 2 provides information about the 20 awards that ended in August 2023. Courses funded by the OER Grant Program were taught four times during the grant cycle using only OER.

Table 2. OER Grant Program Fiscal Years 2020-2021 Awardees

Faculty Name	Institution	Course(s)	Grant Amount
Sarah Alvanipour	Houston Community College	General Chemistry	\$24,624
Brenda Norton	Angelo State University	Texas Government	\$21,474
Fred Spaulding	Tarrant County Community College	Art Appreciation	\$25,000
Jesse Taylor	Angelo State University	Finite Mathematics	\$22,137
Erika M. Warnick	South Plains College	English Composition	\$20,500
Adam Weiss	West Texas A&M University	Learning Frameworks, Educational Foundations	\$25,000
Total Development Grants			\$138,735

Faculty Name	Institution	Course(s)	Grant Amount
Kimberley Breuer	The University of Texas at Arlington	Technology and Science in American Society	\$5,000
Billye Cheek *	Grayson College	College Algebra, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry	\$5,000
Jangsup Choi	Texas A&M University - Commerce	United States Government	\$5,000
Wade A. Cornelius	El Paso Community College	Public Speaking and Professional Communication	\$5,000
Molly Wiant Cummins	The University of Texas at Arlington	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	\$5,000
Jerrica Jordan	Tarrant County Community College	English Composition	\$4,936
Minchul Kang	Texas A&M University-Commerce	Calculus I and II	\$5,000
Maura L. Krestar	Texas A&M University-Kingsville	Introduction to Psychology	\$5,000
Ming Lou	Lamar University	College Physics II	\$5,000
Rajone Lyman	Houston Community College	Learning Frameworks	\$5,000
Kristi Moore	Angelo State University	General Psychology	\$4,949
Creshema Murray	University of Houston-Downtown	Introduction to Communication	\$5,000
Sadaf Sajjad	Austin Community College	Introduction to Psychology	\$5,000
Anthony Zoccolillo	Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi	General Psychology	\$5,000
Total Implementation Grants			\$69,885
Total OER Grant Program Grants			\$208,620

**Grant was terminated, as requested by grantee. Institution adopted Inclusive Access Program, and therefore the use of OER was no longer possible.*

Fiscal Years 2022-2023

In FYs 2022 and 2023, 19 eligible applications were received for the OER Grant Program. Institutions were awarded a maximum of \$5,000 for redesigning one or more courses to incorporate existing OER (Implementation Grant) and a maximum of \$25,000 for developing new or substantially improve existing OER for one or more courses (Development Grants). In all, 16 grant awards totaling \$184,958 were awarded, 7 Development Grants and 9 Implementation Grants, to Texas public institutions of higher education. Funded Development Grants supported developing new or substantially improving existing OER for one or more eligible courses. Materials developed under the OER Grant Program were uploaded to the statewide OER repository, OERTX, in September 2023.

Table 3 provides information about the 16 awards, which will continue through August 31, 2025. Courses funded by the OER Grant Program will be taught four times during the grant cycle using only OER.

Table 3. OER Grant Program Fiscal Years 2022-2023 Awardees

Institution	Course(s)	Grant Amount
North Central Texas College	Microbiology	\$9,000
Laredo College	Federal Government	\$25,000
San Jacinto College	Introductory Chemistry	\$18,658
Odessa College	Lifespan Growth and Development American Minority Studies	\$25,000
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center	International Health	\$25,000
Midwestern State University	College Algebra Developmental College Algebra	\$12,300
The University of Texas at San Antonio	Telecommunications and Networking	\$25,000
Total Development Grants		\$139,958
University of Texas at Tyler	Foundations of Leadership	\$5,000
North Central Texas College	World Literature I Learning Framework Introduction to Ethics Music Appreciation	\$5,000
Central Texas College	College Algebra	\$5,000
Tarrant County College District	Computed Tomography	\$5,000

Institution	Course(s)	Grant Amount
West Texas A&M University	Statistics for Business and Economics	\$5,000
Austin Community College District	Introduction to the Teaching Profession	\$5,000
Austin Community College District	Educating Young Children	\$5,000
Lee College	Introduction to Physical Fitness and Wellness	\$5,000
Texas Woman's University	Composition I/Integrated Reading and Writing	\$5,000
Total Implementation Grants		\$45,000
Total OER Grant Program Grants		\$184,958

Fiscal Years 2025 - 2027

In October 2024, the Division of Digital Learning (DDL) released a request for applications (RFA) and received 16 eligible applications. One eligible applicant withdrew their application after the review process. Faculty members or teams were awarded a maximum of \$5,000 for Continuous Improvement Grants and a maximum of \$25,000 for Development Grants. In all, 15 grant awards totaling \$133,986 were awarded, 4 Development Grants and 11 Continuous Improvement Grants, to faculty members at Texas public institutions of higher education. Unique to this RFA was the change from Implementation Grants to Continuous Improvement Grants and priority points for projects that incorporate student participation in the creation, adaptation, and/or evaluation of the resources, supporting nursing courses and using textbooks from the OER Nursing Essentials (ONE series), and designing or redesigning courses that support z-degree programs using only OER. A z-degree is a pathway for students to complete a degree using only OER (Wiley et al., 2016).

Table 4 provides information about the Round 4 awardees. Courses funded by the OER Grant Program were taught four times during the grant cycle using only OER. Grantees will teach using OER developed from the grant projects in fall 2025.

Table 4. OER Grant Program Fiscal Year 2025 - 2027 Awardees

Institution	Course(s)	Grant Amount
East Texas A&M University	Spanish for Native/Heritage Speakers I and II	\$16,585
Houston Community College	Nutrition and Diet Therapy	\$24,996
North Central Texas College	United States History I	\$15,000
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	Introduction to Composition	\$23,405
Total Development Grants		\$79,986
Angelo State University	Engineering Mechanics - Statics	\$5,000.00
Angelo State University	Developmental Psychology	\$5,000.00
Angelo State University	Introduction to Technical and Business Writing	\$5,000.00
Cisco College	Introduction to Composition	\$5,000.00
North Central Texas College	American Literature II	\$4,750.00
North Central Texas College	British Literature II	\$4,750.00
North Central Texas College	Interpersonal Communication	\$4,750.00
North Central Texas College	World Literature II	\$4,750.00
Stephen F. Austin State University	Contemporary Mathematics	\$5,000.00
Texas A&M University Texarkana	Introduction to Composition I and II	\$5,000.00
Tarrant County College District	Introduction to Philosophy	\$5,000.00
Total Continuous Improvement Grants		\$54,000
Total OER Grant Program Grants		\$133,986

Data from Grantee Progress Reports

The 15 faculty members awarded grants in the 2018 round of the OER Grant Program completed their first progress reports in December 2019, second progress reports in October 2020, and a final report in September 2021. The 20 faculty members awarded grants in the 2020 round of the OER Grant Program submitted their first progress reports to the THECB in December 2021 and second progress reports in December 2022. Round 3 grantees submitted their first progress report in December 2023 and second progress report in December 2024.

Many of the 2018 awardees taught the course(s) using only OER for the first time during the fall 2019 term. Grantees reported for the spring 2020, summer 2020, fall 2020, spring 2021, and summer 2021 terms during the grant period. An estimated total of 6,918 students completed courses during this time using only OER adopted, modified, redesigned, or developed under the program, for a total estimated savings to students of \$1,014,416. This estimate includes students who took courses with faculty members other than the grantees (at the same institution) who also used the OER adopted, modified, redesigned, or developed under the grant program.

Awardees for the 2020 round of the OER Grant Program began teaching using OER in their courses in fall 2020. An estimated total of 8,799 students completed courses using OER from the grant program between fall 2020 and fall 2023, with an estimated savings of \$894,423.

Awardees for the 2023 round of the OER Grant Program began teaching using their OER in courses in fall 2023. Round 3 grantees began using OER from the grant project in fall 2023 and submitted reports in December 2023 and 2024, estimating a total of 4,210 students completed courses using OER from the grant projects, with an estimated savings of \$300,000.

Table 5 provides information about the 2018 grantee outcomes for students served and money saved. As noted above, the grantees' colleagues may also be using OER created or curated for the grant program.

Table 5. OER Grant Program Fiscal 2018-2019 Award Impact

Term	# of Students Served by Grantee Faculty Member and Colleagues	Total Amount Saved by Students During the Term*
Fall 2019	1,487	\$237,387
Spring 2020	1,502	\$251,109
Summer 2020	427	\$34,635
Fall 2020	1,502	\$251,109
Spring 2021	1,846	\$226,907
Summer 2021	154	\$13,269
Total	6,918	\$1,014,416

Source: OER Grant Program Progress Reports

**Amount saved based on the number of students completing the course and the cost of course materials in the semester preceding OER use. Material costs ranged from \$43 to \$413 per student, per course.*

Table 6 provides information about the 2020 grantee outcomes for students served and money saved. Two grantees requested and were granted a six-month no-cost grant extension, as allowed in the RFA. Therefore, courses using OER from the grant projects were offered in spring 2023, summer 2023, and fall 2023.

Table 6. OER Grant Program Fiscal 2020-2021 Award Impact

Term	# of Students Served by Grantee Faculty Member and Colleagues	Total Amount Saved by Students During the Term*
Fall 2020	534	\$50,010
Spring 2021	625	\$71,246
Summer 2021	381	\$35,021
Fall 2021	2,404	\$240,588
Spring 2022	1,694	\$184,156
Summer 2022	369	\$33,311
Fall 2022	447	\$55,392
Spring 2023	1,619	\$140,416
Summer 2023	478	\$36,826
Fall 2023	232	\$36,079
Total	8,799	\$894,423

Source: OER Grant Program Progress Reports

*Amount saved based on the number of students completing the course and the cost of course materials in the semester preceding OER use. Material costs ranged from \$19 to \$306 per student, per course. Cost savings have been updated since October 2023 legislative report, based on updated numbers submitted by grantees.

Table 7 provides information about the 2023 grantee outcomes for students served and money saved. The final report for Round 3 was submitted in September 2024. Therefore, final student impact numbers and amount saved for fall 2024 and spring 2025 are not reflected in Table 7.

Table 7. OER Grant Program Fiscal 2022-2023 Award Impact

Term*	# of Students Served by Grantee Faculty Member and Colleagues	Total Amount Saved by Students During the Term**
Fall 2023	1,479	\$101,377
Spring 2024	1,989	\$141,653
Summer 2024	103	\$6,965
Fall 2024	639	\$48,916
Total	4,210	\$298,911

Source: OER Grant Program Progress Reports

*Round 3 Grantees taught courses using OER from the grant project for the first time in fall 2023.

**Amount saved based on the number of students completing the course and the cost of course materials in the semester preceding OER use. Material costs ranged from \$40 to \$304 per student, per course.

Possible Future OER Opportunities

Per TEC 61.0668, which provides guidelines for reporting on the OER Grant Program, this report includes suggestions of subject areas that would benefit from the adoption, modification, or development of OER and options for future steps for adopting, modifying, or developing OER.

Subject Areas

In 2019, 2021, and 2023, the THECB partnered with the Digital Higher Education Consortium of Texas (DigiTex) and the Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education (ISKME) to conduct landscape surveys of OER use and adoption at Texas institutions of higher education. The three OER Landscape Surveys offer insight into OER use and adoption at two- and four-year public and private institutions across the state. A recommendation for subject areas to target for OER adoption was included in the survey reports. In March 2025, the fourth biennial landscape survey was distributed to 169 two- and four-year public and private institutions across the state, including 11 health-related institutions. Final analysis and report will be available in late fall 2025.

The 2023 OER Landscape Study (Jimes, C., et al., 2024) was administered in May 2023 to 169 two- and four-year public and private institutions across the state, including 11 health-related institutions. Seventy-eight institutions completed the survey, offering insight into staff-led and cross-office support approaches for OER adoption at institutions. Key findings from the survey include that affordability remains a key factor for OER adoption, with an increased recognition of OER's potential to prioritize student engagement and the use of collaborative efforts, such as a trend toward resource-sharing and collaborative teaching methods. Findings reveal that the emphasis on cross-office support with libraries in the forefront highlights a move from policy mandates to a staff-led approach to OER adoption. The report concludes with a discussion about recommendations for future OER work, including ongoing professional development to support OER awareness and capacity building and highlighting exemplary work at institutions.

The 2021 survey (Jimes, C., et al., 2021) was administered in March 2021 to 169 two- and four-year nonprofit, public, and private institutions across the state, including 11 health-related institutions. The authors noted that at the time, the landscape of OER in Texas higher education was in transition, given that “nearly 70% of the state’s institutions are advancing the use of OER for online and emergency remote learning, likely spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas 2021 winter storm upheaval, and considerations around future potential crises” (p. 23). This survey highlights that the number of institutions with a formal, written definition of OER has increased since 2019 and a growing number of institutions are centralizing their OER efforts, such as a centralized office, committee, or role, for example, taking a systems-based approach by engaging multiple offices and roles across campus.

The first Texas OER Landscape Survey was administered in May 2019 to 158 two- and four-year nonprofit, public, and private institutions across the state. A total of 100 institutions responded to questions to be included in the analysis. The respondents represented a full range of college and universities across the state, with two-year institutions making up the

largest respondent group. Growth in commitment to OER across the state is documented in the 2021 survey, with 45% of institutions having formal policies or programs in place to support OER, compared with 38% reported in 2019 (Jimes, C., et al., 2021). This report suggested the curation of OER in career and technical education, especially as those courses could be leveraged to support zero-textbook-cost credentials in those fields (Jimes, C., et.al., 2019). These zero-textbook-cost programs allow students to earn a credential, such as an associate degree, with zero textbook costs because of OER and/or materials provided to students free of charge, such as via the library (Jimes, C., et.al., 2019). A future outcome of this research was the inclusion of priority points for grant projects in the OER Grant Program Round 4 RFA that supported z-degrees. Six of the proposals support z-degrees.

The 2025 update for the state's strategic plan for higher education, [Building a Talent Strong Texas](#), provides the guiding framework for postsecondary credentials of value. Furthermore, “by helping more students graduate with credentials of value and by fostering innovation, we increase opportunities for all Texans and strengthen our state’s future” (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2025, p. 2). Findings from the 2019 OER Landscape study validate the work focusing on supporting resources in high-demand fields (Jines, C. et al. 2019). In addition, increased access to low- or no-cost OER course materials helps to eliminate affordability barriers for students. This reduction in education costs directly supports the goals of *Building a Talent Strong Texas*, allowing students to earn credentials of value with no or manageable debt.

Future Steps

In 2017 and 2018, the THECB conducted a study on the feasibility of creating a digital repository for OER in Texas, and in 2019, 2021, and 2024 the agency conducted the landscape surveys mentioned above. The links for the reports can be found in the [References](#) section of this report. Several recommendations came out of these studies that continue to inform future programs and initiatives for increasing OER awareness, adoption, and use in Texas.

The THECB launched the Division of Digital Learning in November 2020, which continues to sustain existing OER programs and initiatives, and provides direction and support for innovative efforts in the future. Suggestions in this report were developed from the two OER landscape surveys, the experience the THECB now has with statewide OER initiatives, as well as lessons learned from national partnerships initiated by the DDL, and the goals and work of the DDL.

Future steps include the following:

1. Continue commitment to state-level OER advocacy and collaboration with key stakeholders.

Given the increased scope and visibility of THECB's work in open education in the past six years, continued commitment from key stakeholders, such as an advisory council, is increasingly relevant. The Learning Technology Advisory Committee and subcommittees continue to inform and support the DDL’s OER work and help to inform future directions and initiatives for OER. Several states, including Connecticut and Colorado, have used such a model with great success. According to open resource advocacy organization SPARC, “expanding OER at institutions can be as simple as offering encouragement and support for the use and sharing of high-quality materials academics create” (SPARC, 2025, p. 2).

The 86th Texas Legislature mandated a repository for OER, customized for Texas institutions of higher education, with House Bill 3652. All grantees are required to make their work available on the statewide OER repository, OERTX, which launched September 1, 2020. The Legislature allocated funds for OERTX for FYs 2020 and 2021, and the General Appropriation Acts of 2021 and 2023 dedicated additional resources for ongoing maintenance, support, and expansion. OERTX has more than 600,000 users, and more than 15,000 resources have been added to the repository. A feature of the digital library is the ability for users to create OER materials using the Open Author tool. At the time of this report, more than 4,000 resources were created using the Open Author tool. Open Education Global awarded the DDL their Open Policy Award in 2022 for the OERTX initiative. This was recognized in April 2023 with a congratulatory resolution by the Texas Legislature for DDL's commitment to open education. In July 2024, the DDL was awarded the WCET (WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies) Outstanding Work (WOW) Award for outstanding efforts in applying an innovative, technology-based solution to a challenging educational need.

2. Promote institutional capacity building through robust innovative programs.

The [OER Fellowship Program](#) is an innovative approach to promoting institutional capacity building. The OER Fellowship Program provides mentoring relationships for OER use, creation, and capacity building at the institution level and statewide. Faculty, librarians, staff, and administrators from Texas public and independent institutions of higher education and system offices are eligible to apply for the OER Fellowship Program. OER Fellows participate in in-person workshops in Austin, attend monthly virtual sessions throughout the academic year, and complete a capstone project. OER Fellows are selected based on their considerable demonstrated experience and leadership in open education in Texas.

In June 2024, the DDL announced that 10 individuals had been selected to serve as OER Founding Fellows. The Founding Fellows collaborated on the design and evaluation of the OER Fellowship program course and essential resources to guide leadership development of future Texas OER Fellows. This also included creating videos that documented their journey and leadership experiences in open education. They received training from invited experts to develop advocacy and mentorship skills.

In September 2024, Cohort 1 kicked off during the [Open Texas conference](#). Throughout the academic year, Cohort 1 Fellows piloted and provided feedback on the Texas OER Fellowship curriculum, developed mentoring relationships with the Founding Fellows Cohort, and developed capstone projects to advance OER statewide. The Cohort 2 Fellows cohort will be held from September 2025-June 2026.

In 2024, the DDL launched the AIEmpowerED series. These free, virtual series of webinars demonstrate successful strategies for leveraging AI effectively and responsibly. These sessions are designed to equip participants with actionable insights to navigate the dynamic landscape of AI in higher education. To support this initiative, in spring 2025, DDL partnered with ISKME to conduct research on the intersection of AI and open education using focus groups with faculty, administrators, and librarians. Research questions that guided the study included perceptions about the potential use of Generative AI (GenAI) in open pedagogy, processes participants have used to engage in open education and GenAI, and concerns and challenges about the use of GenAI and open education. Key findings highlighted ethical concerns, the

opportunity to build on credibility and expertise, and the use of professional development about GenAI and open education at institutions.

The DDL will continue to develop programming that focuses on how the connections between OER and AI will support institutional capacity building. For example, the DDL hosted an OER Community Session in May 2025 titled “Leveraging AI to Enhance Open Educational Practices and OER Creation.” The session explored how OER advocates are leveraging AI to enhance the creation and adaptation of OER. Participants connected and engaged with each other around how they might use AI to advance their OER work and engage open pedagogical practices.

3. Increase THECB-sponsored OER professional development and community engagement opportunities.

The DDL supports professional development and engagement opportunities through community sessions and OER Academies. The DDL hosted the third Digital Learning Summit, February 11-12, 2025. The free, virtual event included keynote speakers, workshops, and interactive sessions. The conference theme was *Choosing Agility: Adapting to a New Era of Innovation in Digital Learning*. Many of the sessions included sharing OER to support how to be agile when adapting to innovations and new technologies that are transforming the higher education landscape. Participants collaborated and networked with practitioners from institutions of higher education across Texas.

More recently, in spring and summer 2025, the DDL hosted a series of virtual events that covered topics such as Universal Design for Learning, digital accessibility through SLIDE practices, leveraging AI in OER, and ensuring high-quality OER through evaluation and peer review. Participants engaged in discussions and hands-on activities aimed at enhancing their skills and incorporating best practices in open education. In partnership with ISKME, the DDL offered the OER Core Elements and OER Advanced Skills Academies in April and June 2025. Full- and part-time faculty, librarians, and instructional designers at public and private higher education institutions were invited to participate. The OER Core Elements focused on discovery, curation, evaluation, and remixing, including an introduction to OER and OER Practices. The OER Advanced Skills Academy offered OER practitioners with prior OER experience the opportunity to build on the foundational skills and practices of curation, evaluation, and authoring of OER to further develop OER projects in process. The DDL plans to offer these professional development opportunities each year, illustrating a commitment to professional development and community engagement to support open education.

The DDL launched an online self-paced professional development program on OERTX in August of 2023. The [Texas OER Core Elements Course](#) is available from the OERTX repository and provides a certificate of completion for individuals who complete a final assessment. The Texas OER Core Elements Course by Carrie Gits and Judith Sebesta for the Division of Digital Learning -Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is licensed under a Creative Commons. Since the launch of the online course, 170 individuals from more than 20 institutions across the state have completed the course. Several institutions have modified the course for professional development on their campuses. The DDL will continue to promote and encourage the completion of the Texas OER Core Elements course, specifically for OER work supported by the THECB. For example, OER Grant Program Round 4 grantees will complete the online training or the OER Core Elements Course as a grant deliverable to prepare grant teams for developing and using OER.

4. Continue to highlight exemplary work being done at institutions.

The THECB is uniquely positioned to highlight exemplary work and bring attention to the OER efforts underway at Texas institutions. Inviting faculty and administrators to serve as guest speakers or facilitators for webinars, highlighting best practices through OERTX, and awarding commendable projects with grant funding are ways the THECB spotlights these exemplars. For example, in March 2025, the DDL celebrated [Open Education Week](#) by sponsoring programming throughout the week. DDL programming for open education included OER Grant Program grantees from each of the three grant rounds. OER grantees served as panelists and shared what first inspired them to use OER, the impact of OER on faculty teaching and student learning, how to continuously improve resources, how their use of OER evolved across the grant cycle, how to secure support for OER work, and the amount of time required for developing OER.

5. Continue to support the OER ecosystem.

The DDL is continuously studying developments in open education. The OER landscape will continue to change based on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and inclusive and equitable access models. The most recent Texas OER Landscape study examines institutional engagement in automatic textbook billing models for the delivery of course materials, such as inclusive access and equitable access programs. For example, an institution employing an equitable access program may set a flat fee for course materials per semester hour for each student, which could include use of both OER and traditional, copyrighted materials. Textbook pricing and purchasing are completed at the institutional level, but students are given an option to opt out of the fee. Additional research can help determine the reach and impact of these models in Texas (Jimes, C., et al., 2024) and the 2025 OER Landscape Survey includes questions to investigate these programs.

In late 2024, ISKME conducted an OERTX User Engagement Survey, which was distributed to new and returning users of OERTX. The survey focused on gathering a better understanding of user engagement and use of the digital library. Findings will be used to enhance the user experience by continuing to provide access to relevant and high-quality OER. Preliminary insights reveal site navigation experiences, perceptions about OER quality, and ideas for enhancing the site. In addition, Community of Practice Sessions, launched in fall 2025, provide ongoing OERTX user feedback, further improve the OERTX experience, and build community.

The THECB is also working on future possibilities for collaboration and adaptation, inherent in the principles of open education, to scale institutional best practices beyond sharing instructional materials. Future use of a grant management system will allow for collection and automation of grant impact.

The THECB maintains information about the OER Grant Program online at <http://www.highered.texas.gov/oerqp>

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Appendix A: Resources

AI EmpowerED Series: <https://dltx.highered.texas.gov/professional-learning/ai-empowered-series/>

Digital Learning Summit Hub: <https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/hubs/DLS>

OE Global <https://oeweek.oeglobal.org/>

OER Grant Program in statute (TEC, Section 61.0668): <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ED/htm/ED.61.htm#61.0668>

OER Fellowship Course: <https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/courseware/60>

OER Fellowship Program DLTx: <https://dltx.highered.texas.gov/programs/oer-fellowship-program/>

OER Fellowship Program Storytelling and Advocacy Resource:
<https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/courseware/lesson/5863>

OER Nursing Essentials Hub: <https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/hubs/ONE-nursing>

OERTX Adapting to Innovation Hub: <https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/hubs/innovation>

OERTX Repository: <https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/>

Open Educational Resources (OER) in Texas Statewide Playbook:
<https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/courseware/lesson/4146>

OpenStax: <https://openstax.org/>

Open Texas Conference: <https://www.opentexas.org/>

Rules for the OER Grant Program (Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 0, Rules 4.230-4.238): https://texas-sos.appianportalsgov.com/rules-and-meetings?chapter=4&interface=VIEW_TAC&part=1&subchapter=0&title=19

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Texas OER Core Elements Course: <https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/courseware/24>

Texas OER Regional Needs Analysis:
<https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/courseware/lesson/4163>

WCET – WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies: <https://wcet.wiche.edu/>

Texas Higher Education

COORDINATING BOARD

This document is available on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website:
<https://highered.texas.gov>.

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