



Materials Matter: Open Education Resources (OER) in Delaware



MATERIALS MATTER

BACKGROUND

[Rodel Teacher Council](#) OER Working Group

- Casey Cashdollar, Lulu M. Ross Elementary, Milford School District
- Stephanie Diggins, William Penn High School, Colonial School District
- Karen Eller, Stubbs Elementary School, Christina School District
- Jared Lelito, Fred Fifer III Middle School, Caesar Rodney School District
- Sophie Lin, McKean High School, Red Clay Consolidated School District
- Stacey Stump, Laurel High School, Laurel School District
- Tameka Wingo, Thomas Edison Charter School

The web has opened countless doors to potential teaching material—but is any of it good?

RTC members surveyed hundreds of local educators about **open educational resources (OER)**: freely accessible, openly licensed text, media, and other digital assets. Find out what teachers had to say about online materials, and how schools can support them in vetting for quality.

MATERIALS MATTER

What do we mean when we say “materials?”

Learning materials can cover a broad array of things used in the classroom. Examples include:

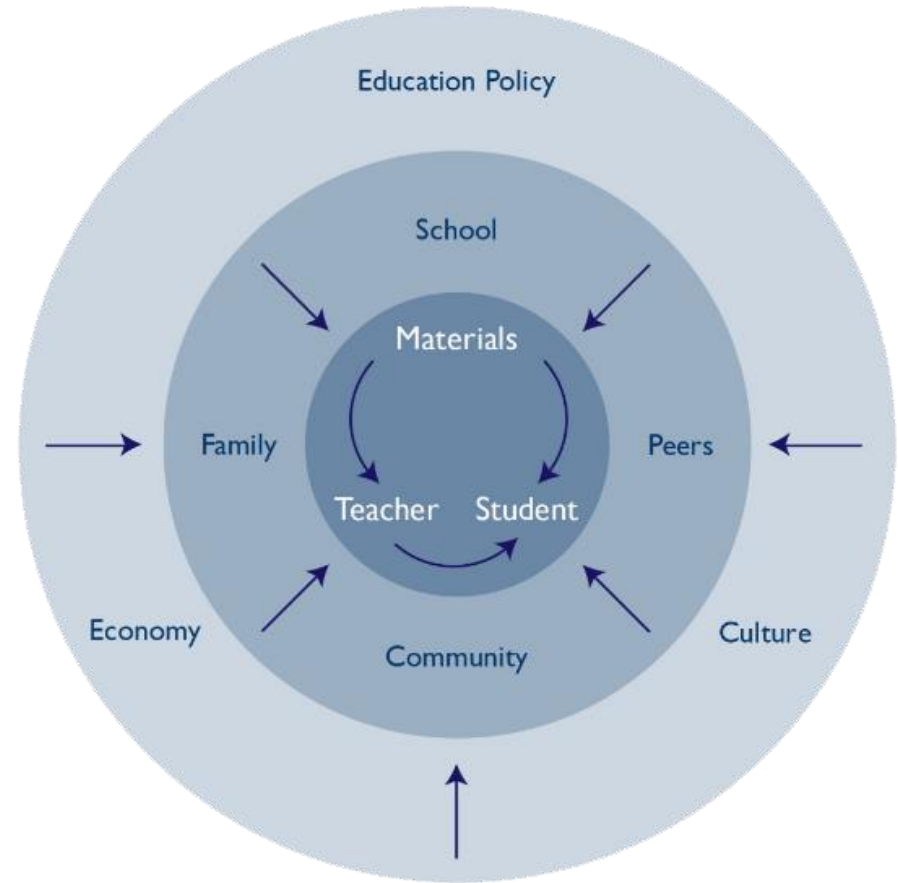
- Individual lesson plans
- In class worksheets
- Hands on classroom activities and associated materials
- Homework assignments and/or worksheets
- Instructional videos
- Textbooks
- Lesson plans for teachers
- Grading rubrics
- Assessments



MATERIALS MATTER: RESEARCH

The research is conclusive and convincing: high-quality teaching materials make a difference

- Quality instructional materials can have an impact as large as or larger than the impact of teacher quality on students (see Evaluating Impact of Quality Instructional Materials for Teacher Preparation overview). Additionally, the cumulative impact of such curriculum is statistically significant over time.
- Teachers need access to quality materials to adapt for their classroom based on the needs of their students so that they can provide a better education for students.



MATERIAL MATTERS: OER

Open educational resources (OER) are freely accessible, openly licensed text, media, and other digital assets that are useful for teaching, learning, and assessment, as well as for research purposes. The term OER describes publicly accessible materials and resources for any user to use, re-mix, improve and redistribute under some licenses.



Teachers Share Top 3 Benefits To OER

1. High quality OER can save teachers significant time and effort on resource development and advance student learning inside and outside the classroom – 84%
2. Save time and/or money finding or creating tools for my classroom – 70%
3. Improved access to classroom tools and curriculum – 58%

Source: Surveyed Delaware Teachers

MATERIALS MATTER: HOW ARE OER USED?

- An OER can serve as its own curriculum material, or complement existing ones
- An OER can range from a primary source material to a lesson unit to an assessment to a curriculum

Top 7 Most Helpful Educational Materials

1. Curriculum

2. Lessons

3. Books (digital and/or printed)

4. Lesson planning tools

5. Streaming Videos

6. Quizzes and/or tests

7. Homework

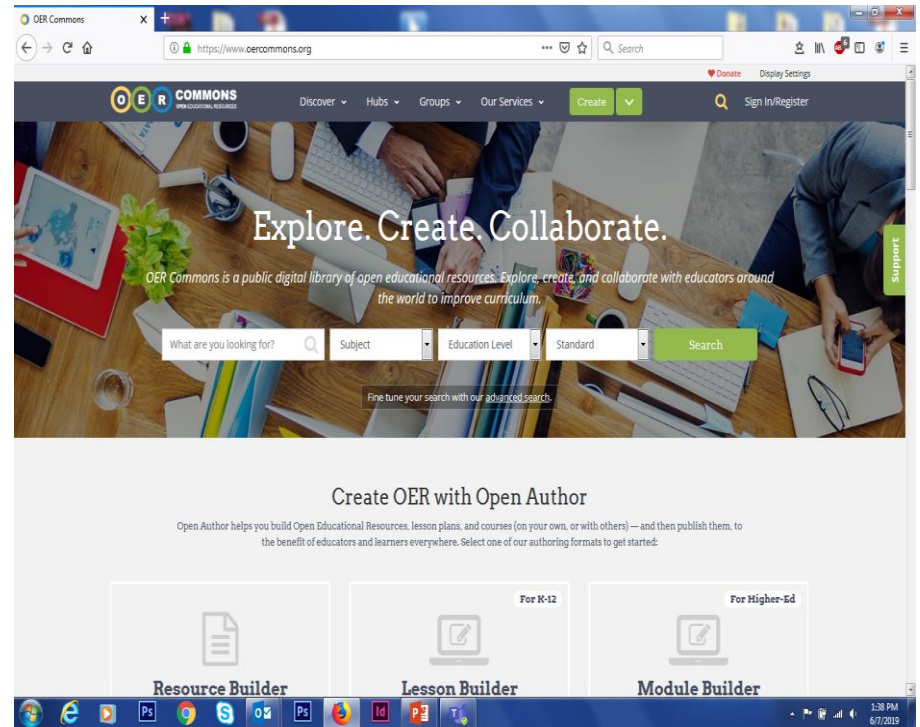


Source: Surveyed Delaware Teachers

MATERIALS MATTER

How are states and districts taking advantage of OER?

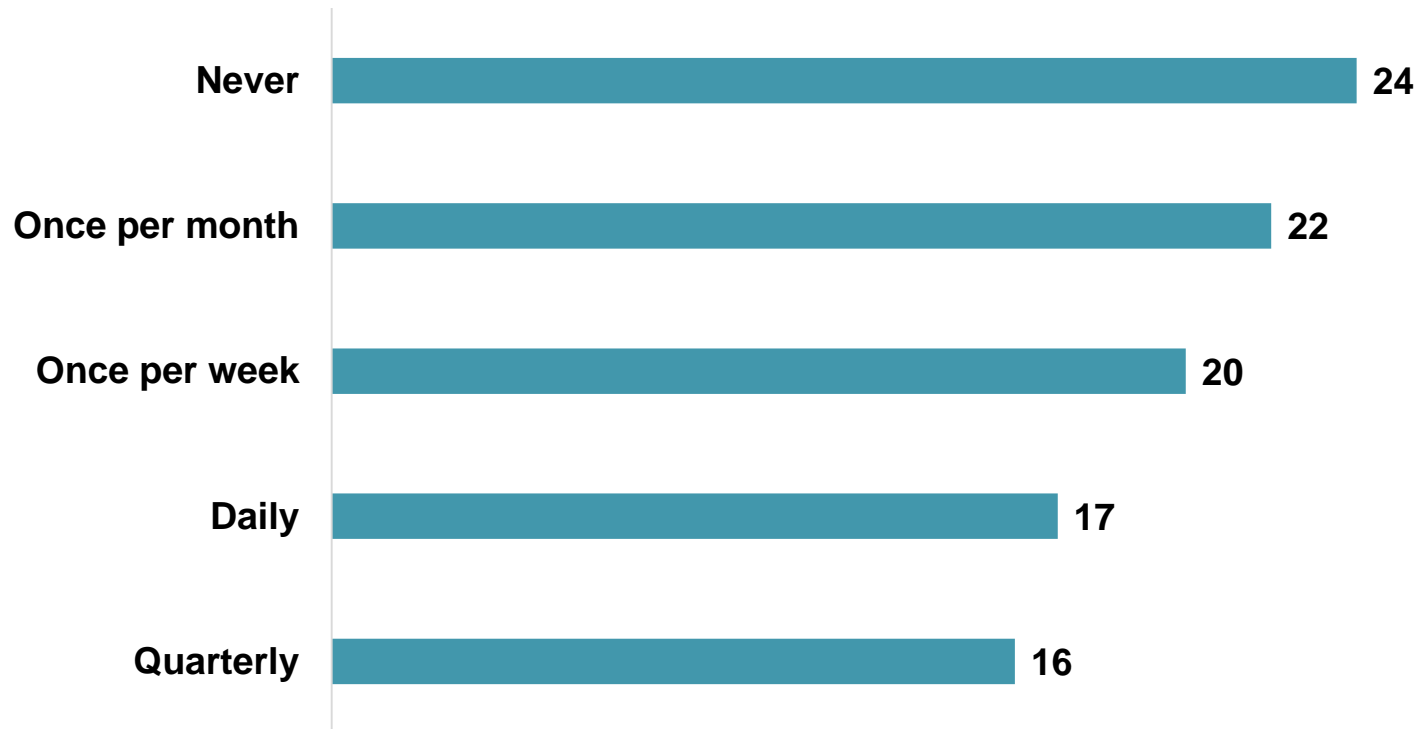
- Some districts and states have own OER libraries
- Some rely on existing web-based platforms



MATERIALS MATTERS: WHAT TEACHERS SAY

While Delaware teachers are somewhat familiar with OER, 22 percent say they use OER once per month, 20 percent say once per week, and 24 percent say they never use OER.

How Often Do You Use OER?



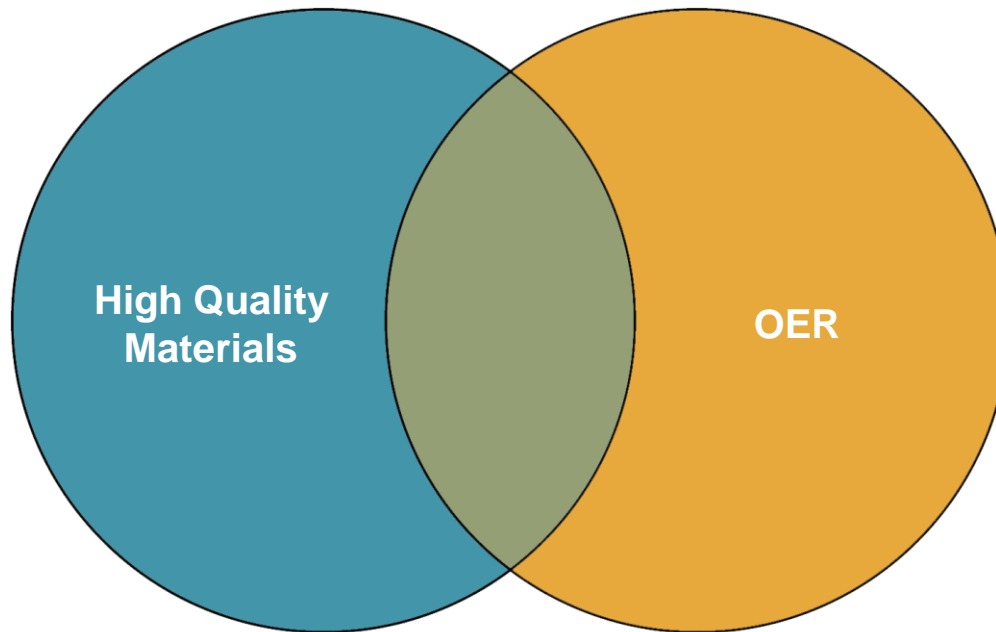
Source: Surveyed Delaware Teachers

MATERIALS MATTER

Not all High Quality Materials are OER, and not all OER are High Quality Materials



Teachers Pay Teachers





WHAT SHOULD CHANGE?

WHAT SHOULD CHANGE?

We're asking teachers to be both creators of content and deliverers, two very different skills.

There plenty of OER options out there; many teachers use websites like Pinterest or TeachersPayTeachers to find materials and activities for students. **But these resources often vary in quality and aren't vetted by any official body to ensure alignment with standards.**



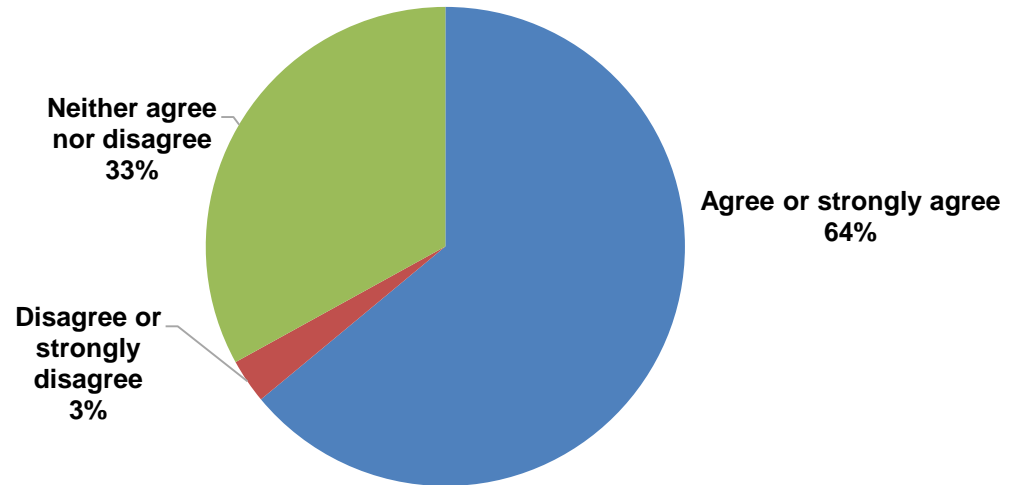
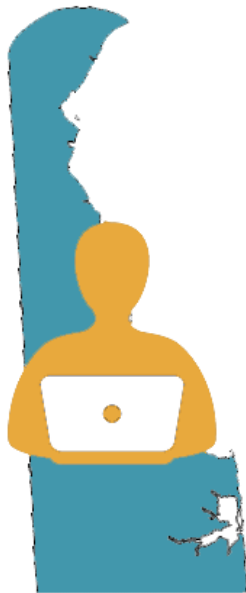
Platform	% teachers familiar
TeachersPayTeachers	80%
Khan Academy	71%
Pinterest	67%
Engage New York	35%
Smarter Balanced Digital Library	34%

Source: Surveyed Delaware Teachers

WHAT SHOULD CHANGE?

Teachers want more support to realize the promise of high-quality OER.

While there are vast quantities of material online, teachers say they could use more help in making informed choices when it comes to resources they use with students.



64% OF TEACHERS AGREE THAT OER ARE A VALUABLE TOOL AND THAT THE STATE SHOULD DO MORE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY OPEN RESOURCES

Source: Surveyed Delaware Teachers

OER AND EQUITY: WHAT SHOULD CHANGE?

Challenges around instructional materials are most problematic for the neediest students

- Less experienced educators, who often serve high-need students, are sometimes creating or using less-than-stellar materials
 - Similar students with access to high-quality materials could see accelerated learning
 - **Teachers cite a lack of content tailored to English learners, special education students**

In a study of five school systems, students spent most of their time in schools without access to four key resources:

- **grade-appropriate assignments**
 - **strong instruction**
 - **deep engagement**
 - **teachers who hold high expectations.**
- **Students of color, students from low-income families, English language learners, and students with disabilities had less access to resources**

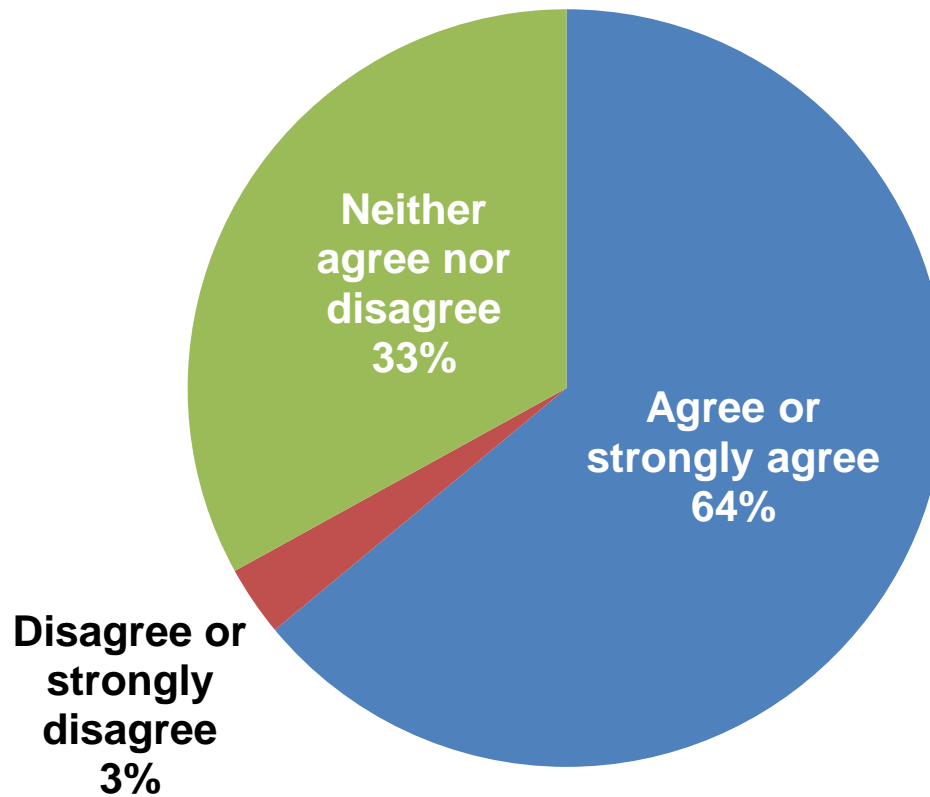


A photograph of two people, a woman and a man, sitting at a table. The woman is on the left, wearing a patterned shirt, and the man is on the right, wearing a striped shirt. They are both looking down at documents on the table. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

NOW WHAT?

NOW WHAT: WHAT TEACHERS SAY

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NOW WHAT: WHAT TEACHERS SAY



Using OER

- **53% want a platform with a ratings system** where users can rate the quality of various materials on different characteristics
- **36% want a repository where they use a vetting process/rubric** with master educators assessing quality

Top four barriers to using OER

1. Not enough time to find and modify resources appropriately
2. Cannot find enough resources for my subject
3. Resources aren't high quality
4. My school/district does not encourage necessary collaboration to facilitate the use of OER (lack of support)



NOW WHAT: THE OPPORTUNITY

Based on demand from the field and examples in other states and districts, Delaware can support Delaware teachers with OER.

- Schoology in Delaware: Are we maximizing its use?
- OER usage
- Desire for vetted repository
- Need for support
- Small size



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FIND MORE INFORMATION

- [Open Education Resources: Overview and Definition](#)
- [OER Commons](#)
- [Goodbye textbooks, hello free online resources](#)
- [What are Open Education Resources?](#)