



## MEMO

TO: Colorado Commission on Higher Education  
FROM: CDHE OER Council  
DATE: March 31, 2020  
RE: Official Notice for Reallocation of OER Council Funds for 2020 Conference

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The purpose of this memo is to encourage the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) to act to reallocate \$40,000 in funds to the Colorado Department of Higher Education's (CDHE) *No Lapse for Learning* initiative.

Since 2018, CDHE has been working to assist public higher education institutions in lowering learning material costs by developing and expanding the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) in tandem with the Colorado OER Council, pursuant to HB18-1331, a bill that created the statewide OER Council and grant program that was informed by a 2017 CDHE report.

The OER Council's report, submitted to the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) and Education Committee in November 2017, found increased adoption of freely available teaching and learning materials could significantly benefit students through cost savings, improved learning and higher student retention.

The OER Council budgeted \$40,000 for the 2020 Conference, set to take place June 4 and 5 at Colorado School of Mines. Due to the public health crisis facing Colorado and the United States, the OER Council has decided to postpone the annual OER Conference to October 2020.

Therefore, the OER Council would like to pledge \$40,000 to the No Lapse in Learning: Laptop Drive. Educators are charting new territory as our higher education institutions seek to deal with COVID-19 and we recognize that, while the transition to remote instruction may be necessary, our students are at risk of being left behind because they don't have access to the required technology. Providing access to technology, such as laptops and hotspots, is consistent with the objective of open educational resources: the cost of education should not be a barrier for students.

The OER Council strives to make education more accessible and equitable through freely available teaching and learning materials. While the Council's plans for the year have shifted due to the extreme circumstances, we are excited to support this program to ensure Colorado students continue to receive high quality education.

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