



J-WEL

Abdul Latif Jameel World Education Lab

The Potential of Open Educational Resources at the Itz'at STEAM Academy, Belize

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ITZ'AT

STEAM ACADEMY

- Opened **September 2023** to 64 students in First Form (equiv. U.S. 8th grade), 75 new First Form students started August 2024
- Opportunity: Establish an innovative, contemporary **STEAM secondary school** in Belize based on MIT principles of “**mind and hand**” and **heart, active learning, project-based learning** focusing on **UN Sustainable Development Goals**

The Opportunity

- Encode OER policies & practices from the start
- Ensure (via license) the ability to use the school's materials broadly within Belize, and our collective work more broadly
- Provide an example of OER for the Belizean education system

Journey to OER at Itz'at



Build on the work of Mountain Heights Academy and MIT



Develop an OER Policy



Implement the OER Policy

Why this team?

- Helped to launch the Open Educational Resources movement with MIT OpenCourseWare in 2001
- OER and “Mind, hand and heart” deeply infuse our work
- Opened Mountain Heights Academy, a charter high school in 2009, utilizing OER for all course materials
- Expertise and experience in advising other high schools adopting OER
- Expertise in developing OER lesson plans, etc.

A (Brief) History of OER



Mountain Heights

- Founded in 2007
- Opened in 2009
- Positioned as the first secondary school to implement OER curriculum
- Functions as an online, public charter school
- Serves 1,500+ students all over Utah
- Scores above state average in Science and English

Mountain Heights Vision, Mission, Goals

- Vision is to be the leader in digital education
- Mission is to develop connected and successful learners
- One of our schoolwide goals is to increase OER impact, by supporting others

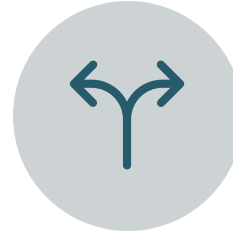
Mountain Heights Values



AUDACIOUS



PROBLEM-
SOLVERS



OPEN &
FLEXIBLE



INNOVATIVE



COMMUNICATIVE



SERVICE
LEARNING



PERSONAL
RESPONSIBILITY

Mountain Heights Experiences

- Evolution of OER
- Experimented, evaluated, learned
- Identified multiple benefits of OER, including just-in-time instruction and differentiation by tiering
- Teachers as instructional designers, supported by two instructional coaches

Itz'at STEAM Academy: OER Policy

To help meet the mission and vision, the school will:

1. Design the school's curriculum such that the use of Open Educational Resources comprises a majority percentage of teaching and learning materials.
2. Develop materials, especially those for use in teaching and learning at the school, as Open Educational Resources utilizing a permissive license.
3. Utilize OER to provide ready access to materials and to personalize materials to meet the needs of individual students.
4. Promote the use and awareness of OER through professional development activities supported by the school.
5. Promote the creation, use and awareness of OER by students.
6. Communicate the use of and value of OER with parents, other community members and the education system in Belize.

Key Elements of the Policy

- Patterned after Mountain Heights
 - Copyright, Attribution
 - CC-BY License
 - Students
 - Teacher Support
- As a new school, distinguishing what's used in the classroom, vs. what (and when) the school publishes the OER
- Encoding recognition of individual efforts

OER Policy: Copyright

- Itz'at STEAM Academy
 - will hold the copyright of all materials developed for use at the school by its teachers, educators, administrators and other staff.
 - will be the publisher of all materials developed for use at the school by its teachers, educators, administrators and other staff.
- A copyright statement may be included with materials published by the Itz'at STEAM Academy.
 - Copyright © 2022, Itz'at STEAM Academy

"Itz'at STEAM Academy Open Educational Resources Policy". July 15, 2024.

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OER Policy: License

- The Itz'at STEAM Academy will publish and license the materials developed by its teachers, educators, administrator and other staff with a current Creative Commons Attribution license.

As of June 2022, all materials will be licensed with a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

OER Policy: Attribution & Citation

Attribution

- Individuals contributing to the development of materials developed and/or published by the Itz'at STEAM Academy ***will have the option of having their name listed along with the Itz'at STEAM Academy on a material-by-material basis***. Contributions by those outside of the school may be included upon request and with consent of the publisher. Contributions will follow generally accepted practice of attribution in academic publications.
- Good practice for attribution of the materials described by this policy is to include the title, author, source and license.

Citation

- Good practice for citation of materials developed by the school is to follow standard citation guidelines such those published by the American Psychological Association or the Modern Language Association.

OER Policy: Students

- **Students** of the Itz'at STEAM Academy **will hold the copyright of materials they develop during their attendance at the school.**
- **Students may opt out** of which materials are used by the school as part of lesson plans and activities. (For example, students will engage in project work and the school may request that some or all of the project materials be included as part of future lesson plans and activities.)
- Student materials that are not opted and are used as part of lesson plans and activities will be licensed with a current **Creative Commons Attribution** license.

OER Policy: Publishing OER

- Itz'at STEAM Academy OER will be published in a publicly available website and/or repository that may include: the school's website; a **Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology website** / repository; and one or more international OER repositories (e.g., OER Commons).

OER Policy: Support for Teachers

- The Itz'at STEAM Academy will support teachers, educators, administrators and other staff in the development and use of OER. This support will take the form of regular professional development and includes support for copyright clearance, finding OER, use of a school style guide, etc.

Implementing Itz'at's OER Policy within curriculum design



Curriculum
Architecture



Competences &
Competencies



Course Design



Lesson Planning
(Find, Adapt OER)



Learning &
Teaching

Implementation Challenges

- Brand new school, campus under construction as the school opened
- New pedagogical approach of competency-based and project-based learning → teachers learning a new system, becoming curriculum developers
- Typical challenges in helping teachers / faculty / instructional designers transition to OER

“Building the airplane as we’re flying it”

Implementing Itz'at's OER Policy within curriculum design. How did we do?



Curriculum
Architecture



Competences &
Competencies



Course Design



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Learning &
Teaching



Learn More

- Itz'at STEAM Academy, <https://www.itzat.edu.bz>
- Mountain Heights Academy,
<https://mountainheightsacademy.org>
 - OER → <https://mountainheightsoer.org>
- MIT Open Learning, <https://openlearning.mit.edu>