

Civics OER Rubric: High School Civics & Comparative Government



Purpose and Audience

This document was drafted to:

- Support statewide implementation of Senate Bill 23
- Assess Open Educational Resources (OER's) for alignment to the 2024 Alaska Social Studies Standards and the 14 instructional topics required by Senate Bill 23
- Support districts in selecting Civics and Government curricula

This document is intended to support the following audiences:

- Organizations submitting OER's for review by AK DEED
- Alaska School Districts
- Teachers in Alaska who teach Civics, Comparative Government or Social Studies
- Pre-service teachers preparing to teach Civics, Comparative Government, or Social Studies in Alaska
- Interested community partners and stakeholders

Context:

- On June 18, 2026, Alaska Senate Bill 23 passed into law with an effective implementation date of July 1, 2027.
- The enrolled law (the version which passed into law) is available [here](#).

****It is highly recommended that district superintendents, district content / curriculum supervisors, district social studies teachers, and any other staff members with relevant connections to high school Civics / Comparative Government instruction closely read the enrolled law.****

Instructions

This rubric is designed to be adapted for any content area to evaluate OER's which include:

- Complete courses / curricula
- Units with include multiple lessons
- Individual lessons

Certain criteria may not apply to some resources. Use professional judgement to decide when it is appropriate to score an item "not appropriate". **For shorter resources, focus on the key questions and any content-specific priorities.** This rubric is not designed to evaluate a single task or stand-alone activity.

Key Vocabulary

open educational resource (OER) (according to SB 23) may refer to:

1. Learning, teaching, or research material in any format that resides in the public domain
2. Learning, teaching, or research material in any format that is under copyright and has been released under an open license that permits access at no cost as well as reuse, repurpose, adaptation, and redistribution by others.

Criterion 1: Alignment

The materials included are aligned to [Senate Bill 23](#) and the [2024 Alaska Social Studies Standards](#). Materials address the 14 required civics instructional topics identified in Senate Bill 23 and provide clear, substantive connections to relevant Alaska Social Studies Standards. Alignment is evident in the content, learning objectives, instructional activities, and assessments, rather than being limited to references or citations.

Key questions: Check all that apply

- ☐ 1.1 Does the resource directly support Alaska's 2024 Social Studies Standards?
- ☐ 1.2 Does the resource include all / some / none of the 14 required instructional topics listed below?

Reviewer notes:

SB23 Required Instructional Topics: Check all that are present in the resource

- ☐ (1) the founding history of the United States, including foundational documents and the principles of government of the United States
- ☐ (2) federalism, including the role and operations of local, state, and national governments
- ☐ (3) the institutions of the United States government, including the 3 responsibilities of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches
- ☐ (4) the rights and responsibilities of United States citizenship
- ☐ (5) civil liberties and civil rights
- ☐ (6) the Constitution of the State of Alaska and the Constitution of the United States
- ☐ (7) political parties and interest groups
- ☐ (8) campaigns and elections
- ☐ (9) the United States Congress
- ☐ (10) domestic policy
- ☐ (11) foreign policy
- ☐ (12) comparative systems of governments used globally and by Alaska Natives
- ☐ (13) international relations
- ☐ (14) major issues facing local, state, and the United States governments.

Criterion 2: Civics Knowledge & Practice

The materials develop students' civic knowledge, inquiry skills, and capacity for informed civic participation. Materials provide accurate and appropriately rigorous civic content; engage students in authentic civic inquiry and disciplinary practices; and provide meaningful opportunities for students to apply civic knowledge, develop civic skills, and consider or participate in civic life.

2.1 Civic Knowledge & Content Accuracy

Materials provide accurate, relevant, and appropriately rigorous knowledge of government, civics, political systems, institutions, rights and responsibilities, and other essential concepts. Content reflects the complexity of civic life, distinguishes fact from interpretation or opinion, and avoids factual, conceptual, or historical inaccuracies

2.2 Civic Inquiry & Disciplinary Practices

Materials engage students in disciplinary practices central to civics, including developing and answering questions, analyzing primary and secondary sources, evaluating evidence and claims, considering multiple perspectives, using civic reasoning, and constructing evidence-based explanations or arguments.

2.3 Civic Participation & Agency

Materials provide authentic opportunities for students to develop civic skills, and apply civic knowledge to relevant issues or problems. Opportunities for civic participation are developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and designed to support student agency rather than promote a particular political position or outcome.

Key questions: Check all that apply

- ☐ 2.1 Does the resource develop accurate, substantive knowledge of government, civics, political systems, institutions, rights and responsibilities, and other essential concepts?
- ☐ 2.2 Does the resource engage students in developing and answering questions, analyzing primary and secondary sources, evaluating evidence and claims, considering multiple perspectives, using civic reason, and constructing evidence-based explanations and arguments?
- ☐ 2.3 Does the resource provide authentic opportunities to develop civic skills and apply civic knowledge to relevant issues or problems?

	Meets Criteria	Reviewer notes:
	Partially Meets Criteria	
	Criteria Not Met	
	N/A	

Criterion 3: Usability

The materials are accessible and straightforward to use for teachers and students.

Materials organized and presented in ways that support effective implementation by educators and students. Materials are easy to locate, navigate, understand, and use. Organization, sequencing, directions, formatting, and resource requirements are clear. Materials provide sufficient information for educators to understand their intended use, instructional purpose, and relationship to other components. Materials include background knowledge or a teacher information guide.

Key Questions: Check all that apply

- ☐ 3.1 *Is the resource easy to use?*
- ☐ 3.2 *Is the resource engaging and accessible for teachers and students?*

	<i>Meets Criteria</i>	Reviewer notes:
	<i>Partially Meets Criteria</i>	
	<i>Criteria Not Met</i>	
	<i>N/A</i>	

Criterion 4: Non-Partisan, Viewpoint-neutral

The materials support civic learning without promoting or discouraging a particular political party, candidate, or policy position. Materials present controversial or contested issues in ways that encourage inquiry, evidence-based reasoning, and consideration of multiple perspectives. Materials do not direct students toward predetermined political conclusions or use instructional activities primarily to advance a partisan or ideological position.

Key Questions: Check all that apply

- ☐ 4.1 Does the resource maintain a non-partisan approach and avoid promoting a political party, candidate, ideology, or policy position?
- ☐ 4.2 Does the resource allow students to develop their own informed conclusions rather than directing them toward predetermined political conclusions?

	Meets Criteria	Reviewer notes:
	Partially Meets Criteria	
	Criteria Not Met	
	N/A	

Criterion 5: Alaska Relevance, Representation, & Perspectives

The materials meaningfully reflect Alaska's people, places, history, government, civic institutions, and communities and provide opportunities for students to engage with diverse perspectives. Materials appropriately incorporate Alaska-specific content and contexts and represent the experiences and contributions of Alaska Native peoples and other Alaskans. Materials avoid stereotypes, tokenism, disfavored names or terms, or inaccurate representations and provide opportunities for students to examine issues from multiple perspectives and within relevant cultural and historical contexts.

Key Questions: Check all that apply

- ☐ 5.1 Is the resource relevant to Alaskan students?
- ☐ 5.2 Does the resource accurately and respectfully represent a range of perspectives and experiences, including the perspectives of Alaska Natives and Alaska's unique governmental, tribal, civic, geographic, and community contexts?

	Meets Criteria	Reviewer notes:
	Partially Meets Criteria	
	Criteria Not Met	
	N/A	

Criterion 6: Instructional Quality & Supports

The materials incorporate evidence-informed instructional practices and provide supports which enable learners to engage successfully in rigorous civics learning.

Materials include clear learning objectives, purposeful sequencing, appropriate scaffolds, opportunities for student thinking and discussion, and supports for learners with varied levels of background knowledge, literacy, language proficiency, and learning needs. Teacher guidance supports effective facilitation without unnecessarily limiting educator flexibility

Key Questions: Check all that apply

- ☐ 6.1 Does the resource incorporate evidence-informed instructional practices?
- ☐ 6.2 Does the resource provide supports which enable learners to engage successfully in rigorous civics learning?
- ☐ 6.3 Does the resource include clear learning objectives? Purposeful sequencing? Appropriate Scaffolds? Opportunities for student thinking and discussion? Supports for learners with varied levels of background knowledge, literacy, language proficiency, and learning needs?

	Meets Criteria	Reviewer notes:
	Partially Meets Criteria	
	Criteria Not Met	
	N/A	

Criterion 7: Assessment Practices

The materials use assessment to measure students' civic knowledge, reasoning, inquiry, and application of civic skills. Assessments, performance tasks, and projects are aligned to learning objectives and provide meaningful opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know and can do. Assessment tasks emphasize evidence-based reasoning, source analysis, argumentation, inquiry, and/or civic application rather than primarily measuring recall. Clear criteria, exemplars, rubrics, or other scoring guidance support consistent evaluation of student work.

Key Questions: Check all that apply

- ☐ 7.1 Does the resource include an aligned assessment?
- ☐ 7.2 Does the resource include an aligned project-based assessment?

	Meets Criteria	Reviewer notes:
	Partially Meets Criteria	
	Criteria Not Met	
	N/A	

Criterion 8: OER Quality

The materials are openly accessible, technically functional, and designed to support sustainable use, adaptation, and sharing. Materials clearly identify their access and use permissions, including applicable Creative Commons or other licensing information. Digital resources are functional, accessible, easy to navigate, and reasonably usable across common devices and platforms. Materials provide appropriate attribution and minimize barriers to access, including unnecessary registration, paywalls, or proprietary technology requirements.

Key Questions: Check all that apply

- ☐ 8.1 Is the resource openly licensed or otherwise legally reusable?
- ☐ 8.2 Is it technically accessible, stable, current, adaptable, and free of unnecessary barriers?

	Meets Criteria	Reviewer notes:
	Partially Meets Criteria	
	Criteria Not Met	
	N/A	