

Utah's Online School Library FAQ

1. What is the Utah's Online School Library?

[Utah's Online School Library](#) (UOSL) is a virtual library of databases designed to support research and learning at the K-12 level. It is one component of the statewide [Utah's Online Library](#) project. Access to resources varies by library: [Utah's Online Public Library](#) serves patrons of public libraries, [Utah's Academic Online Library](#) serves university and college students, and [Utah's Online School Library](#) serves primary and secondary school students and teachers.

2. What is UEN's role with Utah's Online Library?

In state law, UEN is responsible for managing the state's infrastructure for educational technology. This infrastructure has a wide area network that connects schools to the internet, high quality resources, software and professional learning for educators. UEN is a highly regarded organization both within Utah and with peer organizations nationwide.

3. How does UEN choose resources for services such as Utah's Online Library?

UEN licenses software, media, programs and other resources in accordance with [state law](#) and UEN's [public service mission](#). UEN also works with subject matter experts to curate open education resources aligned to the [state's core curriculum standards](#). The resources and standards are linked to a [searchable database](#) on uen.org. This work is guided by UEN's [content selection policy](#) and other applicable law (e.g., procurement law).

4. What's in Utah's Online School Library?

The reference materials on [Utah's Online School Library](#) are designed to support Strand 2 of [the Utah core standards for information literacy](#), which focus on developing "lifelong skills of selecting information from a wide variety of sources, assessing its worth and applying newfound knowledge to problems" to prepare students "for learning, doing and problem solving in college, career and throughout life." The resources include:

- a. CultureGrams containing reports on over 200 countries and world cultures
- b. Gale Reference with cross-curricular content aligned to education standards and topics
- c. World Book Online encyclopedia for grades Pre-K through high school, also in Spanish
- d. Soundzabound royalty-free music library for students and school media

productions

- e. Utah Resources including newspapers, encyclopedias, Utah photo archives and state collections
- f. Sora ebooks with thousands of titles for early elementary age readers
- g. National Geographic Kids with books, videos and pictures for learners grades K-8
- h. eMedia multimedia resources for educators to explore, create and collaborate

5. Who can access Utah's Online School Library?

Utah K-12 educators, students and their families can use Utah's Online School Library. Users can automatically connect from devices that are on their school networks. For devices that are not on their school networks, they can use the login and password provided by their school. Note that the versions of Utah's Online Library for public libraries and academic libraries have different resources and separate logins.

6. How is Utah's Online School Library used in schools?

UEN does not require educators to use Utah's Online School Library. Content and pedagogical decisions are the responsibility of local education agencies, administrators, faculty and local school boards. UEN's role supporting educational technology infrastructure includes managing enterprise level software licensing, resulting in cost savings and other benefits.

7. Do you restrict use by grade level?

Utah's Online School Library website is organized (though not restricted) by grade band for elementary, middle and high school students along with the following notice: "Research databases and materials may not be suitable for all ages. Users are advised to follow [information literacy standards](#) and practices."

8. How do educators learn about Utah's Online School Library?

UEN provides [professional development workshops](#) and [materials](#) to help educators teach research skills to their students. Workshops are also provided by school districts, individual schools and USBE staff, and through the four [Utah Regional Education Service Agencies](#).

9. Are schools required to use Utah's Online School Library?

The decision to use or not use instructional resources, including [Utah's Online School Library](#), continues to ultimately lie with parents, local educators and school boards.

10. Does UEN follow Utah's 2022 Sensitive Materials law?

Laws enacted by Utah HB374 apply to Local Education Agencies (LEAs). UEN is not an LEA. In 2021, the Utah legislature enacted a digital materials law specific to UETN

(Digital Resource Standards [UCA 53B-17-109](#)). When procuring K-12 software, UEN communicates these expectations to vendors.

11. Is it safe to use Utah’s Online School Library?

Utah’s Online School Library is designed to support schools across the state and is geared toward a K-12 audience. The resources are grouped by elementary, middle and high school grade bands. Opinions vary on what is “safe” or “appropriate” from district to district and even within schools and families. As UEN’s [content selection policy](#) states, “we strive to judiciously balance the concerns of parents or guardians as they guide their children’s use of our content, while also preserving that right for other parents/guardians.”

12. What about filtering?

When the internet is accessed through the school’s wired or wireless network, then it is filtered. Applicable law, including the [Children’s Internet Protection Act](#) and [USB E rules](#), requires schools that receive federal E-Rate funding to certify they maintain internet safety policies that include technology protection measures. UEN supports schools by making filtering software and technical support for filtering available to districts and schools.

13. Is the software also filtered?

Yes. During procurement, library professionals conduct a thorough review of the journals and databases and work with vendors to customize the collections available in Utah. In addition, software scans and blocks material with certain terms when searches are conducted through the K-12 login. Unrestricted access to information is an important principle at the core of library and internet services, so unrestricted software is available through Utah’s public and academic libraries.

14. Do we still have EBSCO?

No. During a regular procurement cycle in 2024, EBSCO was not selected as a provider and is no longer licensed by UEN. Individual LEAs, public libraries and academic libraries may elect to license EBSCO independent of the UEN state contract.

15. What if I have a complaint about something on Utah’s Online School Library?

When a member of the public has a programming or content concern, we encourage them to discuss it with programming staff or UEN management. If their concern is not satisfied, we invite them to [request a review of our content](#) following UEN’s [content selection policy](#).

16. What if I need more information?

Local [school district](#) and [charter school](#) administrators and their boards are best able to assist members of their school community. [USB E staff](#) can help with questions regarding LEA requirements. School library staff, UEN staff and professionals associated with the [Utah School Library Association](#) teach research skills using Utah's Online School Library. Utah residents can learn more about public library services from the [Utah State Library Division](#) and their [local public libraries](#). Students, faculty and staff at Utah's colleges and universities can get help through [their institution's academic library](#).

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