

IBM Foundation and National Center for Learning Disabilities Release Watson-Enabled Tool for Teachers

Updates to Teacher Advisor With Watson content supports diverse learners and middle school math

ARMONK, N.Y., Aug. 16, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, the IBM (NYSE:[IBM](#)) Foundation and the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) announced their collaboration on a suite of classroom resources focused on supporting teachers who work with students with learning and attention issues. Teacher Advisor With Watson uses machine learning to correlate and understand nuances within a curated content collection of over 8,000 Open Educational Resources (OER) including vetted, quality lesson plans, student-facing activities and classroom strategies.

"The strategies NCLD is providing through Teacher Advisor with Watson will not only help the one in five students with learning and attention issues succeed, but are actually effective for all students," said NCLD President and CEO Mimi Corcoran. "We know teachers are hungry for this information, and our collaboration with the IBM Foundation to infuse these evidence-based strategies into general education materials is a crucial next step to support teachers across the country."

The IBM Foundation and NCLD are adding custom math modules for grades K-5. These resources provide teachers with evidence-based strategies to help them more effectively meet the needs of individual students with learning and attention issues. For example, a third-grade math teacher can easily leverage hands on activities introducing fractions with manipulatives to a student with ADHD. The new content also helps to support the 70 percent of children with learning and attention issues that spend at least 80 percent of their time in general education classes, too often without the individualized support they need to truly thrive.¹

"Currently, there are over 1.8 million public elementary school teachers in the U.S. Unfortunately, too many of them do not always have the tools they need to support their students," said IBM Foundation President Jennifer Ryan Crozier. "Our partnership with NCLD enhances Teacher Advisor's machine learning capabilities so more teachers can effectively and efficiently meet individual students' learning needs."

Teacher Advisor aims to save teachers time planning highly effective math lessons for all students, which is also why IBM added additional instructional content to support middle math teachers for the upcoming school year. Research has shown middle school to be a critical time in students' development of a positive 'math identity,' which is the key to their continuing engagement with STEM subjects and career paths. The middle school additions include full-grade curriculum from EngageNY and Open Up Resources, the two most reputable math curricula in the OER domain, according to independent expert reviewers at [edreports.org](#).

Teachers Advisor has been trained in machine learning by math experts at non-profit [UnboundEd](#) to better understand math terminology. With the average teacher typically spending 12 hours per week searching for or creating their own resources, this training from former educators saves teachers valuable lesson planning time by giving them targeted resource recommendations based on their search criteria.

Less than a year after its launch, over 12,000 elementary school teachers have embraced Teacher Advisor With Watson. Nearly nine out of every 10 instructional coaches who have used the tool said in a survey that they would recommend Teacher Advisor to other teachers. And the latest version of Teacher Advisor also enables teachers to find references best suited for English Language Learners (ELL), so that they can quickly access tips that will help them tailor their instruction for students who are not native English speakers.

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For more information on Teacher Advisor With Watson, please visit: <https://teacheradvisor.org/>

More About Teacher Advisor With Watson: Teacher Advisor With Watson is a philanthropic collaboration between IBM, the American Federation of Teachers, UnboundEd, and external philanthropic funding partners, such as the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

The tool was created in 2017 out of the firm belief that improving student achievement depends on high quality teaching, and that the most innovative technology solutions should be tailored to enhance and extend teacher expertise. Teachers and educators have directly helped inform the tool's content and functionality from day one. Its latest release reflects feedback received throughout Teacher Advisor's first year as a publicly available OER tool.

About the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

The mission of NCLD is to improve the lives of the 1 in 5 children and adults nationwide with learning and attention issues—by empowering parents and young adults, transforming schools and advocating for equal rights and opportunities. We're working to create a society in which every individual possesses the academic, social and emotional skills needed to succeed in school, at work and in life.

For more information, visit us at www.NCLD.org.

¹ [The State of Learning Disabilities, NCLD, 2017.](#)

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