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PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP ENHANCES DIGITAL TOOLS FOR CUSTOMIZED SCIENCE EDUCATION

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BOULDER—The University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR), University of Colorado, and EdTrex today announced an exclusive option agreement allowing EdTrex to continue developing a software platform enabling on-demand creation of customizable curricula using curated open education resources.

The software platform, named E-Hub, is the result of four years of research headed by Tamara Sumner, co-director of Digital Learning Sciences, a joint research and development center of the University of Colorado Boulder and UCAR. The center, incorporating input from Colorado and out-of-state school district teachers and administrators, developed a teacher-centric, cloud-based system allowing educators to create customized curricula using curated resources from open education databases and publisher-provided materials. E-Hub is especially focused on content and curricula for STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and math).

The research was funded by the National Science Foundation.

"We're especially excited about the transfer of this technology into classroom settings," said Mary Marlino, director of Digital Learning Services at UCAR. "This is a very satisfying culmination of a dozen years of working very closely with the CU team in developing services to support open education resources in the classroom."

In the six school districts where the E-Hub platform has been deployed so far, involving nearly 100 schools and 400 teachers, 90% of teachers said they would recommend the platform to other educators. In one study, student outcomes improved up to 35% based on standard test scores.

"For the first time, teachers can respond immediately and effectively to adaptions of instructional content that best suit the individual needs of each of their students," said EdTrex CEO John Stearns. "We know all students learn differently. Now teachers can address those differences on the spot and achieve extraordinary learning outcomes."

"Empowering teachers to customize curricula is particularly critical for today's diverse learners," added Sumner, an associate professor of cognitive science and computer science. "A study conducted by researchers from Utah State University found that students of teachers who took advantage of the rich features in the E-Hub platform showed significantly higher learning gains. In addition, these teachers' use of E-Hub tended to benefit student populations that had a larger portion of low socio-economic status students."

Beyond curriculum design, EdTrex plans to develop the software platform to support next-generation classroom and instructional management requirements.

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