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**PBS LAUNCHES ONLINE EDUCATION COMMUNITY WHERE PRE-K-12
EDUCATORS CAN CONNECT, CONTRIBUTE AND GROW**

'PBS Teachers Connect'SM (pbsteachers.org/connect) provides Web 2.0 tools to foster collaboration among educators using multimedia and technology to improve teaching and learning

ARLINGTON, VA., July 1, 2008 – PBS today unveils a new online community for preK-12 educators that supports the advancement of digital media content and technology integration in education. PBS Teachers ConnectSM (pbsteachers.org/connect) provides teachers, school library media specialists, technology coordinators, early childhood educators and other education professionals with opportunities to share ideas, collaborate and support the effective use of instructional technology and multimedia to enhance student learning.

The new online community is built around PBS Teachers (pbsteachers.org), the Web portal to the wide-ranging multimedia instructional resources and professional development services PBS offers preK-12 educators. At no cost, educators can search more than 3,000 standards-based classroom activities, lesson plans, interactive resources and other materials on the PBS Teachers Web site, then easily bookmark, annotate, share and manage their tagged content within the PBS Teachers Connect community. Many of the resources feature PBS' award-winning programming and content, including on-demand streaming video from select PBS programs.

PBS Teachers Connect will foster discussion and use of digital media content, and enable educators to form shared-interest groups online. The community features a personalized homepage for each user, enhanced user profiles, a searchable database of resources and community members, bookmarking tools and discussion threads. Additional online components, such as private messaging, community feeds, friend feeds, online events, and a digital media gallery, will be available this fall.

Through its nationwide network of local stations, PBS will extend the online interaction in PBS Teachers Connect into local school communities through face-to-face events. Educators across the country will be able to customize their homepages to receive local PBS station programming and event schedules as well as access a rich array of local education resources.

A key component of the PBS Teachers Connect offering is the PBS Teacher Leader program, which recognizes and rewards innovation in the use of digital media and technology in education. PBS Teacher Leaders will be an integral part of the online community's continued development by fostering discussion, collaboration and contribution of teacher-created content.

With the vast majority of students using social networking sites on a weekly basis, according to a recent report from the National School Board Association, more educators are incorporating social media tools in their professional lives to collaborate with and support each other. Community-building that once was confined to face-to-face encounters in school departments and association conferences, or informal contacts with like-minded staff members, is now increasingly happening online.

The power of Web 2.0 technologies, such as blogs, wikis and forums, enables educators to grow their network exponentially, connecting with teachers across the United States and around the world. Social networking in education opens doors to an unprecedented array of learning opportunities in an environment where educators often feel freer to express themselves, share their ideas and be catalysts for change.

For more information about PBS Teachers Connect, go to pbsteachers.org/connect.

About PBS

PBS, with its 355 member stations, offers all Americans – from every walk of life – the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and online content. Each week, PBS reaches more than 73 million people and invites them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; hear diverse viewpoints; and take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS' broad array of programs have been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. PBS' premier children's TV programming and Web site, pbskids.org, are parents' and teachers' most trusted partners in inspiring and nurturing curiosity and love of learning in children. More information about PBS is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org Web sites on the Internet.

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