



## **PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection Provides Specialized Resources and Tools to Help Instructional Coaches Improve Skills**

***Added functionality and new professional development modules on coaching practices and effectiveness enhance PBS TeacherLine's online offering for coaches***

ARLINGTON, Va. (Sept. 24, 2008) – PBS TeacherLine® has released a new version of PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection that enhances the user experience for instructional coaches and teachers. The upgrade improves the way content is viewed, and offers more professional development modules that address coaching strategies and effectiveness. [PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection](#) is an expansive online suite of media-rich resources, instructional strategies, and tools that supports educators with coaching responsibilities. The latest version is the result of more than a year spent conducting in-depth research and soliciting feedback from coaches.

Coaches are school-based professional developers that provide ongoing, job-embedded training and support to their peers. A growing body of empirical studies indicate that instructional coaching has great potential to influence teacher practice and, ultimately, student performance. However, the research also shows that coaches need greater access to resources and training opportunities to hone their skills and improve coaching practices.

Increasingly, districts are adopting instructional coaching programs, but methods and needs vary across the country. Through PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection, coaches can augment their current professional development programs to create a customized, practical learning experience for teachers whether they support teachers face-to-face, online, or with a blended approach. Featuring thousands of research-based, standards-aligned content in K-12 math, reading, and instructional technology, PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection enables school-based professional developers to deliver on specific district initiatives and student performance goals. In addition, PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection offers online communication and collaboration tools to easily and quickly share and discuss resources with one or more teachers. High-quality multimedia resources, such as videos on best practices and research-based articles, are accessible in one searchable location along with a system to rate, tag, and comment on all resources within the library.

To provide effective teacher professional development, coaches need to understand the interventions they are sharing and how to productively employ the coaching process. In response to coaches' requests for more content designed to help them be more effective, PBS TeacherLine created eight professional development modules specifically for coaches and mentors, with 40 more in development. These modules address topics such as facilitating data-driven instruction, differentiating instruction, establishing trust and improving communication, facilitating discussion about technology and change, and the roles of an instructional coach. The self-paced, flexible design of PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection's professional development modules allow coaches and mentors to identify and select specific skills they want to develop and work at their own pace.

Other enhancements to PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection include a new feature that allows users to attach documents to announcements and online discussion forums, visual changes to improve the way users view and access content, and easier navigation through content and modules.

Full subscription service is available to schools, districts and coaching consultants. For more information or to preview PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection, visit [www.pbs.org/teacherline/peerconnection](http://www.pbs.org/teacherline/peerconnection).

### **About PBS TeacherLine**

PBS TeacherLine is committed to helping teachers acquire the skills they need to prepare students for a successful future. PBS TeacherLine provides high-quality, affordable professional development through facilitated, online courses, collaborative learning communities, and exemplary Internet-based resources. Currently, more than 130 courses across multiple subject areas are offered. Teachers can earn continuing education units, professional development points, and graduate credits for course completion. The courses have been developed in conjunction with leading education organizations, including Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), Education Development Center (EDC), Concord Consortium, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and International Society for Technology Education. Created in 2000, PBS TeacherLine is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education for \$6,046,811. This represents approximately 85 percent of the total program funding. The remaining 15 percent is funded through in-kind support from PBS and program income. For more information, visit [www.pbs.org/teacherline](http://www.pbs.org/teacherline).

### **About PBS**

PBS, with its 356 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 65 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 has 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](http://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](http://www.pbs.org), one of the leading dot-org Web sites on the Internet.

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