



## **Louisiana Governor's Office and School Districts Select PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection for PreK-12 Professional Development**

***Louisiana education leaders turn to PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection as an affordable, convenient option to support instructional coaches, improve teaching effectiveness***

ARLINGTON, Va. (Jan. 14, 2010) – To improve teacher quality – critical for meeting student achievement and graduate rate goals – the Louisiana Governor's Office and several school districts in the state have selected Peer Connection, a service of PBS TeacherLine® ([www.pbs.org/teacherline](http://www.pbs.org/teacherline)). Peer Connection will offer ongoing support to the state's preK-12 instructional coaches and educators through anytime, anywhere access to best practices and teaching resources, and a professional learning community.

Delivered locally through Louisiana Public Broadcasting, PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection will be implemented by state and district education leaders this year. PBS TeacherLine [Peer Connection](#), which recently earned the highest quality rating from the federal Government Performance and Results Act review, is an online suite of instructional strategies and tools for teacher leaders and instructional coaches who provide sustained, job-embedded professional development for their peers. Featuring thousands of research-based, standards-aligned resources in preK-12 math, reading, instructional strategies, and instructional technology, PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection enables coaches and mentors to create customized, practical learning experiences and guide teachers in their professional growth.

The [Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development Program](#) (NSECD), an initiative of the Louisiana Governor's Office of Community Programs, is training its monitors and educators on Peer Connection to implement in the 2010-2011 school year. The NSECD Program was first created through legislative appropriation for the 2001-2002 school year to operate in Orleans Parish. The Program expanded under the prior Administration to serve at-risk children who attended schools in nine designated parishes before being expanded statewide due to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Teacher quality is critical to the success of early childhood education to ensure developmentally appropriate practices are used. High-quality early childhood programs are proven by research to result in long-term positive outcomes for children.

"Peer Connection will help keep our teachers up-to-date and ahead of the curve when it comes to early childhood education," said Petrouchka Moise, the program's Director. "Our monitors will be able to build resource networks for teachers and their principals to ensure a supportive learning community no matter where they are located. Peer Connection provides quick access to a wealth of information that is well-organized and presented in a user-friendly way, so it's easy for busy teachers to find high-quality resources they need. We are very excited to start using it next school year."

In addition to the Governor's Office, five school districts in the state have selected PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection: Louisiana Department of Education's Special School District #2, Lafourche Parish Public Schools in Thibodaux, East Baton Rouge Parish School System in Baton Rouge, Point Coupee Parish Schools in New Roads, and Calcasieu Parish Public Schools in Lake Charles.

[Lafourche Parish Public Schools](#) serves about 15,000 students in 28 schools, with approximately 2,400 staff members. “Peer Connection fits well with the instructional coaching and mentoring model that our district and others around the state are using,” said Pam Folse, supervisor of Title I programs. “The online suite is easy-to-use and supports the face-to-face interaction to which teachers are accustomed.”

Numerous studies show that teacher effectiveness is one of the most significant determinants of student achievement. As technology evolves and instructional practices improve, teachers of all experience levels need to stay current and continually enhance their knowledge and skills. And, as teachers of the Baby Boomer generation retire there must be a pool of effective, diverse teachers ready to step in and take their place. Successful veteran teachers are being tasked by administrators with providing leadership and coaching to their peers to help them develop effective teaching skills and strategies.

“Faced with increasingly tight budgets, Louisiana education leaders are looking to make smart investments that provide long-term benefits and help them reach their goals for increased student achievement and higher graduation rates, such as using Peer Connection to provide high-quality professional development that improves teacher effectiveness,” said Nancy Thompson, LPB-PBS TeacherLine Project Manager for [Louisiana Public Broadcasting](#). “Instructional coaching is a key initiative of the state. Reading and math specialists and master teachers who are providing continuous support to peers also need professional development. They need tools and strategies for effective coaching, and access to media-rich, research-based instructional resources they can suggest to teachers.”

For more information about PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection, visit [www.pbs.org/peerconnection](http://www.pbs.org/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 for preK-12 educators through facilitated, online courses, collaborative learning communities, and exemplary Internet-based resources. Currently, more than 120 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 the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), Concord Consortium, and International Society for Technology in Education. Created in 2000, PBS TeacherLine is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, which 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 month, PBS reaches more than 124 million people on-air and online, inviting 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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#### **Media contacts:**

- Kevin Dando, PBS, 703-739-5073, [kdando@pbs.org](mailto:kdando@pbs.org)
- Donovan Goode, PBS TeacherLine, 703-739-5252, [dwgoode@pbs.org](mailto:dwgoode@pbs.org)
- Kristen Plemon, C. Blohm & Associates, Inc., 608-839-9805, [kristen@cblohm.com](mailto:kristen@cblohm.com)

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