



**PBS TeacherLine®**

## **South Carolina Educators See Positive Changes in the Classroom and Their Careers With Help from PBS TeacherLine and SCETV**

***PBS TeacherLine courses helped educators enhance knowledge and skills, contributed to rise in students' reading scores***

ARLINGTON, Va. (May 14, 2007) – Staff development is a key strategy to address reading achievement, according to Greg Mingo, principal at Lester Elementary School in Florence, S.C., and he knows first hand. When he encouraged his teachers to enroll in courses from PBS TeacherLine, a provider of facilitated, online professional development for preK-12 educators, he decided to support them by taking the same courses. Mingo said PBS TeacherLine was a contributing factor to the subsequent rise in reading achievement at Lester Elementary, a Title I school. Betsy Long, library media specialist for Doby's Mill Elementary School in Lugoff, S.C., reported the same finding at her school.

Across the country schools like Lester Elementary and Doby's Mill Elementary are faced with the task of increasing reading test scores to meet No Child Left Behind requirements. Educators in South Carolina are turning to PBS TeacherLine to gain the knowledge and skills needed to improve student learning. Along the way, they're also achieving professional recognition and success.

The first course Mingo and his staff completed was *Teaching Reading Across the Content Areas*. Mingo already believed in the benefits of online learning, but was impressed with the strong instructional content and format of PBS TeacherLine courses. "The courses are well-designed...and introduce a wide array of online resources to incorporate into instruction as well as provide interaction with educators all across the country," Mingo said. Because he had the teachers take courses together, they were able to meet in small groups to discuss what they had learned and enjoy the collaboration among colleagues. "It brought the staff closer together," Mingo continued. In the 2005-06 school year, 15 teachers from Lester Elementary, which has 405 K-6 students, enrolled in PBS TeacherLine courses.

Through classroom visits and teacher feedback, Mingo has seen the strategies that were taught in PBS TeacherLine courses used in the classroom with outstanding results. "The strategies have helped my students become stronger readers and decipher words more easily. They've become more confident in reading as well," said Jessica Crowson, first grade teacher at Lester Elementary. "In my grade level I have seen a huge growth, and I can look back on that and say I made a difference in that child's life. And that's the biggest reward ever."

For Janmarie Chatlosh, the school's library media specialist, PBS TeacherLine courses have helped her develop lessons with teachers and provide them with new ideas to use in the classroom.

Long, who has taken 10 PBS TeacherLine courses, believes the content and strategies she's learned from the courses have helped her incorporate new ideas in her position as a library media specialist, working with all the students and teachers at Doby's Mill Elementary. She has encouraged her colleagues to take PBS TeacherLine courses as well.

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PBS TeacherLine is one of the main reasons for the positive changes in students' reading skills, she said. The school was recently recognized in a study released by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee for reducing the achievement gap in the areas of reading and math.

"I love the flexibility, and the content is wonderful," said Long. "It's a great venue for sharing ideas and collaborating with other educators online, particularly since technology is constantly evolving." She has completed courses in reading/language arts, instructional strategies and instructional technology to work toward a Master's +30 degree in library science.

PBS TeacherLine courses are offered to South Carolina educators through PBS member station SCETV. To customize course content to meet local and state standards, educators from the state, who have earned a master's degree and were trained in online course facilitation by PBS TeacherLine and SCETV, facilitate the courses. Because of Long's and Mingo's successful learning experiences with PBS TeacherLine, they are both in the process of becoming local facilitators for PBS TeacherLine and SCETV.

"ETV is proud to know that as a result of its efforts, South Carolina teachers have taken over 2,250 courses," said Maurice "Moss" Bresnahan, president and CEO of SCETV, who has participated as a national reviewer for PBS TeacherLine in Arlington, Va. "Because of these professional development opportunities, each of these teachers is now better able to improve student learning outcomes. We think PBS TeacherLine is a real example of 'No Teacher Left Behind.'"

Teachers can learn more about PBS TeacherLine courses or enroll at [www.pbs.org/teacherline](http://www.pbs.org/teacherline).

#### **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 90 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 through program income. For more information, visit [www.pbs.org/teacherline](http://www.pbs.org/teacherline).

#### **About PBS**

PBS is a media enterprise that serves 355 public noncommercial television stations and reaches over 75 million people each week through on-air and online content. Bringing diverse viewpoints to television and the Internet, PBS provides high-quality documentary and dramatic entertainment, and consistently dominates the most prestigious award competitions. PBS is a leading provider of educational materials for K-12 teachers, and offers a broad array of other educational services. PBS' premier kids' TV programming and Web site, PBS KIDS Online ([www.pbskids.org](http://www.pbskids.org)), continue to be parents' and teachers' most trusted learning environments for 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)

--Tim Lum, PBS TeacherLine, 703-739-5252, [tdlum@pbs.org](mailto:tdlum@pbs.org)

--Charlene Blohm, C. Blohm & Associates, Inc., 608-839-9800, [charlene@cblehm.com](mailto:charlene@cblehm.com)