



‘PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection’ Assists Educators with Instructional Coaching Responsibilities

Content enables instructional coaches to deliver customized professional development to their peers while building a community of learners

ARLINGTON, Va. (June 25, 2007) – PBS TeacherLine® today launches a new product to help educators build and improve their coaching skills as they work with their peers to increase student achievement. Master teachers, department chairs and others are assuming the role of instructional coach – providing job-embedded, ongoing training to their peers – as schools nationwide transition to a new model of professional development. PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection is an expansive online suite of tools designed to support instructional coaches and others providing onsite, continuous professional development for teachers.

According to surveys conducted by Hezel Associates on behalf of PBS TeacherLine, 46 percent of superintendents and 65 percent of principals report the use of instructional coaching. Schools and districts nationwide are moving away from traditional models of professional development that provide only one-time or short-term training. As administrators make this shift, they are tasking school or district faculty with instructional coaching responsibilities. Coaches express a need for ongoing support and training, particularly since this role is new to many educators.

PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection approaches coaching on two levels. First, it shows coaches how to be a “guide on the side,” providing suggestions for facilitating adult learning and building a community of learners. Second, it offers coaches a rich library of instructional strategies and resources to draw upon while helping teachers accomplish their professional development goals. To that end, the functionality of PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection positions the coach as the curriculum expert, able to deliver a unique, customizable coaching experience to each teacher. It can support face-to-face, online, or blended coaching models.

“Educators across the country were instrumental in helping us design PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection,” said Rob Lippincott, senior vice president of education for PBS. “They piloted the program this year and gave us the direct feedback that helped us create the strongest coaching package possible with the greatest number of embedded resources.”

PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection features resource sets, known as Coaching Modules, which incorporate both theoretical and practical information to support teachers’ learning goals and provide a framework for setting expectations and outcomes around particular instructional strategies. The Coaching Modules contain various media from the PBS TeacherLine online courses, including videos, articles, interactives, and web-based resources, and are searchable by topic, grade level, subject area standards, and media type. Coaches are able to search on instructional strategies and find applicable resources for coaching their teachers in dealing with opportunities and challenges in the classroom. Coaches may select one or two items from a Coaching Module, or the entire set of resources on a particular topic.

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Currently, the content has been customized for middle school math and K-8 reading and language arts. Other instructional areas and grade levels throughout math, reading, and instructional technology will soon follow.

Coaches use the resources with teachers for building skills in:

- Assessing student performance and achievement
- Communicating with students' families
- Integrating technology
- Deepening teacher content knowledge
- Understanding specific strategies for improving classroom practice.

An embedded communication system makes it easy for coaches to access and forward specific resources to one or more teachers. Teachers can rate, tag and provide comments on any resource. A discussion board allows coaches to communicate with teachers across geographic areas to create discussion groups and share ideas.

An annual subscription to PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection is \$2,495 per school building. Volume discounts are available. Educators can learn more about PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection at 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 100 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.

About PBS

PBS is a media enterprise that serves 355 public noncommercial television stations and reaches more than 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), continue to be parents' and teachers' most trusted learning environments for 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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