



Nevada, Arkansas Officials Pick PBS TeacherLine® for State Professional Development Initiatives

PBS TeacherLine and its partners to provide professional development courses for Nevada, Arkansas teachers to help them meet 'highly qualified' mandates, raise student achievement

ARLINGTON, Va. (Aug. 2, 2006) – The Nevada Commission on Educational Technology and the Arkansas Department of Education have selected PBS TeacherLine®, a provider of facilitated, online professional development for preK-12 educators, to meet professional development initiatives in each state. Through this relationship with PBS, officials in Nevada and Arkansas will help teachers and paraprofessionals acquire the knowledge and skills they need to improve student learning as well as to meet state and federal “highly qualified” requirements.

Under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, educators who teach core academic subjects—including reading, language arts, mathematics, and science—must meet the definition of “highly qualified” this year. States have been granted some flexibility in meeting this deadline if they are showing progress and commitment to meeting the mandate. The highly qualified provision requires teachers to possess a bachelor’s degree, be licensed to teach in their state, and demonstrate subject knowledge and teaching skills. In addition, each state has its own criteria and timeline teachers must meet to be considered highly qualified.

“Across the country, districts and states are searching for innovative, smart methods to meet new teacher quality mandates and bolster student achievement,” said Mary Kadera, PBS vice president of education. “By selecting PBS TeacherLine, Nevada and Arkansas have significantly expanded their efforts to support teachers’ professional growth while at the same time offering administrators an efficient, cost-effective solution to meet ‘highly qualified’ mandates. The decision signifies the states’ strong commitment to recruiting and retaining talented teachers.”

Nevada has among the most rigorous highly qualified teacher requirements in the nation, which contributes to the number of teachers in that state who do not meet its highly qualified teacher mandates. The Nevada Commission on Educational Technology appropriated \$250,000 for the next two years to help teachers reach the state’s stringent requirements and improve their subject knowledge and teaching skills. Clark County and Washoe County school district officials are collaborating with local PBS stations, KLVX and KNPB respectively, to ensure their teachers have access to exceptional, research-based professional development courses aligned to local and national standards.

In Arkansas, recent legislation requires that all certified employees of the state’s public schools complete 60 hours of approved professional development each year, beginning in the 2005-2006 school year. As part of the new legislation, the Arkansas Online Professional Development Initiative was created. The grant-funded initiative is a partnership between the Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN) to provide online programs, courses and workshops through PBS TeacherLine. Teachers can count courses completed through PBS TeacherLine toward the required 60 hours of professional development. Arkansas is implementing the new professional development rules to build teachers’ content knowledge and pedagogical skills as a means of improving student achievement scores statewide.

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“Nevada is a rapidly growing state with over 3,000 new teachers hired every year,” explained Tom Axtell, general manager of KLVX. “To meet the federally mandated ‘highly qualified’ status, teachers need access to easily accessible online courses that allow them to improve and perfect their teaching skills. TeacherLine is an invaluable tool that helps us meet this critical state need.”

“TeacherLine courses are recognized among Nevada educators for quality, rigor, and service to their professional development needs for reaching highly qualified status,” said Kliff Kuehl, KNPB president and CEO. “The TeacherLine project addresses the very heart of the station’s education mission.”

“PBS TeacherLine is one of the services AETN will offer this fall as a part of our new statewide professional development portal called Arkansas IDEAS,” stated Kathleen Stafford Branton, director of education for AETN. “This project is in cooperation with the Arkansas Department of Education and will allow educators in our state to have access to professional development 24 hours a day, seven days a week. TeacherLine is well respected as a staff development service, and Arkansas schools will greatly benefit from these asynchronous, high-quality courses.”

PBS TeacherLine offers research-driven and standards-based online professional development programs for educators. Courses cover instructional technology, mathematics, reading, science, instructional strategies, and more. In addition, PBS TeacherLine offers ISTE/Capstone courses that help teachers demonstrate their mastery of the ISTE NETS*T and earn certification in technology integration. The online courses, led by facilitators who are trained and certified by PBS TeacherLine, are \$199 each. Courses are also available for graduate credit.

For more information about PBS TeacherLine, visit 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.

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About PBS

PBS is a media enterprise that serves 354 public noncommercial television stations and reaches almost 90 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 (pbskids.org), continue to be parents' and teachers' most trusted learning environments for children. More information about PBS is available at pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org Web sites on the Internet.

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