

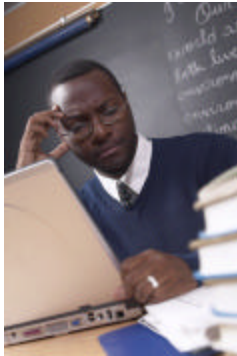


**PBS TeacherLine[®]
New York**

online solutions for teacher professional development

**November 2008
Newsletter**

Collaborating for School Success



Within the past year, a unique educational improvement collaborative took root between PBS TeacherLine New York, the Regional School Support Center located at Erie 1 BOCES (RSSC), and the Dunkirk City School District. A major motivation for the Dunkirk Schools to get involved with PBS TeacherLine New York was directly related to their long-range goal to begin a district-wide ELA improvement initiative. “As a department at Dunkirk High School, we have been revisiting and revising the English curriculum to better meet the needs of our students in preparation for the ELA Regents Exam. We were looking for a professional development program that would give us new ideas on connecting reading with our students.” The TeacherLine course “Teaching Reading in the Content Areas” became a vehicle through which administrators and teachers could fast-track the conversation about literacy and create a shared understanding of the issues, as well as a common vocabulary tied to an improvement agenda.

As high school Principal Dave Pulley explains, “It was the right experience at the right time. We were a school in need - and this online course allowed us to get a core group of people together and really quick-start a conversation about improving our ELA outcomes.” A key outcome of this unique partnership was the ability for district educators to delve more deeply into content issues. Another lesson learned was that the online course and its layers of thoughtful facilitation and coaching made it possible for teachers to openly identify and discuss difficult learning scenarios concerning their students. For all involved, there was 100% “strong agreement” that the course met their expectations and 100% “strong agreement” that student academic performance will benefit due to their participation. At the time of course completion, 80% of the respondents were immediately able to incorporate course content knowledge into their classroom activities. With the course finished, and immediate and short-term goals met, the Dunkirk City Schools have moved on to their district-wide planning process. Principal Pulley reports, “The course gave us a shot of adrenalin in getting started, and now we continue to branch out. We’re focused on reading different kinds of text, doing cross-curriculum projects, empowering non-ELA teachers, and launching a Springboard Project that helps our student’s achieve higher critical thinking skills.”

PBS TeacherLine Highlight Course

RDLA340: Teaching Reading in the Content Areas: Master new approaches for teaching reading across the content areas by adapting strategies that meet the needs of students in various grade levels. Explore environments that promote effective reading and learning. Examine the particular skills and knowledge that students need in order to read content material effectively. Discover methods to help students become more independent as readers and learners. Create learning experiences that encourage your students to access prior knowledge, set a purpose or target for reading, organize and summarize ideas, take notes, and reflect on what they have discovered through their reading.

To view more course options, checkout the upcoming course schedule on our website at <http://teacherline.nylearns.org/schedule/csofferings.asp?c=1>