

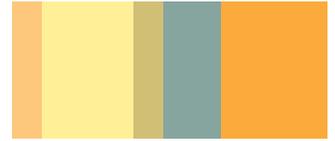
# MyLivePD™ Online Coaching Service: Year One Review

**Presented by:** Tutor.com

The MyLivePD™ Online Coaching Service began as a pilot program for teachers funded by a grant from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The service launched in September 2011. This paper reviews the first full school-year implementation (2011-2012) of the program.



# MyLivePD™ Online Coaching Service: Year One Review



## Online Coaching: A New Professional Development Model for a New Generation of Teachers

Traditional professional development (PD) programs offer teachers a one-size-fits-all event or seminar that is disconnected from the students. And it has not been proven effective in changing teacher knowledge or practice.

PD is beginning to change. Schools have introduced new programs such as on-site coaching and personal learning communities. To this end, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provided a grant to Tutor.com to create and implement a completely new model of PD—live online coaching that provides teachers with private and personalized help from an experienced peer with content expertise.

Tutor.com was already well known for providing more than 8 million one-to-one, online tutoring and homework help sessions through schools, universities, public libraries and the U.S. military. Students of all ages connect to an expert tutor online and work together in all core academic subjects. Students who use the service report they are completing more homework assignments, increasing their confidence levels in their academic work

and most importantly, improving their grades. Could a similar one-to-one, highly personalized learning experience work for teachers?

### The MyLivePD Pilot

The answer to this question was the creation of MyLivePD™ Online Coaching Service. MyLivePD is a completely new model of PD that focuses on delivering timely, relevant and actionable coaching for math teachers through live online sessions with no appointments needed. For the first time, math teachers can connect with an experienced coach to ask a specific question about their teaching on their own schedule from any Internet-enabled computer. The service was created to be completely driven by the teacher. It is also meant to be a continuous process where teachers get help throughout the school year. This level of personalization and privacy does not exist in any other PD model.

MyLivePD was implemented in three districts and several Teach for America regions in the fall of 2011. All districts and teachers have been granted access to the service through December 2012. This paper will provide further details on how MyLivePD works, the initial results from the pilot program to date and

*"[Coach] was tremendous. The quality of counsel was really wonderful. Especially as a first-year teacher, having someone to suggest ideas and cross-examine what's going on in my classroom is an invaluable service. In just 10 minutes, we identified several trends in student learning I wouldn't have otherwise spotted."*

**- Teacher**

*"This was great. I sometimes struggle with real-life connections, and my coach had some great examples."*

**- Teacher**

conclusions on how MyLivePD can be used by schools as part of their PD programs.

### How MyLivePD Works

During the 2011-2012 school year, MyLivePD was available to math teachers specifically teaching pre-Algebra, Algebra I and Algebra II. When a teacher wants to collaborate with a peer coach, he or she simply logs into their account online—no appointment needed—and asks a specific question. A coach meets the teacher in the interactive, online environment and communicates using VOIP or by using text-chat. Coaches have access to a broad database of lesson plans, activities and other resources provided by partner companies that participated in the pilot including I CAN Learn®, Lesson Planet® and The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. These materials can be shared directly in the interactive, online environment.

Teachers were not restricted in the topics or questions they could ask. Teachers worked with coaches on their specific planning and PD needs, across all topics, including:

- Differentiated learning
- Classroom management
- Lesson planning
- Student engagement
- Common Core initiatives
- Student assessments
- Math content

Teachers had full access to their recorded sessions and could review them at anytime either online or by printing them out. Teachers also provided feedback through a survey after each session where they rated the quality of the experience. They could also leave open-ended comments about the program. A selection of these comments are shared in the sidebar of this document.

MyLivePD coaches were available Sunday, Monday and Wednesday from 2pm - 1am ET, and on Tuesday and Thursday from 9am - 1am ET. This way, teachers could make the most of their planning time in school

or during out-of-school private time. MyLivePD never took teachers out of the classroom.

### Experienced Peer Coaches

A key component of the online coaching model was finding experienced coaches who could provide a high-quality experience for any teacher who used the service. A national recruitment effort secured the goal number of coaches (27) for the pilot program. Coaches were recruited through local and national math teacher organizations.

Every coach was required to be a certified mathematics teacher and have a minimum of five years of experience teaching math and three years of experience coaching teachers. In the end, the coach community Tutor.com recruited had an average of 17 years of experience teaching math and five years of experience coaching teachers. Each coach went through a comprehensive and rigorous screening process before being accepted into the program. Coaches also completed a third-party background and reference check.

### MyLivePD Pilot Results

Participating Districts and Teachers

After receiving expressions of interest from over 100 school districts, three districts were chosen to participate in the pilot: Baltimore County, MD (Student population: 103,324); Hillsborough County, FL (Student population: 193,265); and Tucson Independent, AZ (Student population: 55,369) and the following Teach for America (TFA) regions: Charlotte, Detroit, E. North Carolina, and Indianapolis. All of the schools will continue to participate in the pilot from September through December 2012.

Tutor.com staff visited each school and TFA region to introduce the program and provide training sessions for teachers to demonstrate the program. A total of 152 math teachers participated in the pilot. Teachers completed a total of 714 private, one-to-one coaching sessions during the school year.

*"I love that now I can just get online and work with a coach whenever I want. Before, I had to wait months for a workshop. This is so much better because I can ask my specific question and have an immediate solution."*

**- Teacher**

*"I'm SOOOO thankful for this program! It's so great to know if I have ANY question I have someone I can talk to and I don't feel so alone, afterwards I feel empowered to go in to my class the next day and teach with more confidence! Thank you so much, this is a wonderful resource and help for me!"*

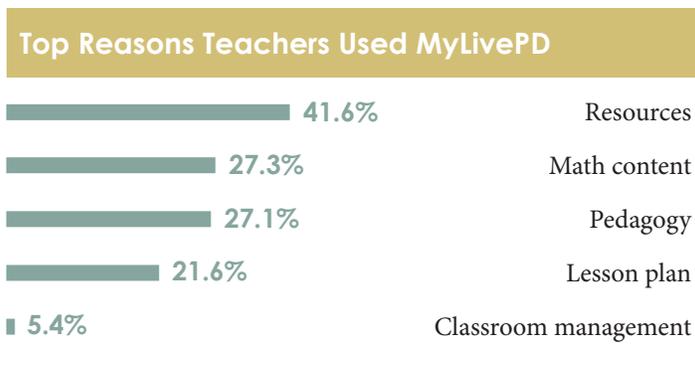
**- Teacher**

*"(Teacher) initially wanted my opinion on whether the topics on his review sheet were rigorous enough for his grade 8 students. We ended up going over that, then I helped give him ideas on sites and technology he could use with his classes."*

**- Coach**

Participating Districts	Sessions
Baltimore County	119
Killeen Independent School District	83
MyLivePD Open Signups	130
Tampa Hillsborough	180
Teach For America	144
Tucson	58
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>714</b>

Teachers used MyLivePD for help with a range of teaching, planning and classroom issues. To the right is a list of the top reasons teachers used MyLivePD. This list was created by coaches. Coaches identify the topics discussed in each session so that the scope and sequence of sessions can be recorded and reviewed as necessary.

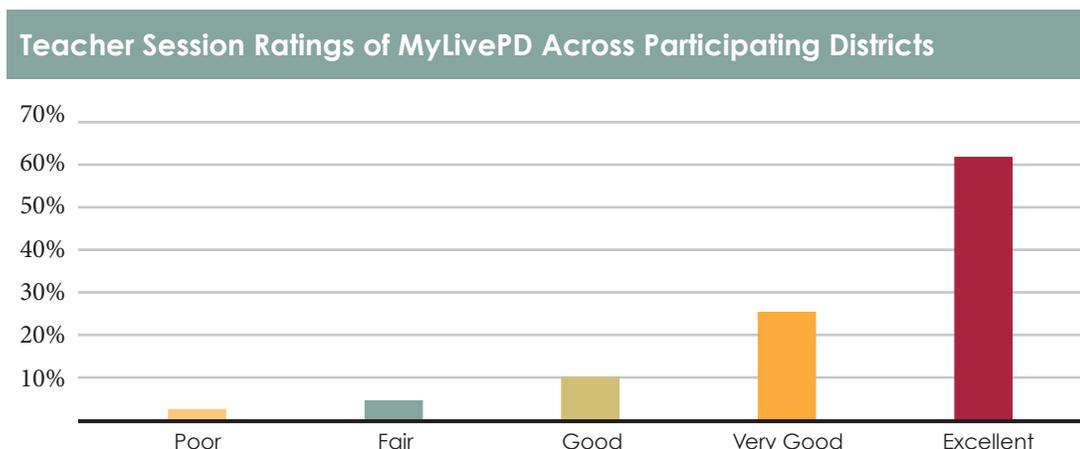


“(Teacher) wanted suggestions for quick assessment ideas other than tickets and using personal white boards. I shared half a dozen ideas he might try with students. Some of the methods checked students’ confidence levels while some assessed content. He was very enthusiastic with many of the ideas and felt he could apply many of the suggestions.”  
- Coach

## High Ratings for Personalized Coaching

Teachers had the opportunity to complete a survey and leave a comment after each session with a coach. Ninety-six percent of all teachers who used the service rated the quality as good, very good or excellent. Most telling was that 85% of teachers shared that they would use the information from a MyLivePD coaching session within a week in their classroom and 95% would use it within a month. This statistic points to the immediate nature of the professional development and how it was quickly integrated into the learning environment to the benefit of students.

“[Teacher] wanted some ideas on presenting vocabulary relative to functions and linear functions in particular. We shared some sites he could use as resources with students that include pictures, text and examples. Additionally we found some function machines online that help students play with the concepts of functions. He is excited about using these tools this week before his students go on break .”  
- Coach



## MyLivePD Conclusions

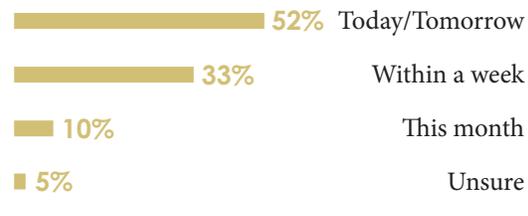
Early data from the MyLivePD pilot points to a need and desire for personal and private online coaching options for teachers. Teachers were able to get very specific help that made an immediate impact within their classrooms. They did not have to rely on infrequent seminars or workshops or even an in-person coach who may only be available during certain periods of the school year. Teachers enjoyed having a thought partner and collegial collaborator to share challenges, frustrations and the ideas to solve these problems throughout the school year for continuous learning.

While an assumption was made that online peer coaching may attract more new teachers, Tutor.com found that both new teachers and veteran teachers used the program equally. The introduction of Common Core Standards and new teaching techniques to help students reach these new levels of achievement may be a catalyst for encouraging even more teachers to try online coaching as an effective PD service.

The most important key learning from the first year of implementing online peer coaching was the immediate impact it is making in classrooms. This continuous

dynamic of providing ongoing support to teachers from experienced peers and then using that knowledge in the classroom and going back for additional collaboration was the hoped for outcome of a new and persistent PD model.

### When Teachers Will Use Knowledge from MyLivePD Session



In the 2012-2013 school year, Tutor.com will use feedback from teachers and coaches to continue to improve the online coaching experience. A challenge from the first year of the pilot program was helping teachers understand how to integrate online coaching into their professional lives. Many teachers developed the habit of connecting to a coach during their planning periods. Other teachers chose to connect to a coach during their own time at home. Additional training and support will provide the support teachers need to understand how to use MyLivePD to benefit their teaching and ultimately student achievement.

*"The [Teacher] needed help in arranging a positive sequence of skills for 4 days of 50 minute classes. [Teacher] concern was how to "fit in" all the content. I shared strategies to use social peer sharing first to help narrow down what is known and not known followed up by some sessions of directed instructions and practice with a wrap up on the fourth day tying things together. [Teacher] felt better that she had a plan now, but I encouraged [Teacher] to call back after each class if she would like to tweak her plans or ideas."*

**- Coach**

For more information on MyLivePD, go to [www.tutor.com/mylivepd](http://www.tutor.com/mylivepd) or contact us at [educate@tutor.com](mailto:educate@tutor.com).