

TSUS MELL Project

Creating Success for All Students



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About TSUS MELL

What is TSUS MELL?

The Texas State University System Mathematics for English Language Learners (TSUS MELL) project is a [multiyear] effort developing instructional resources designed to increase the effectiveness of mathematics instruction for ELL students in K-12 schools. The project is a partnership between the [Texas State University System](#), its component universities and the [Texas Education Agency](#).

Project Focus Areas

The TSUS MELL project focuses its activities in five areas:

1. Identifying and developing instructional tools
2. Creating professional development
3. Conducting applied classroom-based research
4. Extending best practices to university-based preservice (teacher training) programs
5. Guiding policymakers

The TSUS MELL project will identify common issues associated with teaching math to ELL students, develop tools and training for educators keying best practice instructional strategies to these issues, and develop guidance for policymakers about how to more effectively assist ELL students and teachers in increasing math proficiency. Resources developed by the project will be made widely available to all schools and universities in Texas. [Learn More](#)

Why TSUS MELL?

English language learning (ELL) students—those whose native language is not English and who are in the process of developing English speaking and writing skills—experience significant challenges learning mathematics. As a group, ELL students consistently score among the lowest of any student group on the Texas K-12 statewide standardized assessment ([TAKS](#)).

Growing evidence suggests that low performance on standardized skills assessments by ELL students has little to do with innate mathematical ability and much to do with cultural differences in the way math concepts are taught in other countries and with linguistic (vocabulary) barriers commonly found among non native English speakers.

The direct policy rationale for the MELL project, therefore, is simple: Improved understanding of how to teach math to ELL students will result in improved student achievement.

Goal of TSUS MELL

The TSUS MELL project is focused on one simple goal: improving mathematics achievement among ELL students. The project is keyed to identifying the underlying cultural and linguistic causes of poor mathematics performance among Texas K-12 ELL students and to developing practical teaching tools that address those root issues.

Practical Project Products

The TSUS MELL project exists primarily to translate research into practical products designed to

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improve teaching. The MELL project is producing a number of exciting products during the 2004-05 project year in four areas:

- Teaching Tool Products
- Professional Development Products
- Applied Research Products
- Pre Service Program Products
- Policymaker Guidance Products

As products are developed, strong partnerships will be built with other universities, K-12 schools, intermediate education service agencies and state agencies to ensure effective and wide scale distribution. [Learn More](#)

Project Governance

The TSUS MELL project is guided by the MELL Project Steering Committee. This committee is comprised of researchers from institutions across the TSUS system. The steering committee also draws from a number of state and national research advisors. The MELL steering committee oversees the work of the initiative and meets monthly to guide and review project work. [Learn More](#)