



## Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

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1200 East Anderson Lane • P.O. Box 12788, Austin, Texas 78711-2788 • [www.thecb.state.tx.us](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us)

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### **Texas receives \$1M Completion Innovation Challenge Grant to transform developmental education**

**August 31, 2011 – Austin, Texas** – The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) announced today that Complete College America (CCA) has awarded Texas a \$1 million dollar Completion Innovation Challenge Grant. CCA funding gives Texas the opportunity to enhance developmental education efforts for students who are not college ready by significantly transforming remediation in math to close attainment gaps, boost college completion, and reach labor market goals.

“Complete College America’s generous investment in Texas speaks volumes about our collective efforts to fundamentally transform developmental education and improve student outcomes,” said THECB Chairman Fred W. Heldenfels IV. “Texas is quickly becoming a national model for innovation in this area. This is a direct result of the collaboration between the THECB and our universities and community colleges.”

“Complete College America recognizes the need for developing innovative, cost-effective strategies to help students graduate college in a timely manner, and recognizes Texas as a national leader in these efforts,” Gov. Perry said. “We’re ready to put this grant to good use, building on reforms to developmental education that we initiated during the 82nd Legislative Session.”

Through the CCA grant, THECB aims to reduce time-to-degree by allowing students to fulfill remediation requirements while also receiving college credit for math within a single semester. This innovative instructional model has been developed and tested at Texas State University-San Marcos. For three years, Texas State’s Department of Mathematics – through the efforts of Dr. Selina Vasquez Mireles – has piloted a state-funded developmental math bridge program. Initial data has shown promising results. The grant funding will help the THECB extend the new model to 15 community colleges throughout the state.

“Governor Perry gets it: doing more of the same will not boost student success or get Texas the additional college graduates it must have to be competitive,” said Complete College America President Stan Jones. “It’s long past time for bold innovation in higher education to remove unnecessary obstacles to success, fix broken policies that hold students back, speed achievement and redesign pathways to college graduation for the new majority of students who must balance work and school.”

Fifteen community colleges representing every region of the state will participate in this initiative, including:

- Alamo Community College System
- Central Texas College
- El Paso Community College District
- Houston Community College
- Lone Star College System
- McClennan Community College
- San Jacinto Community College District
- South Texas College
- Tarrant County College District
- Tyler Junior College.

The selected institutions are largely composed of students from low-income and underrepresented ethnic groups.

"Enhancing developmental education in mathematics not only helps ensure student success, but also aids in meeting the goals of Texas' Closing the Gaps initiative," said Senator Judith Zaffirini, Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee. "I am delighted that two colleges serving the South Texas region will benefit from this grant."

"Too often, the current model for developmental education becomes more of a stumbling block for students than a step ladder," said Representative Dan Branch, Chairman of the House Higher Education Committee. "I'm optimistic that innovative programs such as the one developed by Texas State and implemented by the Complete College America grant will give students the support they need while keeping them on a path to completion."

In addition to programmatic initiatives in developmental education, Texas is aggressively pursuing research and instructional improvements designed to increase success rates. Texas State is the first university in the country to launch a Ph.D. in Developmental Education with the goal of improving teaching and research in this area. The strategies implemented by Dr. Mireles and the university demonstrate the critical role institutional innovation will play in meeting the remediation challenge.

"When we admit a student to one of our institutions, we must do more than just hold the door open for them. We must do all that we can to help them earn the degree. To do otherwise simply wastes the state's money, the student's money and time, and causes us to be complicit in destroying their dreams," said Texas State University System Chancellor Brian McCall. "I'm proud that Dr. Vasquez Mireles and Texas State have played a critical role in developing a successful program that can now be replicated throughout Texas."

In Texas, math presents a significant barrier for college readiness and completion. In FY 10, 38 percent of students enrolling in a public community or technical college direct from high school failed to meet the state college readiness thresholds in math. The CCA grant will augment innovative strategies and programs already in place at community colleges throughout the state.

"I am excited to be here today on behalf of TACC as we take another important step in helping all Texans achieve their educational dreams," said Dr. Rey Garcia, President of the Texas Association of Community Colleges. "The Complete College America Texas project will be a

valuable resource for institutions and policymakers as we work towards the common goal of more degree and certificate completions."

The *Center on Education and the Workforce* projects that the United States must add 20 million more postsecondary educated workers to the nation's workforce by 2025 to be globally competitive. In Texas, 56% of jobs (7.7 million) will require postsecondary education by 2018. The initiative funded by the CCA award is the latest in a series of efforts underway to improve college completion rates in Texas with the goal of making the state a national leader and global competitor.

Established in 2009, Complete College America is a national nonprofit working to significantly increase the number of Americans with a college degree or credential of value. CCA grants were awarded to ten states that produced the best plans to deploy innovative, statewide strategies designed to substantially increase college completion for traditionally underrepresented populations.

**Resources:**

Dr. Selina Vasquez Mireles  
Professor  
Department of Mathematics  
Texas State University-San Marcos  
512-245-8019

[Complete College America \(www.completecollege.org\)](http://www.completecollege.org)  
[Texas Higher Education Accountability System \(www.txhighereddata.org\)](http://www.txhighereddata.org)

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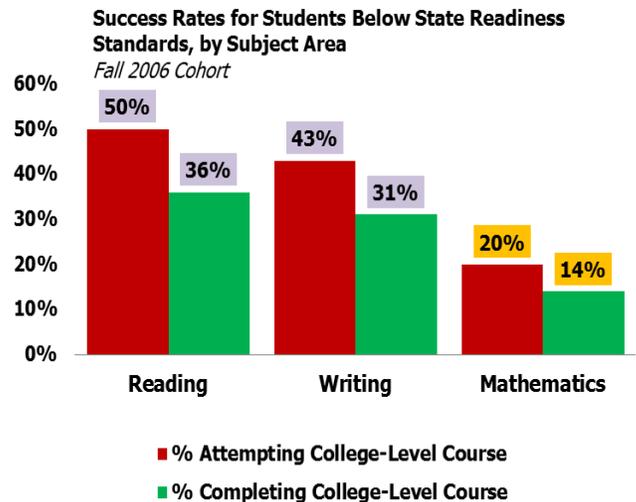
# Transforming Developmental Education

## Completion Innovation Challenge Grant



### The Challenge

- ✓ **48%** of students enrolling in Texas community and technical colleges directly from high school **required some form of developmental education**.
- ✓ **38%** of students enrolled in public community and technical colleges direct from high school **did not meet math readiness standards**, leading to low college completion rates in that subject area.



### Moving Texas Forward

**Complete College America (CCA)**, a national nonprofit focused on dramatically increasing the nation's college completion rate through state policy change, awarded Texas a **\$1 million grant to transform developmental education**. Nationally, developmental education represents a serious hurdle for students to overcome along the pursuit of a postsecondary certificate or degree. With CCA funding, Texas will enhance the promising work underway at our community colleges and universities to **transform remediation, with special emphasis on math**.

By 2018, **56%** of all jobs in Texas will require postsecondary education.

*Source: Georgetown University, Center on Education and the Workforce*

The THECB will partner with 15 public community colleges to replicate an innovative developmental education math program piloted at **Texas State University-San Marcos**. The new model will allow students to satisfy remediation requirements while receiving college credit for math within a single semester. This will reduce time-to degree by cutting down on the need for remedial instruction.

### Other Texas Initiatives

#### **Texas Developmental Education Initiative** ([www.tacc.org/dev-math.htm](http://www.tacc.org/dev-math.htm))

Partners: Texas Association of Community Colleges/THECB

Funding: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

#### **Developmental Education Demonstration Projects**

Partners: THECB and various community colleges and universities

Funding: State of Texas

For More Information: [er@theccb.state.tx.us](mailto:er@theccb.state.tx.us) / 512.427.6111