

## Contests

The Tennessee Mathematics Teachers Association High School Mathematics contest is April 8, 2025. The fee has increased, but the contest is still a bargain at \$6 per student. More information is available at <https://tmta.wildapricot.org/Contests>.

The Dr. Desireé McCullough Middle School Mathematics Contest is April 10, 2025, still offered at the low, low price of \$5 per student. The website has some old information from the 2024 contest, but will be updated soon. <https://sites.google.com/ut.utm.edu/devito/middle-school-math-contest>

## Practice

Exams from past years for both the High School and Middle School contests are on APSU's webpage. <https://www.apsu.edu/math-contests/middle-school-math-tests.php> DO NOT use their page for registration unless you plan for your students to take the test in Clarksville. Same test; different bus ride.

## District Leader Training

The STEM Center hosted West Tennessee school district leaders in Martin on November 4, 2024 for science standards training. The trainers were Brian Caine, science program manager for the Tennessee Department of Education, and his colleagues from Rutherford County Schools — Stephanie Finley, middle grades science coordinator, and Vicky Stem, K-5 science coordinator. The STEM Center appreciates the work of the UT Martin University Center staff who prepared rooms, furniture and AV equipment to welcome these guests and facilitate their training.

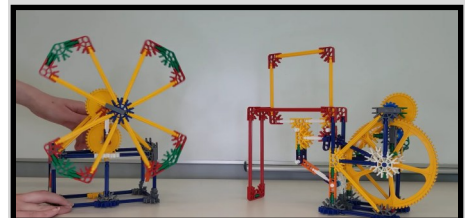


(Left to right) Steve Elliott, Stephanie Finley, Vicky Stem, and Brian Caine pose during setup for District Leader Training on November 4, 2024.

## Contact Us

Website: [stem.utm.edu](http://stem.utm.edu)  
E-mail: [eelliott7@utm.edu](mailto:eelliott7@utm.edu)  
Phone: 731-881-7452

## Borrow Some Stuff



Educators are welcome to borrow K'NEX sets like these for their students to use.

## SPSS

The Science Pedagogy Support System (SPSS) is a new partnership to train and equip teachers to provide "Wow!" moments for their students. (continued on page 2).



Alex Aitken, director of science for Haywood County Schools and SPSS leader, uses his educator kung-fu during a workshop in Ripley, TN on June 4, 2024.

# Summer 2025 Workshops and the SPSS

Workshops are free. Seating is limited and registration is required. Registration opens later this spring. Subscribe to the STEM Center listserv by sending a request to [eelliot7@utm.edu](mailto:eelliot7@utm.edu) for announcements. Workshop participants receive lesson plans and a certificate of attendance. Where appropriate, participants receive equipment required for the lessons described. Lunch is provided.

**Workshop Topics.** The tentative plan is for a workshop on using the Desmos suite of online computational tools as instructional aids and a workshop on computer science topics including artificial intelligence, both sometime in the week of June 2-6, 2025. Details to follow.

**SPSS** (continued from page 1). The SPSS is funded by a UT Grand Challenge grant <https://grandchallenges.tennessee.edu/2024-ut-grants/> and is a partnership among UT Martin, UT Southern, and the school districts of Haywood, Tipton, and Giles Counties. The SPSS will train and equip middle school teachers in these districts to conduct 3D science lessons aligned to Tennessee standards. The SPSS hopes to inspire a greater number of Tennessee students to become future science and engineering problem solvers in our region and beyond. A goal is to include additional school districts in the future.



Right: (Left to right) Tyler Cosby and Steve Elliott during an SPSS coordination meeting at UT Southern on December 16, 2024.

**Howie Hua.** He is on X. He is on Instagram. His campus newsletter calls him “The Math Ambassador.” He is Howie Hua, a lecturer at Fresno State University. There are lots of entertaining math memes on his Wordpress site (<https://howiehua.wordpress.com/> or QR code to the right). Under “Memes” look at his take on grading (2/11/2022 under My Favorite Memes/Jokes) and his explanation of parallel lines (11/19/2023 under Algebra/Geometry/Trig/Stats Memes). A Google search will find his Instagram lecture on long division. Unrelated to mathematics, Fresno State’s mascot is Victor E. Bulldog IV. Scroll 2/3 of the way down their homepage to see Victor’s cuteness. <https://www.fresnostate.edu/index.html>



**2025 is a year to love.** The annual celebration of love, Valentines Day, is the 45th day of the year. That is true every year, but in 2025, we get extra treats, enough extra treats for a square meal.  $2025 = 45^2$ . Saturday, September 27 in month/day/year format is 9/27/2025, or  $1(3^2) / 3(3^2) / (5(3^2))^2$ . In day/month/year format we have  $27092025 = 5205^2$ . Also,  $45^\circ + 45^\circ = 90^\circ$ , a right angle, called square. Speaking of right, look to the right to see cubes in the 2025 game.

$$\sum_{n=1}^9 n^3 = 2025$$