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CREED INVESTS \$75,000 IN CANUTILLO MATHEMATICS COLLEGE READINESS INITIATIVE

\$75,000 grant will help implement Algebra I courses to most Canutillo ISD 8th graders

(EL PASO, Texas) - The Council on Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development (CREED) has awarded Canutillo Independent School District (CISD) \$75,000 to support a dramatic expansion of its middle school mathematics college readiness program. The funding will help increase the number of students who can take Algebra I while still in middle school.

"Algebra is widely considered the gatekeeper subject," said CREED Chairman Richard A. Castro. "Students who complete a mathematics course beyond Algebra 2 are four times more likely to receive a college degree, but that is challenging when you don't have any exposure to Algebra before high school. CREED's grant helps prepare El Paso students for high school and college."

Under the new CISD mathematics college readiness plan, all eighth-grade students who "meet" or "master" seventh grade standards on the annual STAAR mathematics test will be enrolled in Algebra I. In addition, some students who scored as "approaches" on the STAAR exam will be enrolled in Algebra I and provided additional assistance in the advanced coursework.

Only a 24% of CISD eighth graders completed Algebra I last year. Today, almost one half of CISD eighth graders are successfully completing their first semester of Algebra I.

"The question is no longer *if* our students should take algebra, but *when*," said CISD Superintendent Dr. Pedro Galaviz. "Thanks to CREED's support, CISD will be able to transform expectations, making the completion of Algebra I in middle school the norm rather than the exception."

Canutillo is also investing in advanced teacher training as part of the new program, which will be rolled out over the next five years. With CREED's financial assistance, CISD plans to make Algebra I available to all students who scored at the "meets," "masters," and "approaches" levels by 2024.

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About the Council on Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development (CREEED):

CREEED is a nonprofit organization focused on increasing the number of high-performing seats in El Paso's public education system. This is accomplished by investing in initiatives that are creating measurable outcomes to close the achievement gap for El Paso students. CREEED supports organizations, initiatives, and policies that prepare students to succeed in college and in our future workforce. CREEED's efforts are focused on increasing the quality of education that students receive in El Paso. Our efforts fall into three categories: Increasing Student Attainment; Increasing Teacher Talent & Leadership Development; and Increasing Parent and Community Engagement. For more information visit www.creed.org.