CREEED Partners with Canutillo ISD to Bring Computer Science Education to all Canutillo Middle School Students

Announcements, Education, In The News

Canutillo will offer middle school students innovative GameSalad curriculum over the next five years with financial support from CREEED

Today, Canutillo Independent School District announced a new partnership with GameSalad for Education and the Council on Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development (CREEED) to expand computer science education to its middle school students over the next five years. Canutillo Middle School currently uses the GameSalad curriculum to introduce its 6th grade students to STEM and computer science concepts and education. After completing the GameSalad course, last year's 6th grade cohort showed a 3% increase in combined Meets and Masters scores on the STAAR Math exam.

Canutillo ISD secured a substantial grant of $42,646 from CREEED, a not-for-profit education policy and advocacy group focused on creating measurable outcomes and dedicated to closing the achievement gap for El Paso County students, which will allow them to expand this program to all its 7th and 8th grade students by the 2020-2021 school year. GameSalad for Education is a STEM education partner dedicated to engaging all students in computer science by empowering them to design, program, and create their own professional grade mobile games.

"GameSalad encourages students to develop their computational and critical thinking skills which align with the district's STEM initiatives," said Dr. Pedro Galaviz, Canutillo ISD Superintendent. "CREEED's generous grant jump starts the expansion of this program and supports Canutillo's ongoing commitment to provide STEM opportunities for our students."

Exponential growth of jobs in the technology sector relative to the number of qualified candidates has created a need for rapid advances in STEM education in the United States. Studies project that by 2020 there will be 1 million more jobs in computer science than U.S. computer science students. Innovation is outpacing the skills & knowledge we are transferring to our nation's students.

"We are excited to be bringing world-class computer science instruction to the students of Canutillo and offer them the capability to be strong participants in the 21st-century economy," said Brent Dusing, GameSalad CEO. "We are honored to be working with CREEED, who are fantastic visionaries for the transformation of El Paso."

Though many districts are aware of the importance of STEM and computer science, they face barriers to implementing appropriate programs for their students. Underfunding, lack of teachers, and lack of student interest all play a role in preventing successful implementation of computer science education programs.

"CREEED made a commitment to increase educational attainment throughout the El Paso region on a scalable basis by investing in school district initiatives that move the needle on student outcomes and prepares them for the future of work," said Eddie Rodriguez, CREEEDExecutive Director. "Canutillo's decision to bring in a new innovative model into its middle school classrooms has not only improved math outcomes for students, but is setting them up to enter a growing job market in the tech field. It is also preparing students effectively for post-secondary education, placing them in a position to graduate high school College Ready. We look forward to funding more innovative proven programs like this in El Paso."

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