



San Elizario ISD
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MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Trustees
From: Sandra Sanchez, CTE Administrator
Subject: Innovative Courses: Making Connections I and II, to be offered in 8th grade
Date: October 14, 2026

HISTORY: Over the past year, we have been working on how to better support our Special Education students. The Making Connections course sequence assists students with autism spectrum disorder or other related disorders such as social pragmatic communication disorder, that may cause deficits in the individual's social skills in developing an understanding of autism and other disorders which may cause deficits in social skills.

Making Connections I: This course covers topics such as building positive relationships, understanding social expectations in school and community settings, and applying organizational strategies for academic success.

Making Connections II: This course covers disability awareness, teaching students how autism impacts their ability to form and maintain relationships. It guides students through self-assessment of their social skills, encourages strategies for improving friendships, and helps differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate relationships. Students also learn to cope with negative attention, engage in conflict resolution, and apply these skills in various community and social settings. Additionally, students will explore postsecondary options, helping them to identify strengths and areas for growth in preparation for life beyond high school. After further review from our Special Education Director, these courses were found to be beneficial to the students if they started in 8th grade.

RATIONALE: Implementing the innovative courses of Making Connections I, and II, in the 8th grade level would fill in the gap on the support that is lacking in middle school.

BUDGET IMPACT: Approximately \$500 for textbooks

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION: The administrative recommendation is to approve the innovative courses for 8th grade students as presented.

For Approval ☒ Yes ☐ No

If not, please check one: ☐ Presentation ☐ Report ☒ Information

Please check if applicable: ☒ Attachment Included

The mission of the San Elizario Independent School District is to graduate students with innovative skills for 21st-century careers by focusing on academic and social skills, fostering transformative practices, and building community support through positive relationships between home and school.