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**ECISD RECEIVES MORE THAN \$2.2 MILLION FROM TEA THROUGH  
INNOVATIVE SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM GRANT**

April 25, 2022 – Ector County ISD has been selected to receive a Innovative Services for Students with Autism grant from Texas Education Agency (TEA) in the amount of \$2,253,140. This project is a collaborative with Midland ISD and Big Spring ISD, who will receive funds to serve their district as well. ECISD has identified 334 students living with autism, while Midland ISD has 329 and Big Spring ISD reports 51 students with autism.

Leslie Wilson, Director of Special Services and Micah Pettigrew, Special Education, Autism/Homebound/18+ Supervisor will lead the project in providing a variety of materials, technology and training for educators and parents to serve students with Autism. Region 18 Education Service Center will provide consulting services, including extensive training for teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators and parents of students with autism, as well as follow-up visits, coaching and demonstration teaching. Additionally, the Innovation Department in ECISD will provide support for Virtual and Extended Reality applications and preparation of students for Community Based Instruction (CBI) and socialization activities. Special Education classrooms across the three districts will be retrofitted and equipped with necessary materials to improve services to students with autism.

"ECISD Special Services Department is thankful that we were chosen to receive the Autism Grant and want to first express our thanks to the Texas Education Agency. This grant will allow teachers in the district to receive professional development, curriculum materials, and innovative ways to assist with implementation of evidence-based practices. We are most excited about the opportunities that this grant will provide for students with autism in our district. " says Leslie Wilson, Director of Special Services.

"I am so pleased that Ector County ISD, Midland ISD and Big Spring ISD collaborated in preparing the grant to meet the needs of our students living with autism. As the grant writer for ECISD, it was a pleasure to work with the team preparing the proposal, which offers promising educational opportunities for our children," says Dr. Susan Lara, Grant Writer.