



Board Appointment Form

City Clerk's Office

Appointing Office	Lily Limón, District 7
Agenda Placement	Consent
Date of Council Meeting	
Name of Board	Museums and Cultural Affairs Advisory Board
Agenda Posting Language	
Russell Helsabeck-Ochoa to the Museums and Cultural Affairs Advisory Board by Representative Lily Limón, District 7.	
Appointment Type	Regular
Member Qualifications	
As a District 7 resident, Russell Helsabeck-Ochoa's qualifications for serving on the El Paso Museum and Cultural Affairs Advisory Board include more than 15 years of experience in education, arts advocacy, curriculum development, and organizational planning. As a career educator and education consultant, he has worked to expand equitable access to arts education and integrate creativity across multiple academic subjects. His background includes developing museum field trip guides for public school students in Washington, DC, and collaborating with Smithsonian museum educators. He also brings experience in strategic planning, organizational change management, stakeholder engagement, and community-centered problem solving, making him well qualified to support the board's work related to museums, public art, cultural programming, and cultural accessibility.	
Nominee Name	Russell Helsabeck-Ochoa
Nominee Email Address	[REDACTED]
Nominee Residential Address	[REDACTED]
Nominee Primary Phone Number	[REDACTED]
Residing District	
City Employed Relatives	[REDACTED]
Board Membership	
N/A	
Real estate owned in El Paso County	
N/A	
Previous Appointee	Jose Luis Salas
Reason for Vacancy	Term Expired
Date of Appointment	06/09/26
Term Begins On	09/01/25
Term Expires On	08/31/27
Term	First Term

Russell Helsabeck-Ochoa, M.Ed.

Education Consultant | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

Professional Statement

Education leader with 14+ years of experience working at the intersection of schools and communities to expand opportunity for students. Has built partnerships with districts, cultural institutions, and local organizations to create learning experiences that connect strong literacy instruction to students' lives and future pathways. Brings deep experience as a secondary literacy and CTE educator alongside a systems-level perspective, shaping initiatives that align instruction, partnerships, and strategy toward college, career, and long-term success. Skilled in translating vision into practice and building the relationships necessary to sustain that work over time.

Education Consulting Experience

February 2026 – Present

TNTP – Senior Manager of Consulting

February 2026 – Present

- Partner with Lynchburg City Schools at every level of the vertical spine to strengthen instructional systems and improve student readiness for high school success and postsecondary pathways.
- Manage complex, multi-stakeholder projects, aligning strategy, execution, and continuous improvement cycles to meet client goals.
- Collaborate with division leaders, school leaders, and instructional teams to translate research into actionable practices that improve student outcomes at two elementary and three middle schools.
- 100% of survey respondents have rated my in-person professional learning session facilitation effective and actionable.
- Use data to identify gaps in student performance and support the division in adjusting strategy to drive measurable improvement.
- Build strong client relationships that support long-term system transformation and sustained impact.
- Volunteered to support Academic Diagnostics in Connecticut and Virginia CLSD projects in Prince Edward County and Danville, Virginia to learn as much as possible about TNTP's operations and impact.

Career & Technical Education Teacher (CTE) Experience

August 2022 – February 2026

JM Hanks High School, El Paso, TX – English and CTE Teacher

August 2025 – February 2026

- Taught Digital Media CTE Practicum alongside English I and College Prep courses, with a focus on college and workforce readiness.
- Produced a quarterly school newspaper and daily on-air news program through CTE Practicum.
- Partnered with a local news station and city council office to provide students with authentic, career-connected media production experiences.
- Designed project-based learning experiences that required students to produce content for real audiences and professional contexts, strengthening communication and technical skills.
- Supported students in developing portfolios aligned to postsecondary education and entry-level media careers.
- Contributed to improved college readiness outcomes, with 30% of previously failing College Prep seniors passing the Texas Success Initiative exam by the end of the first semester.

Harmony School of Science, El Paso, TX – English/ESL & Dual Credit Teacher

August 2024 – June 2025

- Taught 7th grade ELA/ESL and high school Dual Credit English through El Paso Community College.
- 68% of students scored “Meets” or “Masters” on STAAR; 87% overall pass rate, exceeding district average.
- Over 60% of students met MAP Growth reading goals from fall to winter, exceeding district average.
- 50% of emergent bilingual students achieved “High Advanced” TELPAS proficiency and exited ESL programming.

DC International School, Washington, DC – CTE Teacher

August 2023 – January 2024

- Designed and launched two International Baccalaureate Career Programme courses (Culinary Arts and Digital Photography), aligned to industry-relevant skills and postsecondary pathways.
- Partnered with a local restaurant to create structured, work-based learning experiences, including mini-internships that provided students with direct exposure to professional kitchen environments.
- Aligned coursework to IB Career Programme standards, emphasizing career readiness, technical skill development, and real-world application of learning.
- Collaborated with school leadership to integrate career-connected learning into broader instructional programming.
- Advised on AI and future-of-work considerations through participation in a cross-functional professional learning community.

John Ruhrah Elementary/Middle School, Baltimore, MD – *English and CTE Teacher* August 2022 – August 2023

- Sponsored digital photography program, partnering with a local photographer to provide students with mentorship and exposure to creative career pathways.
- Improved 100% of emergent bilingual students' literacy proficiency by at least two grade levels using structured literacy approaches, including Wilson's *Just Words*.
- Mentored first-year teachers and facilitated schoolwide professional development on restorative justice.

District Systems Leadership & Cross-Sector Partnerships at DC Public Schools

August 2012 – June 2022

Instructional Coach – Alice Deal Middle School

January 2019 – June 2022

- Designed and facilitated cycles of coaching, observation, feedback, and data analysis for 15 secondary ELA teachers.
- Participated in Citybridge Breakthrough Design Fellowship to implement Judith Hochman's *The Writing Revolution* across all core content classes using an equity-first, data-informed inquiry process.
- 80% of teacher participants demonstrated measurable gains in student achievement linked to instructional shifts.
- In 2022, 75% of 1,500 students scored 4 or 5 on end-of-year standardized assessments, exceeding district targets.
- Built trust-based relationships with teachers and school leaders to support sustained instructional improvement.

Manager, Curriculum & Professional Development – DCPS Secondary Literacy Team *July 2016 – January 2019*

- Led districtwide implementation of secondary ELA curriculum across 25 middle schools, aligning instructional systems to improve college readiness outcomes.
- Convened and partnered with cross-sector organizations—including Mikva Challenge, the Smithsonian, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and others—to design learning experiences that connected classroom instruction to civic engagement, cultural institutions, and real-world applications.
- Bridged district and community priorities by integrating external partners into curriculum design, expanding students' access to authentic audiences and career-connected learning experiences.
- Designed and scaled professional learning systems supporting adoption of high-quality instructional materials across diverse school contexts.
- Partnered with school and district leaders to drive 75% implementation fidelity, improving instructional coherence.
- Strengthened assessment systems, increasing use of standards-aligned assessments from 77% to 94% to better measure student readiness for high school and beyond.

English Teacher & Athletic Coach – Alice Deal Middle School

August 2012 – June 2016

- 7th grade ELA teacher; Cross Country and Swim Team coach
- Partnered with community organizations such as Writopia and the Smithsonian as ELA Department Chair and Academic Leadership Team member to create authentic learning experiences for students at school and on field trips.

Key Skills

Education-to-Career Pathway Design
Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Strategy
K–12 Systems Transformation
Cross-Functional Project & Portfolio Management
Client & Executive Stakeholder Engagement
Data Analysis & Continuous Improvement
Change Management & Implementation Strategy
Adult Learning & Leadership Development
Curriculum & Instructional Systems Design
Equity-Centered Design & Emergent Bilingual Education

Certifications

Teacher Certification (Grades 7-12) – *Maryland State Department of Education and Texas Education Agency*
Technology Education (Career and Technical Education Teacher Certification) – *Texas Education Agency*
English as a Second Language (Supplemental) – *Texas Education Agency*

Education

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

Master of Education, **Concentration**: Secondary English Education

May 2012

Bachelor of Arts, **Major**: English Lit. **Minors**: Educational Studies, Music

May 2009

Russell Helsabeck-Ochoa


District 7

June 1, 2025

Dionne Mack, City Manager
El Paso City Hall
300 North Campbell Street
El Paso, Texas 79901

Dear City Manager Mack,

I am writing to express my interest in serving on the El Paso Museum and Cultural Affairs Advisory Board. As a lifelong supporter of arts education and cultural engagement, I would be honored to contribute my professional experience and community perspective to a board that plays such an important role in shaping El Paso's cultural future.

I am a career educator with more than fifteen years of experience serving as both a public school teacher and district-level leader. Throughout my career, I have consistently championed equitable access to the arts and have worked to expand opportunities for students to engage with visual arts across disciplines. Rather than viewing arts education as separate from core academics, I have led initiatives that integrated artistic thinking and creativity into English language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics curricula. I believe the arts are essential not only to cultural enrichment, but also to critical thinking, innovation, and community identity.

In service of this work during my time living in Washington, DC, in my role as a district curriculum manager, I worked to develop a set of "plug and play" art museum field trip guides and get as many public school students into the DC area museums as possible. To equip myself for this project, I attended many educator trainings ran by the Smithsonian Institute and developed a close relationship with the museum education directors and many of the Smithsonian art museums, including the National Portrait Gallery and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

In my current role as an education consultant, I specialize in organizational change management, strategic planning, and curriculum implementation. I work with organizations to improve systems, strengthen stakeholder engagement, and successfully manage complex initiatives. These experiences have given me strong skills in collaboration, long-range planning, communication, and community-centered problem solving. I believe these skills would be valuable contributions to the Advisory Board.

Beyond my professional background, I care deeply about El Paso and the unique cultural identity that makes our city exceptional. I value the role that museums, public art, and

cultural programming play in preserving our history, elevating diverse voices, and creating opportunities for connection across our community. El Paso's artistic and cultural institutions are among its greatest strengths, and I would welcome the opportunity to support their continued growth and accessibility.

I believe my combined experience in education, organizational development, and arts advocacy would allow me to bring a thoughtful and collaborative perspective to the board's work. Thank you for your consideration, and I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve the City of El Paso in this capacity.

Sincerely,

Russell Helsabeck-Ochoa