



## THE DISTRICT

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### Ysleta ISD teacher joins Texas Tech fellowship program

**Ramon Benavides**, a science teacher at Del Valle High School, is the only El Pasoan selected to participate in the 2020-21 Texas Education Policy Fellowship Program (TX-EPFP), a Texas Tech University initiative designed to help education professionals deepen their knowledge and develop skills in leadership and public policy.

The TX-EPFP is a 10-month, intensive professional development program. It provides rich and robust experiences to participants, who will discover multifaceted aspects of education policy with experts across the state, develop their leadership skills through practice, expand their professional networks, and explore avenues for fostering positive impact for stakeholders within Texas education.

The fellowship program's 2020-21 class consists of 16 leaders and professionals from all sectors of education – nonprofits, K-12, higher education – who represent the rich diversity of Texas and live or work in Dallas, Bryan, El Paso, Houston, Irving, Lubbock, San Antonio, Sunnyvale, Tyler, and Waco.

Benavides, who also serves as an adjunct professor at El Paso Community College, is the son of migrant farmworkers who initially dropped out of school to help support their families, but later became educators. He followed in his parents' footsteps and became an educator himself, working at Ysleta ISD for 10 years.

Benavides is in the process of earning a doctorate in Educational Leadership at Texas Tech University, and hopes his research on STEM opportunities among socioeconomically disadvantaged students can spark a change – not just among students, but teachers, educational leaders, and policymakers.

"The Texas Education Policy Fellowship Program will allow me to step onto a platform where I can investigate and assess the impact of STEM education policies on socioeconomically disadvantaged students of color, in hopes of changing the current policy paradigm," Benavides said.

The 2020-2021 class of TX-EPFP fellows will meet regularly from October through June and participate in the Washington Policy Seminar through the Institute for Education Leadership.

"By connecting these fellows to the key players in the education policy arena, they gain vital networks and grow in their leadership skills," said Rebecca Hite, TX-EPFP director and an assistant professor at Texas Tech University's College of Education, which coordinates the fellowship.

"As a result, our state is enriched with knowledgeable and empowered policy influencers, advocates and leaders," Hite added.

As a fellow, Benavides joins a network of 9,000 alumni in all 50 states, including state legislators, university presidents, school superintendents, state teachers of the year and leaders of nonprofits and foundations.

For more information, visit <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/education/outreach-and-research/epfp/>.