

Brenda Leal
1104 Andrews Drive
Martinez, CA 94553

January 13, 2025

Dear Members of the School Board,

As a retired teacher of the Martinez Unified School District, I believe I would be a strong candidate to fill the vacant position in Trustee Area 3. I deeply care about our students and our community, which I have demonstrated from the very start of my career in education. I have been a leader as a teacher in curriculum and professional development, as a mentor of student teachers, and as an officer within the union. I have been dedicated to the education of all students in our District as well as the continuous growth of our schools. I have been a participant on many committees within the District. Because of my experience, I would bring a wealth of knowledge and the highest commitment to this position.

I believe that education opens the door of opportunity for our kids, as it did for me. I would now like to be able to give back to our community by serving on the Board of Trustees for Martinez Unified School District.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda Leal". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Brenda Leal

received 1/13/25
6:30pm

BRENDA LEAL

bnavarro101@yahoo.com

1104 Andrews Drive,
Martinez, CA 94553

PROFILE

Recently retired MUSD educator seeking interim appointment to the Board of Trustees of the Martinez Unified School District.

EXPERIENCE

Educator - Martinez Unified School District — 1988 - 2024

Teaching experience - second, third, and fifth grade, Master teacher - SMC student teachers, Leadership roles at District and County levels - participation on and facilitation of LA and Math Standards Writing teams, District facilitator.

Loan Representative - World Savings and Loan, W.C., CA, 1987 - 1988

Responsible for obtaining loans from brokers and real estate agents, packaging them, submitting for underwriting, and overseeing the closing.

Account Executive — Transamerica / Home Equity Relocation, W.C., CA 1984 -1987

Responsible for managing the Standard Oil account, transferring top executives throughout the U.S., purchasing their homes, reselling the inventory, and maintaining lowest costs among competitors.

Real Estate Agent - 1979 - 1984 - Century 21, W.C., CA

Worked with both buyers and sellers in real estate sales.

EDUCATION

St. Mary's College - Moraga CA - Teaching Credential - 1988 - GPA 4.0

University of California Berkeley - Industrial Psychology - 1984 - GPA 3.89

Graduated with Honors, Member Psi Chi & Phi Beta Kappa

DVC - Pleasant Hill - Undergraduate Coursework - 1982

SKILLS

Extensive knowledge of the practices and procedures of MUSD and the Board while participating on a multitude of District committees in many areas such as the LCAP, COVID Team, District Communications, etc. Strong understanding of curriculum and its implementation across subject matters. Past executive leadership with MEA and established relationships throughout the Martinez community.

DISTINCTIONS

Site Teacher of the Year - 2022, WHO Award 2021, County SELPA Classroom Teacher of the Year 2005, District Teacher of the Year 1999



MARTINEZ UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATE INFORMATION SHEET

APPLICATION PACKETS MUST BE DELIVERED AND RECEIVED IN HARD COPY WITH ORIGINAL SIGNATURE TO THE MARTINEZ UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE BY

January 17, 2025, AT 4:00 PM

Application packets may be delivered by email and in person to the District Office 921 Susana Street, Martinez, CA 94553. Please call 925-335-5908 with any questions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME: Brenda Leal

HOME ADDRESS: 1104 Andrews Drive, Martinez CA 94553

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (707) 372-4313

How long have you been a resident of the Martinez Unified School District? _____

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION: (This information will be redacted when documents are made available to the public)

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Name of current employer: N/A

Address of Employer: N/A

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

You may attach up to two (2) additional typed pages, which must be formatted at no less than 12 point font, one (1) inch margins and single spacing. Responses longer than two (2) additional typed pages, as specified above, will not be allowed as material for board consideration.

1. Have you been a member of any district or school-based committee(s)? **Yes**

If so, please list the name of the committee(s) and your role:

Communications Committee - Union Leader

LCAP- Participant

Budget Committee - Union Leader and Educator

District Equity Training - Supporter and Participant

COVID Committee - Union Leader and Educator

Pilot Committees for Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies - Educator

Standards Writing Team County and District Level / Math - Participant and Facilitator at District Level

GATE - Educator and Assessment Team Member

Dimensions of Learning - Team Member and Facilitator

2. List past or present membership(s) in any community service, civic or youth organization(s)

Contra Costa Animal Services - Dog Walker Trainee

Martinez 4-H Leader - Horses and Rabbits

3. Why do you want to be a school board member?

I grew up in Martinez, graduated from AHS, and later became a teacher, working at JSE for 36 years. I have always been an advocate for students, staff, and our educational community. I believe that I have a lot to offer in terms of experience and insight to help support the continued growth of MUSD.

4. What do you see as the basic purpose of the public schools?

We are preparing our students to become productive citizens that will contribute positively to their communities. We hope to nurture and maximize every student's unique potential. What that looks like for each student can be different and it is incumbent upon public schools to create paths for all students to be successful.

5. What is the role of the school board in the fulfillment of that purpose?

The school board's role is to support the collaborative vision of MUSD. They work with the superintendent as a governance team that focuses on learning and achievement for all students. They seek to involve members of the community to form an alliance and support that benefits the students of the District in achieving their potential.

6. How would you build relationships and establish communication between the board, staff, students, parents, and community?

It is important to encourage everyone in our community, educational and beyond, to feel comfortable in sharing their thoughts, ideas, and concerns with the Board. Listening, returning calls, and responding to correspondence in a timely manner is something I consider important and I have a long history of doing so. Maintaining a relationship of mutual respect within the Board and among all staff, students, and parents is critical. Having taught in Martinez for 36 years, I have established relationships with students and parents, staff at all sites, administrators, and Board members, past and present. I have been and will continue to be visible within the community by attending functions at school sites and by maintaining relationships within the community.

7. What should be the relationship between the board members and the administration in the handling of school concerns?

It is important that the school board and administrators have a trusting, respectful, and honest relationship. Administrators are capable of handling school concerns and show that by maintaining a safe, positive, and growth minded environment for students, educators, parents, and the community. Administrators communicate with our community, projecting both positive developments as well as delineating challenges within our schools. The community should feel that they are given input, both positive and constructive, that will be seriously considered by leadership. The relationship that Administration grows within our community is especially important when issues arise.

The school board is an integral part of the leadership of the District. In listening to concerns from the public, Board members form an important conduit between the community and our District. Communication of concerns should be one of respect, candor, and problem solving. Finding solutions to complex issues will serve to make our schools even stronger.

8. In what area of function as a board member would you have a particular interest or skill (i.e. public relations, budget, negotiations, evaluation, long-range planning, facilities, policy etc.)?

I am interested in all of the above, but am particularly excited about the passing of Measure O and the promise of attracting and retaining talented employees committed to the success of our

students, as well as providing an additional income stream to our District through the development of District owned properties. This opportunity will allow the District to further expand its vision for programs that support all of our students.

9. What do you see as the strengths of the Martinez Unified School District?

The continuing support of Martinez residents has long been a strength for our District. I remember walking the precincts in the late 1980's and feeling proud that Martinez was among the first communities in California to pass a bond to repair our schools; and walking those same precincts again to pass additional bonds, including our most recent bonds that have rebuilt our three oldest elementary schools and renovated Morello Park Elementary. The people of our community continue to also show their alliance through their participation in the yearly MEF Fun Run, raising money to fund teacher grants to improve the quality of education at the ground level in our schools, and forming important partnerships with our District. Our community's generosity is ongoing and indeed an enviable strength.

The commitment of our site and District level educational community is another strength that enfolds our students in a caring environment committed to their success. I can remember when my daughter went on to MJHS and AHS. My parental worries were put to rest by so many of the educators and staff assuring me that, "Our kids are taken care of." That was certainly the case.

In addition, our PTAs support each site's vision for growth. They raise substantial funds, create events and programs to support and enrich our students, and donate their valuable time. Their commitment is integral in creating and maintaining a positive educational culture within our schools.

Martinez Unified's staff is its pearl. The staff is hardworking, many spending untold and often unpaid hours to complete the monumental task of taking care of students, both educationally and emotionally, so that they are safe and prepared to pursue their potential. Their commitment and dedication to our students forms the backbone of our District.

These strengths, the people who are committed to the well being and education of our kids, are why we will continue to meet the challenges ahead.

10. What do you see as the area most needing improvement in Martinez Unified School District?

Challenges in hiring and retaining talent is an ongoing obstacle that has become exceedingly expensive, both in terms of the budget, and more importantly, the cost to our students who need competency and consistency within their school experience. In my service in leadership for MEA and with the District, I have witnessed the difficulty to hire and retain highly qualified administrators, educators, and staff at all levels. This has deeply impacted the ability of the District to make important changes that would bolster effectiveness.

We are a District where all of our schools have been award winning and distinguished. I believe that we can again achieve these accolades at all of our sites. We need to build our capacity and develop a vision and a plan to tackle the overriding problem of turnover and loss of talent thereby increasing our effectiveness. People move to Martinez and stay for the quality of our education. Our unwavering commitment to them to find ways to meet these challenges and forge an even stronger District should always be at our forefront.

CERTIFICATION OF CANDIDATE:

I, **Brenda Leal**, hereby certify I am a qualified voter and resident of Trustee Area No. 3 of the Martinez Unified School District in the County of Contra Costa, in the State of California, and wish to be considered for appointment to fill a vacancy on the Governing Board of the District. The individual appointed to fill the vacancy will hold the seat until the November 2026 election. The appointee may seek re-election at that time. I hereby certify that I meet all legal requirements to be a member of the Governing Board of the Martinez Unified School District. I hereby certify that the information I have presented in the submitted application packet is complete, accurate and true to the best of my knowledge, and hereby authorize the Governing Board to verify this information as may be required. I understand that all application materials I have submitted are subject to the laws governing public information. I understand that the District will review my status in the “Megan’s Law” database. I further agree that if I am appointed to fill the Board vacancy, I will obtain fingerprint clearance through the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation within one month of appointment and prior to visiting any District school sites when students are present.

Signature of Candidate: Brenda Leal

Date: 1/13/2025