

Martha McNicholas

Martha McNicholas was elected to the Capistrano Unified School District Board of Trustees in 2014, and currently serves as Board President. She also serves as a member of the Governing Board of College and Career Advantage (formerly known as South Coast Regional Occupational Program).

She is a native Californian and 29 year resident and homeowner in Laguna Niguel. Martha graduated as a valedictorian of Eureka High School in northern California and earned a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University. She has over 35 years of experience in real-world engineering, holds 3 patents, and is currently self-employed as an engineering consultant.

She is recognized in the CUSD community as a tireless volunteer at her children's schools, as well as for having served on the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council, and several other District Committees. Martha has served on School Site Councils and as PTA President at both George White Elementary and Niguel Hills Middle School and was Executive Vice President at Dana Hills High School. She is a Past President of CUSD's PTA Council (covering all 53 traditional schools), where she has also been active on the scholarship and legislative advocacy committees as well as other leadership positions. Martha currently serves on the Programs Committee of 4th District PTA (covering all of Orange County). She has also been a director of the CUSD Foundation and the Dana Running Foundation at Dana Hills High School, and has served as Chairman of Dana Hills Grad Nite.

She is a member of the Laguna Niguel Chamber of Commerce, a life member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, a member of the Laguna Niguel American Legion Auxiliary, and a member of Laguna Niguel Republican Women Federated, where she has held the position of Scholarship and Youth Advocacy Chair. Martha is a nearly 29 year cancer survivor and has served in leadership positions on the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life of Laguna Niguel.

Martha has twice received the Golden Oak Service Award – California State PTA's highest honor for outstanding volunteer service to children and youth, and has been nominated twice as Laguna Niguel Citizen of the Year.

Martha and her husband Tom (also an engineer) have raised 2 children in CUSD Schools. Their daughter Elizabeth is a 2008 graduate of Dana Hills High School and a 2012 graduate of the University of Colorado in Boulder, with a BS Environmental Engineering. Their son Michael is a 2012 graduate of DHHS, and will finish his BS in Criminal Justice at Cal State Fullerton in May 2017.