I earned a Bachelor of Science in Zoology from Colorado State University and worked professionally in the companion animal welfare field before marrying my husband, Jim, in 2001. Jim works for Thales Avionics as a civilian contractor with the US Marine Corp on Camp Pendleton. We moved here from WA State in 2008 with our daughters, Johanna and Zenaide. If our daughters’ names are unusual, know that each are old family names honoring beloved relatives! After enrolling the girls at Lisa J Mails ES, I became active in the classroom, on campus and with PTA. Fast forward 10 years, Johanna started 9th grade at Vista Murrieta HS, is in an advanced curriculum including JROTC and AP Human Geography. 7th grade Zen is at Dorothy McElhinney MS and has been on the award winning LJMES and DMMS Color Guard teams for 3 years and is also in the advanced curriculum.

During the past 10 years I have served as an executive officer on three different PTA boards: Lisa J. Mails PTA (multiple roles and President), Murrieta Valley Council PTSA (serving all 16 PTAs in MVUSD as President) and finally, 23rd District PTA (serving over 240 PTAs throughout Riverside County, as 1st VP-Leadership). Because of my leadership and excellent community relationships, I was invited to serve on the LCAP Advisory Committee, the MVUSD Action Team for Partnerships Advisory Committee, the Counseling Advisory Committee and as a parent leader for staff/faculty Selection Committee (need a better name for that)

In September 2017, I was appointed unanimously to the MVUSD Board of Education out of a field of 19 qualified applicants. For the past year I have been at the school sites on a daily basis, listening to students, parents, MVUSD employees and our community partners as our stakeholders share what is important to them. My focus on family engagement is rooted in my belief that parent involvement is critical to student learning and achievement. Research supports this belief and I am proud of MVUSD’s long history of supporting parent rights and engagement at all levels.

As a Trustee, I have called for and supported: a robust civics education curriculum with an emphasis on original source documents, both intervention and acceleration programs, a comprehensive school safety examination and implementation of increased safety measures, emphasizing stakeholder input. I am dedicated to transparency and accountability. Indeed, I have a solid voting record supporting fiscal responsibility to the tax payers by demanding a financially healthy budget with a solid reserve meeting our financial obligations for this year and the next 2 years. I have voted to hold developers responsible for the maximum allowed for their share of costs and to refinance several CFDs that yielded $3 million with no increase to area taxpayers. Further, I understand the need for a balanced curriculum as we prepare our children for their journey into adulthood that includes both college-ready and career- ready course offerings. I have voted repeatedly to fund and expand our Career Tech program.

I am not content to simply act on my beliefs. I am dedicated to being a life-long learner and have actively pursued learning opportunities to better advocate for our students. I have participated in:

* RCOE Reducing Chronic Absenteeism Conference
* RCOE Excellence Through Equity Conference
* RCOE Education Summit and Anti-Bullying Conference
* Presenting member of the Family Engagement Network (FEN) representing Murrieta Valley Council PTA, 23rd District PTA and MVUSD
* CSBA Annual Education Conference for school board trustees
* MVUSD Annual Direction Setting Workshop
* Governor’s Budget Workshop
* RCOE/San Bernadino Fall Joint Meeting
* RCOE Unity Conference

Finally, I have dedicated the past year to visiting school sites, attending events/performances, always talking with and listening to students, staff and parents. I have an in-depth understanding of the issues that truly matter to our community because I have personal relationships across the district built over 10 years of service in our schools. During the past year I was elected to represent MVUSD on the Annual Committee for School District Organization and to serve as the secretary for the MVUSD Educational Facilities Corporation. I am eager and highly qualified to continue the excellent work already being done in our California Exemplary School District.