



1201 16th Street, NW | Washington, DC 20036 | Phone: (202) 833-4000

Rebecca S. Pringle  
*President*

Princess R. Moss  
*Vice President*

Noel Candelaria  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

Kim A. Anderson  
*Executive Director*

April 21, 2019

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the more than 3 million members of the National Education Association, which includes our nation's teachers, aspiring educators, retired educators, education support professionals, specialized instructional support personnel, librarians, and higher education faculty and staff, we urge you to vote YES on Cindy Marten's confirmation as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Education. Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 117th Congress.

Marten, superintendent of the San Diego Unified School District, is a former classroom teacher and urban principal who now leads the second largest district in the State of California, and as such, she is uniquely equipped to help our nation provide the opportunities that all students deserve to learn and thrive. As an educator, Superintendent Marten possesses the vast classroom, administrative, and personal experience to effectively support the department in managing its K-12 policies, intergovernmental and stakeholder activities, and English language learners programming.

Since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, Marten has worked closely with families and educators to follow science and keep the community safe. She established her own panel of scientific experts from the University of California in San Diego and launched her own testing program based on the panel's guidance and input from the California Teachers Association (CTA). The testing plan and gradual reopening of schools were widely supported by families, educators, and the community, including local school board members. In addition, as schools transitioned to remote learning, Marten continued her longstanding commitment to professional development by ensuring that all educators were provided an extra week of training at the beginning of the school year to help them take their craft online with confidence.

Under Marten's leadership, the Learning Policy Institute credited the district's dedication and prioritization of hiring and retaining qualified, experienced teachers as a driver of improving student outcomes, particularly for students of color. San Diego Unified also is committed to racial justice and community empowerment, ensuring the continuation of related programs even during the pandemic.

In addition to her work supporting students and educators throughout the pandemic and furthering the district's commitment to racial and social justice, Marten's career features several highlights that demonstrate her experience with coordinating federal policy, responding to student needs, and providing instructional leadership. As the principal of an urban school for a decade, Marten learned the importance of social and emotional learning and trauma-informed approaches to education. She brought her experience with opening a school-based community health clinic San Diego Unified, which has begun a community schools initiative to deepen the bonds between school leaders and the families they serve.

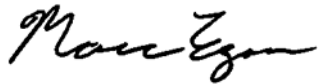
Her emphasis on social and emotional learning, and an approach that values recognizing, understanding, and attempting to meet the full spectrum of a child's needs, has led Marten to de-emphasize standardized testing, instead focusing on classroom-based learning and assessments. Nevertheless, standardized test scores for the district climbed steadily under Superintendent Marten's leadership, prompting the head of the Council of Great City Schools to call San Diego Unified the nation's fastest improving school system.

Marten believes deeply in ensuring every student in the country has access to a bright future and has organized a series of policy recommendations in the "National Response to Persevere and to Prioritize School Recovery with Equity and Undoing Learning Loss." These recommendations are currently available [on the San Diego Unified website](#).

Inheriting a system known for rapid turnover, Marten has established a reputation for stability and collaboration. In a sign of faith in her leadership, voters previously endorsed Marten's plan to issue the largest bond in city educational history for school facility renovations, repairs and safety upgrades, reduction of lead in drinking water, and new facilities for athletics, visual/performing arts and career/technical education.

Cindy Marten has demonstrated a successful and fruitful commitment to educating all students, collaborating with families, educators, and the community, and advancing a comprehensive policy agenda that nurtures and fully supports students. We urge you to vote yes to confirm her as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Egan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marc Egan  
Director of Government Relations  
National Education Association