

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Dec. 13, 2022**CONTACT:** Andrea Torres**PHONE:** 909-573-8137

## **Banning Unified Welcomes New Board Members, Hosts Oath of Office Ceremony**

**BANNING, CA** – Banning Unified School District's Board of Trustees welcomed Leslie Novalis and Shelly Ruiz as new members to the Board during an Oath of Office ceremony on Dec. 9, which featured a welcome message from Superintendent Terrence Davis, congratulatory speeches and applause from dozens of community members.

Novalis and Ruiz were sworn in during the ceremony at Banning High School's library, where they made a promise to fulfill the duties of a Board of Trustees member and uphold the values of the District throughout the next four years.

Both Novalis and Ruiz bring teaching backgrounds from other Districts with them to the Banning Unified School Board. Novalis retired after an 18-year teaching career in El Rancho Unified School District, while Ruiz is currently teaching in the San Jacinto Unified School District.

Novalis has been a resident of Banning for six years and has a background in commercial real estate, finance and urban development and has managed several businesses. She has also been a member of the El Rancho Unified School District curriculum team, served on the school site council and leadership committee and helped design the school's honors program.

Novalis said she is focused on improving the academic performance in Banning Unified and hopes to encourage additional family and community involvement to develop a partnership in education.

"One of the main reasons I wanted to do this job was to create partnerships to give students a voice and a vision to develop their dreams," Novalis said. "My goal is to bring my urban development and business background to create partnerships with students, parents, families, stakeholders and community members to strengthen relationships and build the future of Banning Unified students."

Ruiz has lived in Banning for most of her life and has a daughter and three nephews who attend Banning Unified schools. Ruiz said she has a passion for student learning and is looking forward to being more involved in making positive change and continued progress toward expanding opportunities for students in the District.

"Thank you to everyone who has supported me and believed I can make a difference for our kids," Ruiz said. "I am excited to be on the Board and look forward to working with parents, students, and staff to continue to build Banning Strong."

**MORE**

**BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES**

**Mayra Anguano**  
Trustee

**Lucy Martinez-Lara**  
Trustee

**Leslie Novalis**  
Trustee

**Shelly Ruiz**  
Trustee

**Laura Troutman**  
Trustee

**Terrence Davis, Superintendent**

Novalis and Ruiz will join existing Board of Trustees members, including Mayra Anguiano, Lucy Martinez-Lara and Laura Troutman.

Banning Unified will hold its annual organizational meeting on Dec. 14.

“On behalf of the Board, we are thrilled to welcome two exceptional leaders to our team and look forward to serving the Banning Unified community with each of them in the coming year,” Davis said. “Together, we will remain focused on embracing our diverse community and collaborating with our families and staff to accelerate student achievement and prepare them to achieve their full potential.”

#### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**BAUSD\_BOARD1:** Leslie Novalis and Shelly Ruiz take their Oath of Office as Board of Trustees members during a ceremony on Dec. 9.

**BAUSD\_BOARD2:** Superintendent Terrence Davis welcomes the Board of Trustees, distinguished guests and community members to the Oath of Office Ceremony on Dec. 9.