

Lifting Up BUSD Indigenous Peoples' Voices



Lita Martinez

District Office

Coordinator of
Professional Development

Favorite Book: *Rain of Gold*

Favorite Food:

New Mexican Enchiladas

**What 3 famous people would you
love to have over for dinner?**

Che Guevara, Bob Marley,
Rene Perez from Calle 13

My story begins with the colonization of the Americas through my Native-American father from the Dine/Navajo tribe in Colorado and my mother who is Tepehuan from Durango, Mexico. Their journeys brought them to Oakland where I was born and raised. They fought alongside the Black Panthers and Brown Berets for a "just" Oakland. I entered the educational system as an "English Learner", "Title I student", a female from East Oakland but I did not allow those labels to define me. Instead, I changed my narrative. I found strength from my ancestors and the hard work of my parents and my abuelito/as who laid the path that I would follow.

"I graduated from UC Berkeley with a BA degree. I went on to become a bilingual teacher in the very neighborhood I grew up in. I furthered my education to then become: a district TSA, consultant across the state, a county level director, a district director and now a district coordinator.

"My story is not mine alone. It is a story of immigrants, revolutionaries, healers, and leaders. It is a story of resilience, empathy, social justice, and advocacy. It is a story that I share with you."