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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **WeCOACH Announces Membership Renewals with Madera Unified School District & Oswego School District 308**

September 20, 2023 – WeCOACH is pleased to announce the Madera Unified School District (California) and Oswego School District 308 (Illinois) have renewed their district-wide group memberships for the 2023-24 academic year. These two school districts became the first district-wide members of WeCOACH in 2022-23 and helped ignite a membership growth that more than tripled all-time highest levels for middle and high school women coaches.

The memberships are active immediately, allowing the middle and high schools within each respective district to enroll an unlimited number of women coaches to benefit from the year-round programs and resources offered by WeCOACH, including several new programs and initiatives that will be unveiled this fall.

Marty Bitter, Madera Unified School District Director of Athletics, shared, “In 2022 we all celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Title IX. The celebrations were so impactful, but I vividly remember returning after each one thinking, “Where do I go from here?”. As the Director of Athletics for Madera Unified School District I needed to do a better job of supporting all our female coaches.” In my search I found nothing that was even close to the work that Vanessa and the WeCOACH organization were doing. The impact it makes on our female coaches being able to attend professional development opportunities, small group discussions and support groups with other female coaches simply cannot be measured. I encourage every high school to find a way to support their female coaches and I would start and look no further than WeCOACH!”

“Oswego SD 308 Athletics is very excited to have this opportunity to add this great opportunity for our female athletic coaches! WeCOACH offers them outstanding opportunities for both professional development and growth that we feel will only help to improve what we are able to offer overall in our District for both our female staff and the student-athletes they coach,” said Darren Howard, Oswego SD 308 Director of Athletics.

A one-of-a-kind nonprofit organization with the mission to recruit, advance and retain women coaches in all sports and levels, WeCOACH offers year-round professional growth and leadership programs to help navigate the challenges and obstacles women coaches face to stay in, feel supported, and advance in the coaching profession. Members have access to premier programs such as the Youth & High School Women Coaches Academy, Regional Workshops, Mentor Program, monthly Video Chats, WeAMPLIFY (women of color initiative), new About Time video podcast, and more. Madera Unified SD was well represented with several members participating in the recent September 18 WeCOACH Regional Workshop in San Ramon, California.

“Our MOVE the NUMBERS campaign launched last year to create affordable access for every level of sport. Shortly after the launch, Oswego SD 308 Athletic Director, Darren Howard, and Madera Unified SD Athletic Director, Marty Bitter, reached out to invest in professional growth opportunities for their member coaches. We are grateful for their leadership, allyship and support. Since that time, we have grown exponentially at every level of sport but especially in the youth, middle and high school member levels.” said Vanessa Fuchs, CEO of WeCOACH.

To learn more about WeCOACH membership options, including group memberships, visit [wecoachsports.org/membership/membership-options](http://wecoachsports.org/membership/membership-options), or email [memberships@wecoachsports.org](mailto:memberships@wecoachsports.org).

### **ABOUT THE MADERA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Madera Unified School District was established in 1966. The District is committed to creating and sustaining a culture enabling Madera Unified students to experience an unparalleled educational journey that is intellectually, socially and personally transformative.

### **ABOUT OSWEGO SCHOOL DISTRICT 308**

Oswego School District 308 serves more than 18,000 pre-school through grade 12 students in Oswego, Aurora, Joliet, Montgomery, Plainfield and Yorkville. The seventh largest public school district out of 852 in Illinois, District 308 has experienced phenomenal growth over the past decade, and a continued pursuit of world-class instruction ensures students are always ready for the future.

### **ABOUT WeCOACH**

Founded in 2011, WeCOACH is a one-of-a-kind 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to recruiting, advancing, and retaining women coaches in all sports and levels through year-round professional growth & leadership development programs. Prior to Title IX, over 90% of women’s collegiate sports teams were coached by women. Today, over 50 years later, the data indicates that number has decreased to 46% in Division I, 41% across all three NCAA Divisions, with only 6.2%

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women head coaches of color (Division I). Only 5% women coach men's teams. At the youth level, the data is hard to estimate, approximately less than 20% of teams are coached by women. WeCOACH launched MOVE the NUMBERS in 2022 to help change the landscape for women coaches and the student-athletes they lead. If she can see her, she can be her. For more information visit [MOVE the NUMBERS](#).