

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Vermont School Counselor Association Welcomes First Executive Director and Looks to Expand Statewide Advocacy for School Counselors

#### CONTACT

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Vermont School Counselor Association

South Burlington, VT, August, 2023 – The Vermont School Counselor Association (VTSCA) is pleased to announce the hiring of Patti Tomashot as its first professional Executive Director. Former VTSCA President Lauren Conti emphasized that, *“This accomplishment is a significant milestone for VTSCA. It meets a critical goal within our strategic plan and also marks an exciting moment in our history as this is our first compensated position. I am confident that Patti will be a strong and highly dedicated leader for our organization and fellow school counseling colleagues in Vermont.”*

Patti has served in various capacities within the school counseling field for the last 23 years. Through her passion and commitment, Patti joins VTSCA having acquired unique skills, experiences, abilities, and knowledge regarding public education and advocacy work. This will enable her to help advance VTSCA's mission to provide advocacy, professional development, and educational opportunities for VT school counselors.

For more than 15 years, Patti has been a school counselor leader at the local, state, regional, and national levels, advocating for the role of the school counselor. *“I look forward to partnering with VTSCA to provide more benefits and opportunities for our members and promote our role within the state using the VT School Counseling Model so that we ensure success for all of our VT students”* shared Tomashot.

As a VTSCA member prior to being hired, Tomashot worked alongside a robust advocacy team of school counselors to develop a school counseling model. Starting in 2020, the VTSCA advocacy team focused on advancing equity within the school counseling field and creating standards to help school districts best utilize the skills and expertise of school counselors. The Vermont Agency of Education formally adopted VTSCA's model in August 2022. *“The ultimate goal of the model is student success in all three domains (personal/social, academic and career) and the benefits are many,”* said Tomashot.

The Executive Director position is one of several organizational goals made possible with \$190,000 in capacity-building grants awarded by the J. Warren & Lois McClure Foundation and the VT COVID-19 Respond Fund housed at the Vermont Community Foundation.

*“School counselors play a critical role in helping young people succeed—personally, socially, academically—and plan for life after high school,”* says Carolyn Weir, executive director of the McClure Foundation. *“We are thrilled that VTSCA has hired Patti as its first-ever executive director to represent and support school counselors across Vermont and to advance the new Vermont school counseling model.”*

Joining forces with VTSCA Board of Directors and members, Executive Director Tomashot will support the organization in expanding its statewide advocacy work to ensure that the appropriate roles and responsibilities of school counselors are known, understood, and practiced across Vermont. For more details about the model, mission or VTSCA itself please visit: <https://www.vermontschoolcounselor.org>.

### **About the Vermont School Counselor Association**

The Vermont School Counselor Association is a private, non-profit representing school counselors, counseling directors, supervisors, counselor educators, graduate students, and other individuals involved in related activities who have an impact on a student's success and well-being at school, work and home. Founded in 1992, VTSCA's membership includes approximately 300 Vermont school counselors and is the chartered state division of the American School Counselor Association. Click here for access to the full press release announcement on the grant award from May, 2022: <https://mcclurevt.org/news-and-resources/news/vermont-school-counselor-association-may-2022>

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