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### **Vail Ski and Snowboard Academy to partner with other club sports**

*Competitive hockey players, ice skaters, and mountain bikers among first athletes beyond skiers and snowboarders*

**Vail, CO** – Eagle County Schools announced today that Vail Ski and Snowboard Academy (VSSA) would begin partnering with elite athletic clubs beyond ski and snowboard sports. Currently, VSSA partners with Ski and Snowboard Club Vail. The Club provides the athletic portion of services, and the Academy provides the academic services. Similar relationships will be developed with other clubs servicing the needs of elite athletes in other sports. VSSA provides a rigorous college preparatory academic program while supporting the athletic and personal goals of its students.

“Our program has been very successful in preparing winter sports athletes on a level with college prep schools while understanding and accommodating their intense training and competitive schedules,” explained VSSA Principal Wade Hill. “We have other competitive club sports directors interested in partnering with us for academics.”

The inclusion of other sports will benefit all athletes as the increase in the school’s population enables greater scheduling and elective options. The broader athletic base will increase the vibrancy of the student body both academically and socially. Currently, VSSA has a small group of competitive hockey players, ice skaters, and mountain bikers in addition to its skiers and snowboarders. These types of athletics work well with the natural amenities of our community – from ski and snowboard terrain to ice rinks and world-class mountain bike trails.

“We will have to be selective and work only with clubs established on par with Ski and Snowboard Club Vail in order to be the best fit for the student-athlete,” Hill continued. “We have wonderful and competitive teams at our traditional high schools, so our intent is not to compete with them for student-athletes, but rather attract the athlete and family participating at the club level.”

VSSA is located in Minturn, Colorado and has about 180 student-athletes and 22 teachers and academic coaches. It is the only public ski and snowboard academy in the United States and partners with Ski and Snowboard Club Vail to achieve a unique blend of athletics and academics. Since 2008, 62% of VSSA student-athletes competed at a national level postgraduate, 38% of our Nordic and Alpine athletes competed at NCAA Division 1, and 22% have made the U.S. Ski and Snowboard team, including seven Olympians. In 2018, VSSA students had the seventh highest SAT score in the state.

Photo: VSSA ice skater Caroline Pellerito

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