



The Beyond Sport Volleyball Academy has been approved by the Vernon School District and will begin operating with 48 students in September. (Beyond Sport Volleyball photo)

Vernon School District serves up volleyball academy

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operations in September

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A new facility has led to a new opportunity for young North Okanagan volleyball enthusiasts.

The Beyond Sport Volleyball Academy (BSVA) has been approved by the Vernon School District and will begin in September.

“Volleyball is one of only a few sports experiencing growth in participation rates amongst our youth,” said academy founder, owner and head instructor Troy Lorensen. “The Vernon and surrounding area have also seen a steady rise in the number of kids playing the sport, whether in school, in clubs, on the grass or the beach.”

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With the recent opening of the new Sky Gateway volleyball training facility on Silver Star Road, Lorensen said it created the opportunity to do something special for the students, the sport and School District 22.

The academy will start in September and run through January in the Vernon School District's first semester.

Word of the school district's latest academy offering spread quickly.

"We had an incredible outpouring of support from the volleyball community," said Lorenson. "While my instincts felt the demand was strong, you never really know until you commit fully, and then ask others to join you."

The BSVA filled up quickly, with more than 100 applications, 48 students were recently selected to join the inaugural season. Students range from age 15-18, both boys and girls, in two academy streams of 24 students each.

"This has been a dream of mine to spend more time working with the athletes," said Lorenson. "To develop the body, the mind and the heart of the players. Physical, mental and emotional health are all critical to becoming a great student-athlete."

The program will teach excellence in volleyball, but the overriding purpose is to create complete student-athletes, preparing them for life beyond sport, and to be outstanding citizens. Students will have an intense physical journey but also work on areas of self-awareness, setting priorities, healthy habits, teamwork, leadership, self-confidence, and many other principles that will serve them throughout life.

“Many sports programs are sold as a stepping stone to get to the next level. Too often we focus on the next team, the next opportunity, the next season. Our students will become stronger players, but we want them immersed in the present,” said Lorenson. “Many graduates will pursue a post-secondary volleyball career, but if they choose not to, I want them to feel the academy prepared them for more than volleyball. That it was a remarkable experience in its own right.”

The Vernon School District also offers academies in Earthquest, golf, hockey, soccer, snowsports and baseball.

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