

News Release – Ohio High School Athletic Association

Commissioner Daniel B. Ross, Ph.D.

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OHSAA Football State Championships Moving to Canton in 2017 and 2018

OHSAA Board of Directors approves move back to Stark County during its January meeting Thursday

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio High School Athletic Association football state championship games will be played at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium in Canton in 2017 and 2018 following approval from the OHSAA Board of Directors at its January meeting Thursday. The OHSAA staff had previously confirmed the intent to return to Canton in 2017 and 2018 and the 9-0 vote Thursday by the board of directors makes the move official.

After a 24-year stay in Stark County from 1990-2013, the football state championship games were held at Ohio Stadium in Columbus in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

“We had great hosts in Stark County before, and I know we will again,” said Dr. Dan Ross, OHSAA Commissioner. “We are blessed in Ohio to have so many outstanding playoff venues like Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium in Canton and Ohio Stadium here in Columbus, and our intent all along has been to rotate the finals between the two sites. The last three years in Columbus have been great, and the timing worked out well because Canton and the Pro Football Hall of Fame had major stadium renovations underway at the same time.”

The 2017 OHSAA football state championships weekend is Thursday, Nov. 30, through Sunday, Dec. 3. The exact dates and times of the games will be finalized this spring. All seven state championship games will be played at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium in Canton.

“Visit Canton is excited to see the tradition of the OHSAA High School Football Championships return to Stark County, and we are so eager to showcase the world-class Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium,” said Allyson Bussey, President of Visit Canton. “Our team at the Convention & Visitors’ Bureau is working hand-in-hand with OHSAA and the Pro Football Hall of Fame to plan an experience of excellence for the athletes, coaches, parents, students and everyone involved in this prestigious event.”

The world-class stadium and entertainment complex, adjacent to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, is one of nine major components of Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village, a \$600 million development project under way to transform the Hall of Fame’s campus.

“We look forward to the OHSAA High School Championships returning to Canton. Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village that includes the spectacular, state-of-the-art Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium will provide a rich experience for the many players, coaches, families, and fans attending the games,” shared David Baker, President & CEO of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. “The excellence in competition among the best football players in the state will be celebrated by the Hall of Fame and our community.”

No details for the football state championship games after 2018 have been finalized, but the OHSAA intends to return to Ohio Stadium in Columbus for the 2019 state championship games.

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