

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



## NEWS RELEASE

### **NFHS, NFHS Network Announce Partnership with PlayVS to Begin Esports in High Schools Nationwide**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Mark Koski

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (May 14, 2018) — The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the NFHS Network have entered into a partnership with PlayVS to begin the rollout of esports competition in high schools throughout the nation.

PlayVS, an online gaming provider, will work directly with the NFHS and the NFHS Network to introduce esports to high schools and state associations beginning this fall, with an initial rollout in at least 15 states. After regular-season competition between schools on the PlayVS online platform, state championship games will be played before a live spectator audience and streamed on the NFHS Network.

“PlayVS’ philosophy on high school-based sports and focus on participation perfectly aligns with the NFHS and its member state associations,” **said Mark Koski, CEO of the NFHS Network.** “We looked at many potential esports partners, and PlayVS was the clear choice thanks, in part, to its overall education-based concept, mission and vision.

“As schools look to provide participation opportunities for high school students, esports is a great option on two fronts,” Koski said. “First, esports may involve students who haven’t been involved in a sport or activity in the past. Second, the costs to implement esports are

minimal compared to starting a traditional sport, which can be extensive with equipment and facilities.”

Koski noted that with 72 percent of teens playing video games regularly, esports is a great way to engage additional students with after-school activities. Nearly 200 colleges in the United States and Canada are actively recruiting and offer scholarships for esports. Additionally, companies within the esports industry are looking to hire those with experience across multiple aspects of gaming.

“We believe the NFHS, NFHS Network and PlayVS make a great team to help jump-start esports activities in high schools across the country,” **said Bob Gardner, NFHS executive director.** “With the rollout of this partnership, we anticipate that there will be tremendous initial and growing interest in esports from students, and we are excited to broadcast these events on the NFHS Network.”

PlayVS will operate all esports competitions for NFHS member state associations in a turnkey fashion.

“We're excited to partner with the NFHS and NFHS Network to introduce esports in high schools nationwide,” **said Delane Parnell, CEO and founder of PlayVS.** “This partnership combined with our technology and publisher relationships will help us create the first scalable competition for high school students. Esports is about more than just playing games – it can be used to help students grow their STEM interests and develop valuable life skills; and since there are more high school gamers than athletes, it's about time we foster this pastime in an educational setting.”

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#### **About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school

coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

### **About the NFHS Network**

The NFHS Network, now in its fifth year of covering high school sports events through its digital network at [www.NFHSNetwork.com](http://www.NFHSNetwork.com), is a joint venture between the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), its member state high school associations and PlayOn! Sports. The NFHS Network celebrates and showcases the unique accomplishments of high school students, including the student-athletes participating in 27 different sporting events and the student broadcasters from schools around the country that produce events through the School Broadcast Program.

### **About PlayVS**

PlayVS' mission is to build the infrastructure for high school esports. Through its exclusive partnership with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and NFHS Network, PlayVS is introducing esports into all high schools in the United States. This marks the first time students will be able to compete in esports for an official state championship and be recognized by their state athletic/activity association. For more information on PlayVS, visit: <https://www.playvs.com/>.

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