



News Release

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Commissioner Daniel B. Ross, Ph.D.

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OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (OHSAA) ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH OHIO OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SOCIETY (OOS)

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) is pleased to announce they have signed a one year agreement with the Ohio Ophthalmological Society (OOS). The OOS will bring the **“Play Hard. Don’t Blink.”** sports eye safety program to Ohio high school championship games for field hockey, football, girls and boys basketball, softball and baseball beginning this fall.

“The OHSAA is proud to be a partner in this important initiative with the OOS,” said Daniel B. Ross, Commissioner of the OHSAA. “The importance of eye safety in sports cannot be overstated. The initiative brings the message of proper eye protection to the forefront for athletes and fans alike. It’s a win-win for everyone. Additionally, our partnership with the OOS allows us to continue improving the services and quality of programs to our member schools.”

“Play Hard. Don’t Blink.” combines education for coaches, parents and student-athletes with a variety of protective eye gear activities and information designed to make safe playing habits cool to kids. The campaign is timely because the Board of Directors of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) recently voted to mandate protective eyewear for all 64,000 high school field hockey players nationwide, including 1,000 in Ohio. **“Play Hard. Don’t Blink.”** will be promoted at championship events via program ads, public address announcements, signage and an in-game feature on SportsTime Ohio (STO). Direct communications with the high schools will also be an element of the partnership, giving schools the opportunity to get free protective eye gear for their teams from the OOS.

“Play Hard. Don’t Blink.” is funded by a generous grant through the Ohio Department of Health’s **“Save Our Sight Fund.”** Citizens of Ohio contribute to the “Save our Sight Fund” through voluntary \$1 donations when they apply for or renew their license plates and drivers licenses. The partnership between the OOS and the OHSAA will drive awareness to this fund as well. The objective of the **“Save Our Sight Fund”** is to ensure that children in Ohio have good vision and healthy eyes, accomplished through early identification of children with vision problems and the promotion of good eye health and safety.

“Everyone at the OOS is excited about our partnership with the OHSAA. The broad audience of OHSAA championship events allows us to get **“Play Hard. Don’t Blink.”** in front of athletes, parents and fans, everyone who can benefit from the valuable resources the OOS provides,” said Todd Baker, Executive Director of the OOS.

About the Ohio High School Athletic Association

The Ohio High School Athletic Association is the governing body of interscholastic sports in Ohio. It is a voluntary, non-profit organization which governs 826 high schools and 778 middle schools, which serve more than 350,000 student-athletes. The OHSAA's mission is to regulate and administer interscholastic competition in a fair and equitable manner while promoting the values of participation in interscholastic athletics as an integral part of a student's educational experience.

About the Ohio Ophthalmological Society

The Ohio Ophthalmological Society is the most comprehensive, cohesive group of professionals dedicated to ophthalmology in Ohio. Since its creation in 1961, the Ohio Ophthalmological Society has evolved into more than just a conglomeration of peers, it is recognized as a vital resource for members providing valuable professional knowledge, services, and determined legislative advocacy.

About Home Team Marketing

Home Team Marketing is the nation's leading high school sports marketing company. HTM provides integrated marketing and multimedia solutions for corporate partners and revenue generating opportunities for individual high schools, state high school athletic associations, and other school based activities. Home Team Marketing, which opened in 2001, has offices in Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles, New York City and Washington D.C. HTM has access to over 10,000 high schools nationwide and works with four of the top five largest state associations in the country. HTM serves as the official marketing arm for 18 state associations. 50% of all advertising revenue goes back to HTM's partner schools. To date, a total of \$12.5 million has gone back to schools. HTM was named a finalist in *Sports Business Journal's* "2011 Sports Business Award" in the category of "Best in Property Consulting, Sales and Client Services."

OHSAA