



News Release

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OHSAA to Accept Proposals to Host State Football Finals

First Opportunity to Host is 2012

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio High School Athletic Association is accepting proposals from organizations across the state that are interested in hosting the state football finals, Commissioner Dan Ross has announced. The first opportunity to host the finals is for the 2012 season since the OHSAA's current contract with the Canton/Stark County Convention and Visitors' Bureau runs through the 2011 championships.

A committee that includes members of both the OHSAA Board of Directors and administrative staff along with officers from the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association will be charged with reviewing the proposals and making a recommendation on the host site to the Board of Directors. The 11-member board, comprised of school administrators from across the state including nine voting members, will make its decision no later than July.

The deadline to submit written proposals to host the championships is April 16. Finalists will make formal presentations to the committee during the last week of April, and visits to potential finalists, if needed, will occur during the first week of May. The successful organization will be awarded the finals for 2012, 2013 and 2014, with the likelihood that an option year or two will also be included. The OHSAA football finals are currently slated for the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving week, which in most years is the first Friday and Saturday of December.

The 2009 season marked the 20th consecutive year that the Canton/Stark County Convention and Visitors' Bureau has been involved in hosting the state football finals. In 1990, Massillon's Paul Brown Stadium hosted the Division II through V championships, while the Division I final was held at the Akron Rubber Bowl in Summit County. In 1991 and 1992, Massillon again hosted the Division II through V finals, with the big-school championship moving to Canton Fawcett Stadium. Between 1993 and 1997, each championship game was held at Massillon (the OHSAA added a sixth division in 1994), and, since 1998, the six contests have been split between Canton and Massillon.

"There is no question that the football finals committee in Stark County has done an exceptional job over the years hosting our finals," Ross said. "Virtually every team that has qualified for the championships raves about the outstanding manner in which they are treated and the hospitality that is extended. That committee's experience and tradition in hosting the finals cannot be overlooked.

"We do feel an obligation to the member schools, however, to periodically obtain proposals for the championships to ensure that we are not only providing the absolute best situation for the qualifiers and their fans but also because of the prestige of this event and the continual statewide interest from organizations interested in serving as hosts."

The OHSAA last accepted proposals for the football finals in the spring of 2006, at which time the finalists were Canton/Stark County, Cincinnati and Columbus. A nine-member selection committee recommended to the OHSAA Board that the championships remain in Stark County, and the group was awarded a contract for 2007, 2008 and 2009, with options for 2010 and 2011. The option years were picked up by the board in December 2008.

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