

Esports in High School

A newly sanctioned activity with the NFHS starting in Fall 2018

1 Why are we sanctioning esports?

- The same skills a team needs to succeed in traditional sports are required in esports. Teams need to work together as a unit, think strategically, and put forth strong individual effort in order to win
- Research suggests students who participate in structured esports activities have positive education outcomes, such as increased interest in STEM, higher GPA, and the formation of stronger bonds as a team
- Adopting esports shows our commitment to being a progressive-minded institution that is constantly exploring new trends

Esports is a meaningful new way to engage students and we're glad you're interested in bringing this activity to your school. Getting started is easy and has been boiled down to a five-step process.

2 How does it work?

- PlayVS is the high school esports platform that streamlines students' gameplay. They organize, schedule, and manage all of the logistics that go into an esports league
- Managed through a partnership with PlayVS, esports will be played in two seasons (Oct-Jan/Feb-May) with different games that have been approved by the governing state association
 - Preseason and Regular Seasons are played at the regional level, with each state being divided into four conferences. During the Regular Season teams compete for a spot in the playoffs
 - During the Postseason, the top teams (amount to be determined by the state association) play in a single-elimination bracket until four conference champions

are selected. These Conference Champions then battle in the semi-finals for a spot in the state championship. The final two teams compete to be crowned State Champion

- There is no traveling during the Pre and Regular Seasons. All matchups will happen on campus with competitions played through PlayVS online platform
- Offline events, such as the State Championship, will require travel. PlayVS takes on the cost to produce the events. Schools and/or districts are required to coordinate and cover student travel and related expenses
- Each school can field as many teams as they're able to for as many games in a season
- Students pay to participate. These participation fees can be paid monthly for \$16, seasonally for \$60, or annually for \$160



Compete at school

We legitimize high school esports play, bringing the act of gaming from an at-home activity to one where students are on-campus, surrounded by their teammates.



No cuts

There's no limit to how many teams can form at the varsity level, giving all participants the opportunity to compete within the league.



Coed

An all-inclusive program; students of all genders can equally participate and demonstrate their attitudes and abilities.



Live Audience

Players feel the exhilaration of a crowd as fans attend via live stream or locally at many league matches.

Esports in High School

Getting started is easy and has been boiled down to a six-step process:

1 Express Interest

State Associations can choose to rollout esports within their state.

- State Associations should contact Mark Koski (MKoski@nfhs.org) for more information on how to adopt esports as a sanctioned activity
- Schools can contact their state associations or esports@nfhsnetwork.com to express interest and stay up-to-date on esports in high schools
- The PlayVS team can be reached through email at team@playvs.com or their office line: (805)-613-7617

2 Find a faculty member

A faculty member will be required to oversee and guide the students as they participate. Faculty will be responsible for ensuring student eligibility and keeping school profiles up-to-date, and must be present to oversee on-campus activities. **Reach out to:**

- Advisors for similar clubs (Esports, Robotics, Anime)
- Computer, graphics design, or STEM teachers
- IT staff or support members
- Coaches or other sports staff

3 Find students

Student engagement is the mission of this new program. Many schools have a community of student gamers that are organized and easy to find, but a lot of students are waiting for something like this to exist. **Get the word out:**

- Talk to gaming/technology club
- Hang up flyers
- Morning school announcements
- Club Rush/Club Week activities

4 Equipment

Esports simply requires a one-time purchase approximately every four years. PlayVS has established relationships with peripheral and jersey vendors to further reduce the cost to you. Computer upgrade packages will be available as needed. **You will need:**

- One computer/laptop per students
 - Personal computers may be used
- One peripherals package per student (mouse, headset, keyboard)
- One jersey per student for events

5 IT Structure

During the initial setup an IT staff member will need to be involved to install the games played in our competition. An update plan will need to be put in place if computers require new permissions to edit files. One-time IT concerns will need to be addressed. An IT staff member will already have the tools to make this happen. **IT needs to:**

- Unblock games and associated websites
- Add student computers to network (if needed)
- Setup separate wifi for esports traffic (recommended)

6 Find students

The PlayVS platform is easy to use and navigate. This program is student-driven, but a faculty member should be ready to assist as needed. **Get ready to compete:**

- Have a faculty member sign up on behalf of the school
- Students sign up and pay a \$16 per month, \$60 per season, or \$160 per year participation fee
- Students register for the associated competitive league(s)
- Students form teams, start practicing, and then compete
- Faculty member will oversee students throughout the season and can make adjustments to rosters as needed