

For Immediate Release

May 1, 2024

STAY IN THE GAME! ATTENDANCE NETWORK PARTNERS WITH BATTELLE TO IMPACT MORE THAN 300,000 OHIO STUDENTS

Columbus based Battelle will join the Network to help bolster ability to serve, support, and partner with districts across Ohio to increase attendance

BEREA, Ohio – The Stay in the Game! Attendance Network (SITG!) proudly announces that it is joining forces with Battelle to impact more than 300,000 Ohio students through supporting Ohio districts and schools in dramatically improving attendance along with the Networks founding partners the Cleveland Browns Foundation, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, and Harvard's Proving Ground. Along with the support from the Columbus Crew and the Cleveland Browns, Stay in the Game! is excited for this partnership with Battelle to help get students in school every day. Battelle will be the new 'Network backbone,' hosting SITG! operations.

Battelle, one of the world's largest, independent research and development organizations, is headquartered in Columbus with over 30,000 employees worldwide. Battelle is also a renowned supporter of education networks focused on STEM education and computer science, to increase and diversify the STEM workforce. Through this partnership, Stay in the Game! will have access to Battelle's network backbone support systems, partners and allied organizations with the commitment to emphasizing attendance as a foundational pillar for academic achievement. With a strong commitment to fostering diversity in education, Battelle's new role signals a significant commitment in addressing chronic absenteeism and advancing student outcomes in Ohio and across the country.

Starting July 1, Battelle will serve as the fiscal agent and point of contact for the Network, coordinating and facilitating activities and initiatives with partner school districts and sports teams. Currently operated by the Cleveland Browns Foundation, SITG! has grown from thirteen districts at its start during the 2019-2020 school year to now expecting more than 100 districts for the 2024-25 school year and with this significant growth, SITG! has outgrown the Foundation's ability to house the effort on its own. Battelle will also provide leadership, support, and resources – along with the Browns, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and Harvard's Proving Ground - to help achieve the Network's goal to have 90% of all Ohio students attending school more than 90% of the time by 2030.

"We are excited to announce Battelle, a renowned organization in the education space, as our new host for the Stay in the Game! Attendance Network," said **Dee Haslam, Managing and Principal Partner of Haslam Sports Group**. "Alongside our partners, we are dedicated to improving school attendance in school districts throughout Ohio. We are confident that Battelle will be instrumental in helping the Network achieve its goals in Ohio and beyond as we continue to expand."

"Education is the foundation upon which we build our future, and at Battelle, we are committed to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed," said **Lou Von Thaeer, President and CEO of Battelle**. "Our partnership with the Stay in the Game! Attendance Network is a strategic investment to reduce chronic absenteeism and foster a culture of consistent school attendance. Together, we can help students succeed."

During the 2022-2023 school year SITG! districts on average lowered their chronic absenteeism by 5.2%, according to the 2022-2023 Ohio State Report Card compared to 3.4% as a state. SITG! significantly outperformed the state with 41% of SITG! districts lowering chronic absenteeism by 8.5-10.9%, exemplifying the positive effect that the SITG! is having on Ohio's students.



In Ohio, students who have never been chronically absent are 6.7 times more likely to read on grade level by the end of third grade and nine times more likely to graduate from high school on time. With Ohio's current rate of chronic absenteeism at 26.8%, there is a clear need for Ohio families, schools, and community partners to tackle this problem together. SITG! leaders are thrilled to welcome Battelle to this important effort.

The Stay in the Game! Attendance Network is currently working on its expansion beyond the state of Ohio. Recognizing student attendance is a nationwide issue that has increasingly gotten worse, the Network will look to implement its tools and resources in other states.

For more information on the Stay in the Game! Attendance Network, visit www.stayinthegame.org or email info@stayinthegame.org. For phone inquiries, contact Susan Bodary, Interim Director, Stay in the Game! At 937-657-3453.

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About the Stay in The Game! Attendance Network

Launched in 2019 by the Cleveland Browns Foundation, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and Harvard's Proving Ground, the Stay in the Game! Attendance Network works together to campaign, connect, and convene with experts and supporters to increase attendance in Ohio. The Stay in The Game! Attendance Network is expecting to support over 100 districts and over 300,000 students during the 2024-2025 school year through localized, data-informed attendance campaigns aimed at raising awareness of the importance of school attendance as a foundation for student success and identifying barriers to attendance. For more information about the Stay in the Game! Attendance Network please contact us at info@stayinthegame.org or visit our website at www.stayinthegame.org.

About Battelle

Every day, the people of Battelle apply science and technology to solving what matters most. At major technology centers and national laboratories around the world, Battelle conducts research and development, designs and manufactures products, and delivers critical services for government and commercial customers. Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio since its founding in 1929, Battelle serves the national security, health and life sciences, and energy and environmental industries. For more information, visit www.battelle.org.