

Ohio State Junior Wide Receiver Emeka Egbuka Returning For 2024 Season



Ohio State junior wide receiver Emeka Egbuka announced Thursday on Instagram that he is returning for his fourth and final season in 2024, joining a group of several impact players who will exhaust their final year of collegiate eligibility with the Buckeyes.

“During my time thus far at Ohio State I have grown and learned more than I thought possible,” Egbuka wrote on Instagram Thursday morning. “These three last years have come with trials and tribulations but overwhelming joy as well...By (God’s) guidance and with ultimate faith in Him, I am returning for my senior year at Ohio State. I’m looking forward to what this new year beholds.”

Egbuka, who came to Ohio State in 2021 as a five-star prospect and No. 1 ranked receiver in the class out of Steilacoom (Wa.) High School, has made an impact in Brian Hartline’s receiving room in all three of his seasons thus far.

He first flashed as a freshman in limited playing time, hauling in nine catches for 191 yards, while also being a threat in the kick return game, returning 20 kickoffs for 580 yards. This led Egbuka to have his best season in 2022, where he emerged as quarterback C.J. Stroud’s clear No. 2 option behind Marvin Harrison Jr. Playing primarily in the slot, he racked up 74 catches for 1,151 yards and 10 touchdowns, a stat line that earned him second-team all-Big Ten honors.

Egbuka came into the 2023 season with high expectations, where he was a preseason All-American and a projected top 10 pick by many for the 2024 NFL Draft. While the receiver showed that potential early on while catching passes for first-year starter Kyle McCord — most notably his seven receptions and 96 yards in Ohio State’s thrilling 17-14 win over Notre Dame — his production was slowed by injury as the season progressed.

The junior missed three games in the middle of the season after injuring his foot late in Ohio State’s Oct. 7 win over Maryland, an ailment that likely halted his effectiveness when he returned. He recorded just 42.4 yards per game over his final five games, as opposed to 60.6 in his first five.

With Egbuka returning in 2024, though — and fellow junior Marvin Harrison Jr. on his way to the NFL — the slot receiver will have a chance to show NFL scouts what he can accomplish in a full season when healthy next season, a year where he will likely serve as Ohio State's clear No. 1 receiving option.

Egbuka will be joined at receiver by a different cast of characters in 2024, as Harrison, Xavier Johnson and Julien Fleming are all leaving the program. He will likely share targets next season with promising rising sophomores Carnell Tate and Brandon Inniss, along with incoming five-star freshman Jeremiah Smith and Mylan Graham, among others.

Egbuka is also a part of a large contingency of juniors that have decided to return to the program for a final season in 2024. Cornerbacks Denzel Burke and Jordan Hancock and offensive lineman Donovan each announced their return on Wednesday, while defensive end Jack Sawyer, linebacker Cody Simon, defensive tackles Tyleik Williams and Ty Hamilton and safety Lathan Ransom all announced their return this month.

Harrison, running back TreVeyon Henderson and defensive end J.T. Tuimoloau have yet to publicly announce if they will join their teammates for a final season or declare for the NFL Draft. The deadline to enter the NFL Draft is on Monday.