



MEMORANDUM

To: Superintendents, Principals, Athletic Directors, and Activity Directors

From: Christina Lamas, Executive Director

Re: Student Participation in the 2021 National Catholic Youth Conference, November 18-20

The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is the premier national gathering of Catholic high school-age youth in the United States. Approximately 10,000 young people and their chaperones from around the country will meet for three days of educational sessions, catechesis, prayer, and service while taking care to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.

NCYC is a unique opportunity for young Catholics to strengthen their faith and identity, meet other young people striving to live out positive values, learn to cope with negative influences, and discover that they are strong enough to be countercultural. For many, their participation is not only life-affirming; it is life-changing.

The 2021 NCYC is November 21-23 in Indianapolis. At the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, Inc. (NFCYM), we realize that attending this event will entail an absence from school and extracurricular activities. Due to the nature of the program, I respectfully request that you consider your students' participation an excused absence. What could be more important with many young people struggling with the challenges brought on by the pandemic? NCYC will give teen participants the chance to ground themselves in their faith communities and form or renew relationships with peers and caring adults.

Without support from administrators like you, many students will be unable to attend. They and their families are committed to school and its related activities. If NCYC was an experience that would regularly take students from their classrooms, playing fields, and practices, I would not ask you consider excusing their absence. However, participants usually attend only once or twice in their four years of high school. I hope you agree there are benefits to students taking a few days to deepen their understanding of another facet of their being. I believe the experience will add to their development as well-rounded members of the broader community.

For more information about the conference, feel free to visit our website, www.ncyc.info. In addition, please feel free to contact your local Catholic diocesan youth ministry director or our office in Washington, D.C., for more details.

Your cooperation in enabling your students to attend is greatly appreciated.