



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Superintendents, Principals, Athletic Directors, Music Program Directors, and Activity Directors

**From:** Christina Lamas, Executive Director

**Re:** Student Participation in the 2024 National Catholic Youth Conference

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The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is the premier national gathering of Catholic high school-age youth in the United States. We anticipate 3,000 to 5,000 young people and their chaperones from around the country will meet for three days of educational sessions, catechesis, prayer, and service. 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 they are strong enough to be counter-cultural. For many, their participation is not only life-affirming but also life-changing.

This year's National Catholic Youth Conference will be held in Long Beach, California, from November 16-18. Our theme, El Camino | The Way, and our programming invites participants to feel the presence of God, be empowered to be missionary disciples, and be inspired to walk confidently on their path illuminated by divine guidance. 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. If NCYC were an experience that would regularly take students from their classrooms, playing fields, rehearsals, and practices, I would not ask you to consider excusing their absence. However, due to the nature of the program, I respectfully request that you consider your students' participation an excused absence. NCYC will allow teen participants 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 cannot attend. They and their families are committed to school and its related activities. However, participants usually attend NCYC 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. The experience will add to their development as well-rounded members of the broader community.

For more information about the conference, visit our website, <https://ncyc.us/>. In addition, please feel free to contact your local Catholic diocesan youth ministry director or our office in Washington, DC, for more details. Your cooperation and support in enabling your students to attend is greatly appreciated.