



[DATE]

[Superintendent Name]

[District Name]

[Street Address]

[City, State ZIP]

Dear Superintendent [Last Name]:

I am writing to inform you that [NUMBER] school(s) in your district is/are among the approximately 365 schools randomly selected across the United States to participate in the 2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS), sponsored by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Preventing tobacco product use among youth is critical to ending the tobacco epidemic in the United States. Youth use of tobacco products in any form is unsafe. The Surgeon General has written that while considerable progress has been made in reducing cigarette smoking among U.S. youth, the tobacco product landscape continues to evolve to include a variety of new types of products, including electronic vapor products such as e-cigarettes. These products typically contain nicotine, which is highly addictive, can harm the developing adolescent brain, and can prime the brain for addition to other drugs. Efforts such as the NYTS have increased our ability to measure changes in tobacco use behaviors and their influences, thereby enabling states, school districts, schools, and community organizations to adapt their tobacco prevention and control programs to combat the most prevailing issues at hand.

First conducted in 1999, the NYTS is an ongoing survey of students in grades 6 through 12 that gathers information on: (1) prevalence of use (electronic cigarettes, cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, hookahs, pipe tobacco, and bidis), (2) knowledge and attitudes, (3) media and advertising, (4) minors' access and enforcement, (5) school curriculum, (6) secondhand smoke exposure, and (7) cessation. Each cycle has produced valuable data regarding students' knowledge of and attitudes toward tobacco, their exposure to secondhand smoke, and their exposure to influences that promote or discourage tobacco use.

The selected school(s) in your district is/are shown below, along with the number of anticipated classes at each grade level:

| School | Grade (Number of Classes) |
|---------------|--|
| [School Name] | [6th (#), 7th (#), 8th (#), 9th (#), 10th (#), 11th (#), 12th (#)] |

The CDC respects the educational mission of schools. For that reason, only a small number of classes in each school, one or two at each selected grade level, are chosen randomly to participate. Data collection will occur during late January through May 2021. Specially trained field staff will bring all the materials necessary to administer the survey, via tablet, during one normal class period. Survey administration procedures are designed to protect student privacy and allow for anonymous participation. States, counties, cities, school districts, schools, and students will not be identified in any published reports.

As a symbol of appreciation for contributing their time and support, the CDC will provide each participating school with a monetary award. One option is to use these funds for prevention curriculum and educational materials. However, no restrictions will be placed on how schools can use these funds.

Your support for this survey will help ensure the voluntary participation of the school(s) selected in your district. The NYTS is the most comprehensive, nationally representative source of data regarding tobacco-related behaviors and the only source of such data for middle school students (grades 6-8). In parallel to this national survey, the YTS questionnaire is used independently by many state and local departments of education and health to conduct their own surveys. Results from the national survey serve as an index against which state- and local-level data can be compared and are used by states to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of effective tobacco use prevention and control programs.

Enclosed are copies of the NYTS questionnaire, sample parental permission forms, and study fact sheets. Within one week, a representative from ICF, a nationally recognized research firm contracted by CDC to conduct the NYTS, will contact you to confirm your receipt of this information and answer any questions you may have. If you have any immediate questions, please call Alice Roberts at 1-800-675-9727. Your support for this survey, which will help assess and improve efforts to reduce priority health-risk behaviors among adolescents throughout our nation, is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda J. Neff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "L" and "N".

Linda J. Neff, PhD, MSPH
Chief, Epidemiology Branch, Office on Smoking and Health
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Enclosures

cc: Sean Hu, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Alice Roberts, ICF
Jill Trott, ICF
<ICF RECRUITER>, ICF
<PRINCIPAL NAME>, <SCHOOL NAME>
<STATE HEALTH PRE-CONTACT>, <AGENCY>
<STATE EDUCATION PRE-CONTACT>, <AGENCY>