



MEDIA ADVISORY

June 22, 2005

Breakthrough!

NC TO CELEBRATE REACHING HALF-WAY POINT IN DRIVE TOWARD 100% TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS

STATE LEADERS, HEALTH ADVOCATES, EDUCATORS AND TEENS TO CHALLENGE ALL NC PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO GO 100% TOBACCO-FREE

RALEIGH, NC – NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) Chair Lt. Governor Beverly Perdue will join prominent educators, state leaders, and several dozen teen tobacco advocates from across the state for a rally Wednesday, July 6 at 9:30 a.m. at the State Capitol to celebrate a significant milestone in North Carolina's tobacco prevention efforts. More than half of the state's school districts have now adopted a 100% Tobacco Free Schools (TFS) policy.

100% TFS prohibits tobacco use by anyone, anywhere at anytime on school property and at school related events. Since HWTF began funding local teen tobacco prevention use programs in 2002, 44 of the 115 school districts have adopted 100% TFS policies, bringing the statewide total to 58.

The July 6th celebration will allow state leaders to applaud the school districts that have adopted the policy, and challenge the remaining 57 districts to do the same. This event will also feature a pep rally and entertainment by a local band.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 200,000 young people under the age of 18 alive today in North Carolina will die prematurely because of tobacco-related illnesses.

WHAT: 100% Tobacco Free Schools Half-Way Point Celebration and Pep Rally.

WHO: Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, HWTF chair; Howard Lee, State Board of Education chair; Terry Grier, superintendent, Guilford County Schools; Other participants include NC school district supervisors; top education and community leaders and local tobacco use prevention advocates.

WHEN: Wednesday, July 6, 9:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.
Media will have one-on-one interview opportunities at 10 a.m.

WHERE: State Capitol Lawn – South Side
Corner of Hillsborough St. and Morgan St.
Raleigh, NC 27607

ABOUT THE NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$127 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program. For more information, please visit www.hwtfc.org.

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