



We exist for the academic excellence of all students.

Kraft Administrative Center

Office of the Superintendent

Sept. 4, 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian:

On Tuesday, Sept. 8, President Barack Obama will broadcast a speech at 11 a.m. intended for schoolchildren throughout the country. Since this announcement, parents and community members have inquired about whether students will view the speech during the school day.

Springfield Public Schools is not mandating that all students view President Obama's speech Tuesday. However, some teachers throughout the district will choose to incorporate the President's address into their instruction that day.

Every day we entrust the education of our students to the professional staff in our 52 school buildings. Our highly qualified teachers are skilled at determining which activities and resources enhance the curriculum and instruction goals they have set for their students.

The decision about whether to view the President's address will be made by teachers in consultation with their school principal.

According to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, the President in his address will challenge students to work hard, set educational goals, and take responsibility for their learning. Reports indicate the text of the President's speech will be made available 24 hours in advance at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/mediaresources>.

Citizens may watch the address live via the Internet at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/live/> or on C-SPAN. Following the live broadcast, a downloadable video of the speech will be made available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/mediaresources> as well as on www.ed.gov.

We understand some parents may choose for their children not to participate in this activity but we strongly encourage them to be in attendance Tuesday. It is unnecessary for them to be absent due to an activity that will take only a fraction of the school day. Students who wish to be excused from viewing the President's address will be offered an alternative educational activity during that time.

If parents prefer that their child not view the speech, they should send a note to their child's teacher Tuesday.

We hope this information assists you in making an informed decision about the educational options available to your child.

Sincerely,

Norm Ridder, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools