

Dear Families,

As you know, this week the White House announced that President Obama will deliver a national address to the students of America on Tuesday, September 8, at 12 noon. According to the White House, the President is scheduled to speak for 15-20 minutes and will "challenge students to work hard, set educational goals, and take responsibility for their learning."

That message sounds to be very positive and appropriate. However, since news of the address was first reported, the Catholic Center and several of our Catholic schools have been contacted by parents and others expressing a desire that parents be given the opportunity to request that their children be excused from viewing the address. That request certainly should be honored.

It should be kept in mind that Catholic social teaching reminds us that it is morally imperative for Catholics to participate in public life. An address by the President regarding the importance of education seems to be a teachable moment. Further, the speech heard in the environment of a Catholic school can lead to intelligent follow-up conversations in the classroom.

However, local control in such areas has always been a hallmark of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Toledo. Therefore, each school is permitted to decide whether to allow students to view the President's talk.

Fr. Kent and I have decided to view the speech prior to making a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate for student viewing across all grade levels. Parents may view the whole text of the speech at <http://whitehouse.gov/mediaresources/> or you may watch the live broadcast at noon on Tuesday, September 8, 2009.

Hope your Labor Day weekend was restful and enjoyable.

Mrs. Richardson