

September 4, 2009

Dear Parents,

This letter is to inform you of an opportunity that has been communicated to us from the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan. On Tuesday, September 8th at 11:00 a.m. President Obama will deliver an address to students across our nation via the internet (www.whitehouse.gov) and television (C-Span). The focus of his address will be the importance of students taking responsibility for their education, challenging them to set goals, and doing everything they can to succeed.

At Woodland District, the education of all our students is our top priority. We strive to maintain the instructional integrity of our students' learning environment on a daily basis. As with other educational opportunities, we plan to use this resource only as instructionally appropriate. With that in mind, we have not made plans as schools or as a district to view the president's address on Tuesday. Instead, we have informed our teachers of the address and have suggested that they view it privately to determine if it has any connections to our adopted curricula. The decision whether or not to utilize all or part of the address in class at a later date will be left to each individual teacher's discretion.

With specific regard to older children, Woodland Middle School staff will not be informing our students of the U.S. Department of Education's *I Am What I Learn* video contest that has been suggested as an accompanying activity to the president's speech. While intended to promote student thought and engagement, encouraging middle school-aged students to upload videos of themselves to the YouTube® website is contrary to the lessons we teach our students about internet safety.

As always, our primary focus is to ensure a safe and nurturing learning environment for all our students. If you have any questions regarding the plans of your child's teacher, I encourage you to contact him/her via telephone or email. In the event that your child's teacher plans on utilizing the address in some way, you may request that your child not participate. In its place, your child will be provided an alternative activity of equal educational value. If you have questions or concerns of a more general nature please feel free to contact your child's assistant principal or principal. Contact information for the principals is below. Enjoy your holiday weekend!

Sincerely,

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