



ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

STATEMENT REGARDING PRESIDENT OBAMA'S ADDRESS TO STUDENTS

Richard Thompson, Superintendent

September 3, 2009

Many of our Catholic school administrators, as well as parents, have asked the Office of Catholic Schools for guidance in deciding whether or not to air President Obama's Address to Students, scheduled for next Tuesday, in their classrooms. We understand that such a decision is a controversial issue. Our policy regarding controversial issues is clear, stating:

- A. Catholic school administrators and teachers have the obligation of teaching and advocating Church doctrine, which is contained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church or in other authentic teaching documents of the Catholic Church when this doctrine is relevant to any controversial issue being considered.
- B. **Principal Responsibility.** The presentation of controversial issues in the classroom shall take place solely at the discretion of the principal and only after the principal has approved all materials and information to be used in the presentation. The principal shall also supervise the manner in which controversial issues are presented and discussed in the classroom.

The principal shall exercise professional judgment in granting permission for outside speakers to address any class or the entire student body. If the issue or topic is religious or doctrinal in nature, speakers must be approved by the pastor for parish schools, or the Superintendent for high schools, as well as through the Archdiocesan approval process. No speaker may at any time contradict the teaching of the Church as presented in the Catechism of the Catholic Church or in other authentic teaching documents of the Catholic Church.

We have great confidence that our Principals, in consultation with the school Pastor, and his advisory bodies if necessary, will properly discern the appropriateness of this address for their school community in light of the mission of our Catholic schools.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL
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The Archdiocese of Denver Catholic Schools is an Investment in the future of our Children and the Catholic Faith