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WELLESLEY

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Wellesley schools air Obama speech

Posted September 8, 2009 05:40 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau Globe Correspondent

Wellesley schools aired President Barack Obama's back-to-school speech live on Tuesday to all students unless the students, or their parents, had requested otherwise, according to the superintendent's office.

Natick schools did not show the speech live, but instead taped what was said to possibly be used at a later and school officials in Waltham took the same approach.

Waltham parents were notified Monday evening through a recorded phone message from the superintendent that the speech would be taped for a "possible viewing in the future."

To clear up confusion which stemmed from that message, Waltham superintendent Peter Azar held a press conference Tuesday after school.

"At no time did we say it would not be viewed ... Essentially what we did was we went on the fact that we had little information and made plans to follow up in a way that was appropriate," Azar said.

In Needham and Newton the superintendents left the decision of whether or not to show the speech up to the discretion of each school's principal.

Jonathan Pizzi, Needham High School's principal, said he left it up to each teacher to decide whether or not to show the president's speech in class. He didn't know how many teachers chose to do so; but no one – neither parents nor teachers – expressed any concern to him about the issues that seemed to shake up other school districts. The only real questions he fielded from teachers were logistical, he said, because the speech overlapped two lunch periods.

Globe Staff reporter Lisa Kocian and Globe Correspondent Jessica Rudis contributed to this report.

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6 COMMENTS SO FAR...

1. As a former educator, I wish ever President would have come on the TV and said what President Obama said. to us every year. The children need to know it's alright to fail as long as they don't give up. For some school is easy. For many it's not. They need to realize that they are our country's future and giving up is NOT an option.

Posted by M. Love September 8, 09 06:13 PM

2. I like the way he had to change his speech after the parents started to complain. e didn't ask them to write a letter to help him. What he did say, I thought was really odd!! He said make this world fair! We try to teach our

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kids that nothing is fair & the president gets on television & basically tells them if they go to school it will make the world fairer!! HUH????He really must be desperate to try to go after our kids now!! brain wash them like they did on the campaign trail. Tell them He is trying very hard to get them everything they need to go to school!! I know for a fact 10% of our yearly income goes to the schools. Aren't we the ones that are providing these essentials thru tax dollars, not out of his pocket or the money printing machine he thinks he has???

Posted by [releggneh](#) September 8, 09 06:20 PM

3. The message was good. He basically asked kids to stay in school and expressed the importance of kids to become the best that they can be. The issue is the material that was originally accompanying the speech that basically said "Ask not what you can do for yourself, ask what you can do for Obama." The other issue is this message to the kids has nothing to do with what he is actually doing. He does not think you can manage yourselves. Obama believe he (the government) is the only one who can manage you. He wants the government to manage and control every aspect of your life so that in the end, everyone has the same. Human nature does not work like that.

Posted by [SeeTheBigPicture](#) September 8, 09 06:29 PM

4. My 14 yr old daughter watched Pres. Obama's address today because her individual class teacher thought it was something her class should see. Other teachers in the school could (and some did) opt out. I got a chuckle when my daughter said (of Obama), "he was kind of inspirational, told everyone if we work hard we could become whatever we wanted to be"... then listed a litany of prestigious jobs. She though it interesting that he left "President" off of the list.

Posted by [Patrick Rafter](#) September 8, 09 07:24 PM

5. We the outside world are ashamed of some American parents. President Obama chooses to address school children to take their studies seriously, he was criticized for doing so. What did you parents want from Pre.Obama? Per.Bush did the same, did he got same criticism? The outside world is watching.

Posted by [Anonymous](#) September 8, 09 07:47 PM

6. Good for Wellesley public schools, as a Natick resident, I'm ashamed to read that Natick took such a timid approach. Although on the other hand, I think it's embarrassing that Wellesley even had to take the step of "alerting" parents that they planned to show the president's speech as though it were some kind of town emergency. Heaven forfend that the leader of our country should want to give the youth a pep talk about staying in school and doing their homework. In fact, I think it would be great if the president did this every year.

Posted by [natick resident](#) September 11, 09 11:40 AM

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