

Obama to aim speech at students

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- Libby Amos (http://www.fox10tv.com/dpp/about_us/LibbyAmos)
- Mike Jernigan
- Photojournalist: Riccardo Montgomery

MOBILE, Ala. - The U.S. secretary of education announced Wednesday that President Obama will take on the role of "teacher" in a special address to students nationwide.

According to the White House, the speech is designed to encourage children to stay in school.

"I think it is good because education is very important, the best behavior part keep the violence out of the schools and stuff. I think it will be a great idea for him to do that," said Michael Brown, a parent.

Some critics of the speech believe President Obama will use the speech to help promote his political agenda.

Neal McCluskey with the Cato Institute's Center for Educational Freedom told foxnews.com, "I don't think there's a problem if the president uses the bully pulpit to tell kids to work hard, study hard and things like that. But there are some troubling hints in this, both educationally and politically."

McCluskey was concerned that students who do not support Obama or his educational policies will begin the school year "behind the eight ball."

Parents we talked to were in favor of the classroom speech.

One concerned parent, Bill Dunne, said, "I think it's a good idea. Anyone can say it's political, and they may be correct, but overall it can't hurt especially this day and age."

Education expert Dr. Richard Hayes said with graduation rates at 50 percent, the speech could help the system.

"What you are really talking about is a school system that starts 6,000 kids in kindergarten and graduates 3,000 12 years later and only 1,500 are prepared to participate in the economy," said Richard Hayes, dean of education at the University of South Alabama.

Hayes isn't sure the lecture will be a sure winner.

"I'm always suspicious as to whether one can take that lesson and insert here as if that will accomplish the goals you want."

