

Obama's message " It's OK to fail "

Every single one of you has something you're good at. Every single one of you has something to offer. And you have a responsibility to yourself to discover what that is. That's the opportunity an education can provide.

And no matter what you want to do with your life – I guarantee that you'll need an education to do it. You want to be a doctor, or a teacher, or an architect? You're going to need a good education for every single one of those careers. You can't drop out of school and just drop into a good job. You've got to work for it and train for it and learn for it.

Whatever you resolve to do, I want you to commit to it. I want you to really work at it.

The truth is, being successful is hard. You won't love every subject you study. You won't click with every teacher. Not every homework assignment will seem completely relevant to your life right this minute. And you won't necessarily succeed at everything the first time you try.

That's OK. Some of the most successful people in the world are the ones who've had the most failures. Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team, and he lost hundreds of games and missed thousands of shots during his career. But he once said, "I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

No one's born being good at things, you become good at things through hard work. You don't hit every note the first time you sing a song. You've got to practice. It's the same with your schoolwork. You might have to do a math problem a few times before you get it right, or read something a few times before you understand it, or do a few drafts of a paper before it's good enough to hand in.

So today, I want to ask you, what's your contribution going to be? What problems are you going to solve? What discoveries will you make?

Your families and your teachers are doing everything they can to make sure you have the education you need to answer these questions. But you've got to do your part too. I expect you to put your best effort into everything you do. I expect great things from each of you. So don't let us down. I know you can do it.