Mt. Juliet High School Senior Hayley Richey got to attend President Barack Obama's speech at McGavock High School Thursday. Here is her story on the speech.

On Jan 28, President Barack Obama spoke at McGavock High School on topics such as Education, Unemployment, Job Creation, and Pre-Kindergarten Programs.

It's not every day in Tennessee that someone of such a high ranking comes to visit. The last time the mid-state received President Obama was back in July 2013.

His visit was something of a surprise to the public, as Metro Schools announced it four days before his visit.

Seating to the event was limited, and the general public were not permitted. The students who wished to attend had to have a GPA of at least 3.2, and they had to write an essay explaining why they would like to see the president speak at their school. Media seating was limited as well. All members of the press had to submit an RSVP with no promise of making it to the event.

McGavock had their flags raised high that morning in anticipation of their very special visitor. Everyone at the school from the principal, to the faculty, to the students were excited to host the president.

Heavy security surrounded the area, and was in full force at the high school. Students were under close eye and so were the incoming attendees. Bags and electronic equipment were checked by metal detectors and dogs.

Inside, the audience was abuzz with dignitaries and students alike. Several “big names” in attendance include Ashley Judd, well-known film actress, Al Gore, former vice president and presidential candidate, Jay Carney, press secretary, Congressman Steve Cohen, and Charles Robert Bone, a current lawyer who has expressed “very high” interest in becoming a mayoral candidate of the Davidson County division.

The president was slightly delayed in Milwaukee due to plane troubles. He was scheduled to deliver remarks at 3:50 pm, but took the stage almost an hour later.

Before he took the stage, however, students of McGavock who were members of the national Honors Society filed in behind him and took the best seats in the house. Juan Alvares was lucky enough to get to say the pledge of allegiance, while classmate Becky Fischer delivered a moving rendition of the national anthem.

Once the president was ready to start his speech, student body president Ronald Elliot gave a warm introduction and gave up the podium to Barack Obama himself.

President Obama entered the gymnasium to the roaring applause of the audience. He shook hands with several guests close to the stage, and took to the podium.

He started off his speech by thanking all of the students who had introduced him, then proceeded to offer his condolences to the friends and family of 15 year old Kevin Barbee, a student who passed away a few days prior.

His concern with residents on a local level transitioned into how pleased he was with the “individual academies” program going on at McGavock. He expressed his delight in their Aerospace program and the school’s student-run credit union, complimenting their innovative teachers and highly-focused students.

He also complimented how much McGavock has improved as far as graduation rates and drop out rates go, calling Tennessee “the fastest improving state in the nation”. He was also quoted as saying, “No child should be let slip because of politics, or because an adult cannot get their

act together.”

One of the key points in his speech was explaining how creating a better school environment now leads to a better tomorrow, even going as far as to mention how high quality Pre-K programs would benefit job opportunities and create skilled workers when they grow to be adults.

He closed his speech by stating how important it is to invest in our children, because they are the ones who will be sustaining the future.

The president lingered for a little while, shaking hands with some of the audience members, and then left the school to return to Washington D.C. to get some much needed rest for the next day’s busy agenda.