



Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum

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Press Release

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STUDENTS ARE GIVEN TOOLS TO TALK, NOT FIGHT WHEN FACED WITH A PROBLEM.

Ann Arbor, MICH....The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and has partnered with the Kettering Foundation to teach students how to handle challenging topics through the process of deliberative dialogue. This process is used in National Issues Forums throughout the United States and now overseas to help ordinary people work toward solving contemporary problems by moving toward common ground and away from polarization.

This one hour presentation will be given by students and their teachers from Jackson Public Schools and Emerson School in Ann Arbor. The program will be held at the Gerald R. Ford Library on Tuesday, March 17, at 4:30 PM. There will be a brief explanation of the pilot project, students will demonstrate the deliberative process, using the “Energy Problem” as their topic.

The pilot project began in August 2008 with teacher training on deliberative dialogue, how to run a forum, and the benefits this process can bring to students in problem-solving and understanding other points of view. Once trained, teachers from both Southeast and West Michigan schools returned to their classrooms to use this process with their students. While the Kettering

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Foundation has used such dialogue for over two decades in the National Issues Forums, this project takes the exploration of the topic one step further by utilizing the resources of the Presidential Library.

This is a research project funded by the Kettering Foundation and will result in a manual for use by other Presidential Libraries and Museums who want to replicate the program with teachers and students in their states. The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library has been involved with the Kettering Foundation and National Issues Forums since the forums began in 1983.