



## Charity and Justice

While charity is at the core of many faith communities, advocacy, which is at the heart of Good Schools Pennsylvania, is sometimes less familiar. In fact, charitable deeds and public policy advocacy are both part of a continuum, each perspective strengthening the other. Where does your faith community fall on this continuum?

| <b>Charity</b>  | <b>Justice</b>  |
|---|---|
| Charity = social service. Charity provides direct services like food, clothing, shelter.  | Justice = social change. Justice promotes social change in institutions, policies and systems.  |
| Charity responds to immediate needs.  | Justice addresses long-term conditions.   |
| Charity is directed at the <i>effects</i> of injustice, its symptoms. Charity addresses problems that already exist. Otherwise put: LOVE MOPS UP. | Justice is directed at the <i>root causes</i> of social problems. Justice addresses the underlying structures or causes of these problems. Otherwise put: JUSTICE TRIES TO MAKE SURE THE MESS ISN'T MADE TO BEGIN WITH. |
| Charity is often a private and individual act of caring.  | Justice is public, political, and oriented to collective action for change.   |
| Charity is satisfying and generally non-controversial   | Justice is exciting and sometimes controversial.  |
| Examples of charity: homeless shelters, food shelves, clothing drives, emergency services.  | Examples of justice: legislative advocacy, changing policies and practices, political action.   |

(Source: Adapted from the Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis.)

1. What characteristics define Good Schools Pennsylvania as a social justice campaign?
2. Why might justice sometimes be controversial?
3. How are the roles of the "doer" and "receiver" different under charity and justice?
4. What would the world look like without charity? Without justice?