

EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE: A JOINT PASTORAL LETTER

Seeking Justice in Funding Public Education

Seven bishops of the five diocese of the Episcopal Church throughout Pennsylvania invited Episcopalians and others “to consider reversing an escalating spiral of inequity” in the funding of public education that suggests Pennsylvanians tolerate “economic segregation,” and that “a substandard education is adequate for the poor and near poor,” and that the quality of education provided for Pennsylvania’s children is “determined by their zip code.”

“Over the past 30 years, Pennsylvania has allowed its funding of public education to suggest that some children are worth more than others,” they said in their joint pastoral letter, *Seeking Justice in Funding Public Education*..

“As public education has increased its reliance on local taxes, the Commonwealth’s funding for our children’s education has decreased from 55 to 35 percent. The practical result is an unforgiving gap – up to \$8,500 difference per child – in the amount wealthy and poor districts provide for public education.”

More than 85 percent of Pennsylvania’s children attend public schools, according to the letter, and “most of those oppressed by inequity live in rural areas and inner cities where family poverty is an overwhelming challenge for teachers and administrators.”

The letter concludes with a series of challenges. Please see those in the letter printed below.