

## A Guide to Scoring the Core Democratic Value The Common Good

1. The elements for a successful common good argument must include
  - a) Who must give up something for the common good?
  - b) What is given up?
  - c) How will everyone benefit?

Here are some examples.

*Should Michigan property owners be able to store toxic waste on their own private property?*

I know that some property owners will have to give up the right to put what they want on their property but it is for the common good that the community's ground water is not polluted. Everyone's health benefits from clean sources of water.

2. A policy issue at the *school building level* must serve all the students and staff in the school.

*Should the principal create a schedule that rotates the kickball field at recess between the grades?*

I know that the older grade students would have to give up their chance to use the kickball field on some days even though they get there first, but it is for the common good of the school that fights and arguments are eliminated by using a rotating schedule. Eliminating fights and arguments lets the adults spend time on education not discipline and all the students will have fair access to the kickball field.

3. At the *community or state level* everyone must benefit.

*Should the MEAP testing program be eliminated?*

Having MEAP tests is for the common good. Students will work hard at school to get good grades which will improve the future opportunities, the teachers and school will know if they are doing a good job, which will improve the education for all students, and well educated students graduating from high school is good for the community. Well educated students can start businesses; they won't be involved in crime and will pay taxes. All these things will benefit the whole community.

### Not:

Eliminating the MEAP test in Michigan is for the common good because all the students will be happy.\*

### Nor

Keeping the MEAP test will mean that students will be well educated and can get into good colleges\*.

\*What's the benefit for all citizens, including those not in school or without children in school?

4. National common good must benefit everyone in the nation.
5. International common good must benefit everyone in the countries mentioned in the prompt or the whole planet.
6. **Common good can extend to protecting future generations.**

*Should travel to Antarctica be limited to protect its environment?*

Limiting the number of people who can travel as a tourist to Antarctica will infringe on peoples rights to travel freely but it is for the common good of future generations that we protect this fragile ecosystem so this resource will be available to them as well.