

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

For Immediate Release:

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### **Trenton Civic Trust and The Citizens Campaign Partner with Trenton School District to Give High School Students Citizen Leadership Training**

The Trenton Civic Trust heralded the Trenton School Board's decision to forge a partnership, incorporating "Leadership and No-Blame Problem Solving," an innovative curriculum component developed by The Citizens Campaign, in its high school history and social studies courses. The School Board adopted a resolution to formalize the partnership at last night's meeting.

"Leadership and No-Blame Problem Solving" also known as "Power Civics" is a teaching tool that gives high school students the skills they need to be problem-solvers and to participate in the city's decision-making process so they can leave their city better than they found it. It teaches students a tested, no-blame problem solving method developed by practitioners in local government that is applicable as well to other problems and situations that they may face. Students will learn about new legal rights to government information and to greater participation at local government meetings as well as how to use the internet to identify evidence-based solutions that have worked in communities that are similar to Trenton. They will also be informed about accessible entry-level public leadership opportunities — ones that they can immediately seize without having to run for public office and that prepare them to participate in politics and government at the state and national level in the future.

The Citizens Campaign will supply Trenton with free copies of "Citizen Power: a Citizen Leadership Manual," authored by Harry Pozycki and published by Rutgers Press. Teachers and students will access video classes and accompanying notes through-The Citizens Campaign portal.

Students who complete the course component will receive a certificate in "Leadership and No Blame Problem Solving" from Mercer County Community College and will qualify to join the Trenton Civic Trust.

“By offering our high school students citizenship leadership training, the Trenton School Board is taking an important step in empowering our youth so they are prepared to take leadership roles in our community, state and nation,” said Austin Edwards, a School Board member who also serves as a Trenton Civic Trustee

Superintendent of Schools James Earle, said, “It is essential that our high school students understand how local government works and what roles they can play as citizens and as leaders to better their community. That is exactly what our high school students will take away from ‘Leadership and No-Blame Problem Solving.’”

The Trenton Civic Trust is comprised of about 20 city residents — Civic Trustees — who come together in monthly No-Blame problem-solving sessions, searching the nation to identify successful solutions to better Trenton. Trustees commit to at least one year of service and pledge to work to “leave their city better than they found it.” The Civic Trust worked with teachers and administrators in the school district and with the School Board to secure the teaching of “Leadership and No Blame Problem Solving.”

The Trenton Civic Trust is holding a Celebration of Success at 6:00 PM this evening to celebrate this important accomplishment as well as several others. It will be held at Mercer County Community College’s James Kerney Campus, 102 North Broad St. in Trenton.

The adopted School Board resolution is provided below:

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### **Resolution to Approve Power Civics in US History II Courses**

**Whereas**, The Citizens Campaign nonprofit organization has developed, in concert with national education experts and government practitioners, a set of educational tools for teaching citizen leadership and problem-solving, and

**Whereas**, the incorporation of these citizen leadership educational tools in Trenton High School’s US History II classes will ensure that all Trenton High School students are empowered to the fullness of their civic powers.

**Now Therefore Be It Resolved,**

1. That the Trenton School District shall be provided, at no cost, with copies of the Citizen Leadership Manual developed by The Citizens Campaign and published by Rutgers University Press with a value of \$19.99 per copy (1,048 students taking United States History Social Studies II in 2022-2023 school year), and

2. That the Trenton School District shall be provided with free registration for its teachers and students in the online “Power Civics” video course (10 six-minute videos and supplemental materials), and
3. That Students who complete the course will be awarded a college certificate of training in Citizen Leadership and No Blame Problem Solving from Mercer County Community College, and
4. That the Trenton School District shall also be provided, at no cost, a number of support services, including but not limited to professional development training in best practice uses of the aforementioned citizen leadership educational tools by a curriculum expert and guest lectures by Trenton Civic Trustees when requested, and
5. That The Citizens Campaign shall offer opportunities for Civic Trustee fellowships for three Trenton high school students to become members of the nonpartisan Trenton Civic Trust and receive stipends to cover transportation and loss of after school earnings (total value \$1,500), and
6. That the Trenton Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approves the use of Power Civics Teaching Tools in United States History II, so that it can be piloted in the 2023-24 school year for use on a continuing basis thereafter, which approval qualifies the City of Trenton to be recognized as a “Civic City.”