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MEDIA RELEASE

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

The Trenton Civic Trust heralded the Trenton Public 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 Trenton Board of Education 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 Pozycycki 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 Board of Education 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 Trenton Board of Education to secure the teaching of “Leadership and No Blame Problem Solving.”

The Trenton Civic Trust held a Celebration of Success the evening following the partnership approval and celebrated this important accomplishment as well as several others.

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