

## **LACKAWANNA TRAIL EDUCATION FOUNDATION – CASE STATEMENT**

### **Problem Statement**

Pennsylvania school districts are currently facing financial woes due to decreases or freezes in state funding combined with rising costs, and the inability of school districts to seek financial assistance from their communities. These financial burdens are forcing districts to focus on funding issues rather than student success.

### **Mission**

To gather community and alumni resources to enhance the educational environment and programs within the Lackawanna Trail School District with an emphasis on sponsoring innovative programs or projects not a part of the regular academic curriculum.

### **Goals (2021-2026)**

The goals of The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation, a 501(c)3, are to serve the Lackawanna Trail School District community with a shared vision that supports excellence, achievement, wellness, and enhancement of education programs. The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation will bring together ideas, people, and resources to fund, support and implement innovative educational programs that fall outside the regular school curriculum and enrich students and families of the Lackawanna Trail School District.

### **Objectives (2021-2026)**

1. Establish a sustainable plan for fund generation, a minimum of \$5,000 in new funding per year, to ensure The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation long-term viability and support of school improvement projects.
2. Establish and maintain a Lackawanna Trail Alumni database and social media platform that promotes alumni relations and development.
3. Establish a partnership with the Community Foundation of The Endless Mountains to create, promote and administer endowments providing scholarships and additional funding for our enrichment programs.
4. Establish grant criteria and distribution methods to increase the number of Lackawanna Trail School graduates attending college, trade school or a paid internship or job training program within six months of establishing the foundation.
5. Provide the volunteer and student membership fees and/or expenses required for at least three academic enrichment programs such as Science Olympiad, Junior Achievement, an after-school apprentice program, etc.
6. To acknowledge a Lackawanna Educator of the Year for their outstanding contributions to student success, wellness and/or career readiness.

### **Programs**

The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation will prioritize and support programs with the greatest potential impact on student development and success. The Foundation is committed to supporting innovative programs that have a significant life-changing, impact on kids regardless of their gender, background, academic/vocational interests, and life goals. Special consideration will be given to programs with significant alumni, community, and third-party support – i.e., matching contributions, grants, Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program, bequests, etc.

### ***Program Case Study – Scholastic Shooting Sports 2020-21***

The Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation (SSSF – [www.sssfonline.org](http://www.sssfonline.org)) is 501(c)(3) partner of USA Olympics and a public charity responsible for all aspects of the [Scholastic Clay Target Program \(SCTP\)](#) and [Scholastic Action Shooting Program \(SASP\)](#) across the United States.

SCTP and SASP are youth development programs in which adult coaches and other volunteers use shooting sports to teach and to demonstrate sportsmanship, responsibility, honesty, ethics, integrity, teamwork, and other positive life skills. The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation helped volunteers organize a new Lions Scholastic Action Shooting team hosted at the Factoryville Sportsmen’s Club. Twenty-six youth 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades are participating with all costs of ammunition, steel targets, firearms and other equipment covered by sponsors. The Foundation passed through over \$10,000 in tax deductible donations to the team and has submitted grant applications for over \$5,000 on behalf of the team.

### **Post-secondary Scholarships**

Post-secondary education and training in Pennsylvania has become unaffordable and inaccessible for many Pennsylvania families. Having a post-secondary degree or certification is becoming more significant and mandatory. Scholarships will make post-secondary education more affordable and accessible to Lackawanna Trail School District families. The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation works with The Community Foundation of the Endless Mountains to establish, promote, and administer scholarship funds specifically for Lackawanna Trail students and alumni.

### **Extracurricular Scholarships**

Due to decreased state funding and increased costs, The Lackawanna Trail School District is forced to institute participation fees for each student interested in extra-curricular activities, including art and music. This severely limits the ability for many families to pay the fee, and for students to experience the benefits of teamwork, competition, and camaraderie. The funding of participation fees will allow more students to participate and reap the benefits of extracurricular activities.

### **Mini-Grants**

Teachers are continually choosing to pay for school supplies with their own money to supplement and enhance the learning environment within their classrooms. In fact, statistics show that on average, a teacher contributes more than \$1,000 annually. Mini-grants encourage the development of unique and creative educational experiences that allow teachers to enrich student achievement, while at the same time alleviating the financial burdens placed on teachers of The Lackawanna Trail School District.

### **School Improvement Projects**

The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation strives to provide the best educational experiences possible, with a goal of being a national role model to other districts. The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation supports and encourages innovation in learning. By providing financial resources to programs that are cutting-edge, innovative, and original, it fosters passion and excitement for learning.

**Endowment**

The Lackawanna Trail School District continually seeks endowment funds to strengthen the financial stability of the foundation and creates more unrestricted revenue streams. An endowment demonstrates the long-term mission of the foundation.

**Finances**

See attached event planning guide and budget worksheet.

**Governance**

The board of directors of The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation implement policies and decisions that further the mission of the foundation. The focus is on providing resources that promote student success. A 9 to 15-member board of directors that is representative of the community govern The Lackawanna Education Foundation. We will operate as an autonomous foundation board entirely separated from the School Board. The school does not need to give its approval to changes the foundation board may want to implement. As a general principle, board members should be financially committed to the foundation, thus setting a positive, credible example.

Our Board will include a chairman, a President, a Vice-president, a Treasurer and a Secretary. The Board must be able to: determine the needs of the school; evaluate education programs, financial data and external environmental factors such as inflation and demographic changes; and engage parents, alumni, funders and community leaders.

**Staff**

The staff of The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation will be comprised of volunteers, and when feasible, one part-time webmaster/IT assistant and/or other part-time assistants to assist with alumni/public relations, event planning, etc.

**Facilities and Service Delivery**

The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation, 8 Woodlawn Avenue, Factoryville, PA 18419. Secretary@LTEFoundation.org, ph: (570) 309-8968.

**History**

In the fall of 2020, the school community comprised of parents, business leaders, alumni, faith-based representatives, senior citizen leaders, students and other concerned citizens within the Lackawanna Trail School District developed a School Foundation to provide the school district with the financial means to deliver quality educational programs and activities to ensure all our children are well prepared to succeed as ethical citizen-leaders in a diverse, competitive world. The Lackawanna Trail Education Foundation is organized as a Pennsylvania non-profit corporation and is exempt from federal income tax as a public charity under IRC Section 501(c)(3).