

**Meria Joel Carstarphen, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

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**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

December 22, 2017

Dr. R. Stephen Green  
Superintendent  
DeKalb County School District  
1701 Mountain Industrial Boulevard  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083-1027

**City of Atlanta's Approval of Petitions for Annexation Filed Under the 100% Property-Owner Method re: Properties in Unincorporated DeKalb County Owned By Emory University; Children's Healthcare of Atlanta; Centers for Disease Control; Georgia Power Co.; Villa International; and Synod of South Atlantic & Presbyterian Church (USA), Inc. (collectively "the Emory Area Petitioners")**

Dear Dr. Green:

I am in receipt of your letter, dated December 18, 2017. The expansion of APS's borders respects both 145 years of historical precedent and the legal requirements of its Charter, issued to it by the Georgia General Assembly. The Charter requires that APS's borders must expand coterminous with the City's borders each time new territory is annexed by the City. I communicated APS's intent to assert this legal position in my letter to City of Atlanta Clerk, Rhonda Dauphin Johnson, dated Aug. 24, 2017, on which you were copied. Consistent with this legal requirement, APS has expanded with the City of Atlanta each time it has grown by annexation in either Fulton or DeKalb Counties.

There are a few other clarifications worth noting. First, the annexation process here was not initiated either by the City of Atlanta or by APS. Instead, it was initiated by the six Emory Area Petitioners, each choosing to file a Petition with the City requesting to be annexed into it under the "100% Property Owner Method" authorized by the Georgia Municipal Annexation Statutes.

Second, you have stated that the six Petitioners had not requested that APS's borders be expanded as part of the annexation when they filed their Petitions to be annexed into the City. This is not a choice Petitioners legally get to make. Additionally, I personally spoke with representatives of all six Petitioners, and none of them stated any opposition to APS being included in the proposed annexation.

Third, in regard to the affected students, you mistakenly assert in your letter that "when questioned, APS could not articulate a plan for how it would educate the few impacted students." While it is unclear to what you are referring, in fact, APS has been planning for the transition of these students in the 2018-2019 school year for months and they are zoned to a high-performing cluster focused on college and career readiness.

Finally, your letter makes several incorrect assumptions related to APS's intent which I will not individually address, but do reject. I spoke to you personally about this via telephone so that you would

indeed understand from me the district's intent at the outset. As I expressed in my call, this simply about how our charter is structured. I trust that you can understand my responsibility to not only comply with that charter but also advocate for the best interests of Atlanta students and residents.

As I have made clear many times, APS was never opposed to the Emory Area Annexation. We were excited to see the growth of the City to include such prestigious institutions, and our Charter requires that APS grows with the City. We are proud to serve every student within the City of Atlanta's current and future boundaries.

Sincerely,



Meria J. Carstarphen  
Superintendent

CC: Mr. Paul Bowers, Chairman, President & CEO, Georgia Power  
Rev. Jane Fahey, Interim Exec. Presbyter, Synod of South Atlanta – Care of Presbytery of Greater Atlanta  
Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, Director, Centers for Disease Control  
Ms. Camille Gaffron, Executive Director, Villa International  
Ms. Donna Hyland, President & CEO, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta  
Ms. Claire Sterk, President, Emory University  
Ms. Anne Wallace, President, Druid Hills Civic Association

Mr. Kasim Reed, Mayor of Atlanta  
Ms. Keisha Lance Bottoms, Mayor-Elect of Atlanta  
Mr. Michael L. Thurmond, CEO, DeKalb County  
Mr. Ceasar Mitchell, President, Atlanta City Council  
Ms. Felicia Moore, President-Elect, Atlanta City Council  
Mr. Courtney English, Chairman, Atlanta Board of Education  
Ms. Nancy Meister, Vice Chair, Atlanta Board of Education  
Ms. Leslie Grant, Atlanta Board of Education  
Mr. Byron Amos, Atlanta Board of Education  
Mr. Matt Westmoreland, Atlanta Board of Education  
Mr. Steven Lee, Atlanta Board of Education  
Ms. Eshe Collins, Atlanta Board of Education  
Ms. Cynthia Briscoe Brown, Atlanta Board of Education  
Mr. Jason Esteves, Atlanta Board of Education  
Dr. Melvin Johnson, Chairman, DeKalb County Board of Education  
Dr. Michael Erwin, Vice Chair, DeKalb County Board of Education  
Mr. Stan Jester, DeKalb County Board of Education  
Mr. Marshall Orson, DeKalb County Board of Education  
Mr. Jim McMahan, DeKalb County Board of Education  
Ms. Vickie Turner, DeKalb County Board of Education  
Dr. Joyce Morley, DeKalb County Board of Education