



# A Gift For Teaching

April 22, 2019

Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond  
P.O. Box 27622, Richmond, VA, 23261

RE: SunTrust and The SunTrust Foundation support for A Gift For Teaching  
Letter of Support for the BB&T and SunTrust Merger of Equals

To whom it may concern,

As the president of A Gift For Teaching, a Central Florida non-profit I welcome the enhanced addition of the SunTrust and BB&T merger of equals as a critical current and new partner in assisting teachers to meet the needs of students who want to learn, and *will* learn, if provided with the opportunity!

A Gift For Teaching (AGFT) is the primary provider of free school supplies in Central Florida serving low-income students with essential learning tools to equip them for academic success. For tens of thousands of children, these basic learning tools are a luxury - in fact, more than 70% of the students in Central Florida come from families that can't afford lunch, let alone school supplies. When parents are struggling to pay rent and buy groceries, addressing the overwhelming cost of sending their children to school is often just not possible.

SunTrust has been a remarkable supporter of A Gift For Teaching since 2001 to help A Gift For Teaching drive positive change for kids in need including:

- Since 2001, more than **\$166,000** has been contributed to AGFT by **SunTrust**.
- Board membership representing **SunTrust** includes Mike Dosal from 2004 – 2007.
- **AGFT has banked with SunTrust** since 1998.
- **SunTrust Associates** have conducted School Supply drives nearly every year – notably in 2013 thanks to the leadership of Bosco Slaughter
- Since 2016 the **SunTrust Foundation** has invested in our Mobile Programs called Pencil Boy Express – The Mobile Free Store; and Pencil Boy Online to reach deeper into the communities we serve.

Teachers have the opportunity to visit our "Free Store" location, select free school supplies for their students and receive approximately \$450 worth of school supplies per visit. Yet we found, through surveys, that many eligible teachers working at some of the highest need schools, such as those in the inner city neighborhoods, were not shopping with AGFT due to the excessive demands of working in these low-performing schools. Four years ago AGFT launched the "Pencil Boy Programs": Pencil Boy Express (PBE)-The Mobile Free Store, and Pencil Boy Online (PBO); these programs allow AGFT to equip more students for success than ever before. PBE is a "Free Store" on wheels offering onsite supply shopping to schools with the most need. PBO allows 400 teachers per

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*A Gift For Teaching*

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month to select free school supplies online and have them delivered to their classrooms.

One of AGFT's primary organizational goals is to leverage more community resources for the benefit of students in need by engaging the community in our mission, and encouraging collaboration that transforms the educational experiences of children in Central Florida. Given our deep and long-term alliances with each of the schools that we serve, the opportunities for collaboration and resource sharing between SunTrust and BB&T through the merger are many and will transform schools and improve lives in the Central Florida's most impoverished neighborhoods.

Done: fully



Jane Thompson  
President