

From: [Lindsey Luczynski](#)
To: [BankMergerApplication](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL MESSAGE]Letter: Charles R. Drew Charter School and SunTrust Bank
Date: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 3:08:29 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

Charles R. Drew Charter School knows that it is possible for all students to succeed. We are the educational centerpiece of one of the nation's most dramatic neighborhood revitalization efforts, based in Atlanta's East Lake community. Our school aims to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty by offering families a high-quality, innovative educational option through a seamless PK-12 approach designed to eliminate the achievement and opportunity gaps that are prevalent between racial and socioeconomic groups. Currently, Drew serves over 1,800 students in grades PK-12, with 44% (over 800 students) qualifying for Free or Reduced Lunch, a common proxy for poverty. As we have grown exponentially over the last decade, adding a high school in 2013 that now ranks 1st out of the 18 high schools in Atlanta Public Schools, our students have made incredible progress both in and out of the classroom. However, this progress would not have been possible without our partnerships with companies, universities, and organizations committed to supporting our students in achieving excellent outcomes.

SunTrust Bank has been a valuable partner to Drew for over 12 years. In 2007, Drew launched our Youth Bank program with the tireless support and energy of a group of dedicated SunTrust volunteers. As is common with the Youth Bank model, Drew students serve as the tellers and customer service representatives, guiding their peers through the process of depositing money into their "accounts" each week. At the end of the year, the students who saved money are rewarded for their financial responsibility with generous matching dollars from the SunTrust Foundation. In the first year of the Drew/SunTrust Youth Bank, we set a target for our students to save \$1,000 collectively; we came very close to meeting that goal in the 2007-2008 school year.

We have continued to work with loyal, passionate, and kind SunTrust volunteers to cultivate this program and this school year (2018-2019), we had over 300 student accounts (grades PK-5th) and the total savings for this year alone (not including funds that students rolled over from previous years) was over \$21K. Parents, students, and staff consider the Drew Youth Bank one of the bedrock programs at the school. Our younger students wait until their 5th grade year to interview to become one of the Youth Bank "employees" and each week – at 7am! – SunTrust volunteers arrive to support the students and ensure a smooth operation. Some of the SunTrust employees who volunteer have been coming weekly, before their workday, for 5+ years. Some volunteer on their days off and others volunteer additional time to assist with the student "employee" interviews, hosting our students on visits to SunTrust's main offices, etc. As the Director of Strategic Partnerships, I consider our mutually beneficial partnership with SunTrust to be one of the most robust partnerships Drew is fortunate to have.

Beyond the Youth Bank, SunTrust employees have come each year for the past 6 years or so to deliver the Banking on our Future curriculum to our older elementary/middle school students. The volunteers pair up and lead activities in over 20 classrooms (grades 4-8). Again, our teachers look

forward to this event every year, as it helps our students build a foundation of financial literacy and responsibility that will stay with them through high school, college, and life beyond school. Additionally, Drew Charter School recently moved all of our school bank accounts to SunTrust, making our accounting more manageable and giving the finance office additional peace of mind due to the fraud protection services and tools in place at SunTrust.

As SunTrust Bank contemplates the current merger and the programs/partnerships that will remain in place once the merger is complete, I want to ensure that our past partnership and ongoing appreciation of all that SunTrust Bank has done with Drew is taken into consideration. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or for further information. I would be delighted to provide any additional assistance; my contact information can be found below. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Lindsey M. Luczynski
Director of Strategic Partnerships

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