Dear Dr. Herring and APS Board of Education Members,

I am writing to express my **support for the boundary lines as drawn in the Facilities Master Plan (FMP) Phase 1 Recommendations** first read on May 2, 2022. I recognize the extraordinary effort of Dr. Herring and the Board to advocate for all students in the Midtown cluster, and to devise a long-term solution that strengthens our communities.

As currently proposed, the FMP redistricting includes Piedmont Heights in the Morningside Elementary School (MES) zone. Including Piedmont Heights positively impacts MES, and the Midtown cluster, in ways more significant than the previously proposed scenarios. I would like to briefly recognize the attributes of the current proposal that I entirely support:

1. **Improving diversity at MES, and across the cluster’s elementary schools.** In this proposal, racial percentages improve at MES mostly due to the data-informed inclusion of Piedmont Heights in the school’s attendance boundary. Our neighborhood’s housing diversity, and forecasted growth, provides the potential to improve upon those percentages. The diversity of our housing typologies captures various socioeconomic levels and family structures that are also important to include in an equitable community.
2. **Maintain walkability and proximity.** Community is not always defined by neighborhood. Today Intown Atlanta is far denser, and its size more expansive. Community is now defined by proximity and accessibility. The redrawn attendance boundaries, in the current proposal, keep more than half of each elementary school’s student population within a walking zone. And accessibility increases when you consider the number of students and families that will also be able to commute by bicycle. And especially critical to Piedmont Heights’ location, these boundary lines ensure no student will pass up a school to attend a more distant school.
3. **A balanced and strong community.** By equitably providing quality schools throughout the cluster, the proposal encourages the strengthening of our communities. Including Piedmont Heights in the MES attendance boundary balances the student population going into middle school. This balance removes discordant social structures, provides a quality education for all students, and maintains plasticity for future growth and balance.

Finding a solution that is unanimously agreeable is not possible. With its generous “grandfathering” clause, this is a prudent proposal that best serves priorities relevant to our cluster’s students. It is a model plan for building a long-term equitable community. As a Piedmont Heights resident, I ask Dr. Herring and the Board of Education to vote **YES,** and maintain the lines as drawn in the final FMP Phase 1 proposal.

Sincerely,