

CITY OF ATLANTA

October 18, 1967



CITY HALL ATLANTA, GA. 30303

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IVAN ALLEN, JR., MAYOR

R. EARL LANDERS, Administrative Assistant
MRS. ANN M. MOSES, Executive Secretary
DAN E. SWEAT, JR., Director of Governmental Liaison

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. John Letson, School Superintendent
Mr. Jack Delius, General Manager, Parks Department
Miss Virginia Carmichael, Recreation Director, Parks
Department

From: Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr.

Subject: Transfer of Summer Recreation Programs
to School System

Each summer for the last several years, it has become increasingly more apparent that the development and implementation of comprehensive recreation programs in low income sections of the City of Atlanta is absolutely essential for the reduction of obvious factors which cause problems of juvenile delinquency and social disorders.

The large-scale special recreation program this summer proved conclusively the value of such an all-out coordinated effort. More than 125,000 youngsters from disadvantaged communities took part in programs provided by 33 agencies through the recreation funds made available by the Office of Economic Opportunity, the City of Atlanta and the local agencies.

It was the first summer many of these boys and girls had been afforded the opportunity to participate in supervised recreation activities. The fact that Atlanta experienced a summer of calm with a minimum of frictions which plagued other cities speaks well for this summer's activity.

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The truth of the matter is that anyone who wished to participate in organized recreation in Atlanta this year could do so within his own neighborhood.

All this has strengthened my firm belief that a well planned, adequately financed and staffed summer program of recreation is vital to the supervision of our young people during the long vacation period.

In order to plan, finance, and operate the desired program, every existing public facility and resource must be utilized to the maximum. All available federal aids as well as private assistance must also be incorporated into such a program.

There are at present 121 elementary and 26 high schools in the City School System. All of the elementary schools and all of the high schools have playgrounds or areas suitable for outdoor play adjacent to the schools.

There are 15 gymnasiums and two sports stadiums included in the facilities of the school system. In addition, almost all schools have auditoriums, cafeterias and other tools which should be utilized in a comprehensive summer program of recreation.

The public elementary and high school is the one community facility which most directly affects the lives of the greatest number of people in a community. Virtually all youngsters between the ages 6 - 18 are under the supervision of teachers, coaches and/or other school officials for nine months of the year.

It seems to me that a summer recreation program which is oriented to the school facilities would provide for an orderly and meaningful extension of supervision for a full twelve months. To place direct responsibility for summer recreation with the schools would enable school officials to better coordinate year-around school and youth activities. Summer school, special enrichment programs and other programs conducted by the schools in the summer could be a part of an overall twelve month school plan, including recreation.

The purpose of this memorandum is to request that the Parks and Recreation Department and the School Department discuss the feasibility of transfer of special summer recreation programs -

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particularly in low income areas - to the School Department. The special committee now preparing a five-year plan for public recreation in the City of Atlanta might also be asked to consider the potentialities of this proposal.

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