

1 WHEREAS, on October 25, 1925, Principal Grover C. Koffman opened Shreveport's
2 newest high school in a dedication ceremony held in the 2,000 seat auditorium; and

3 WHEREAS, for the next fifty years under the leadership and guidance of Principal
4 Koffman and Principal J. H. Duncan, Byrd High School, during its "golden era of pristine
5 glory", became a nationally recognized model for classical academic education and superior
6 athletic achievement led by an extraordinary staff of faculty and coaches; and

7 WHEREAS, the legacy of Principals Koffman and Duncan continued through the
8 years under the guidance of former Caddo Parish School Board member and president, state
9 representative, and state senator Principal Dr. B. L. "Buddy" Shaw; interim Principal Jewell
10 Wagner; Principal R. Lynne Fitzgerald; Principal Richard L. Lavergne; continuing to this
11 day under the stewardship of Principal Gerald "Jerry" Badgley; and

12 WHEREAS, over the years Byrd High School experienced the national cultural
13 trends and struggles confronting most urban areas, including "crossover day" in the spring
14 of 1970 when the black Valencia High School merged with the white C. E. Byrd and the
15 tumultuous years leading to the announcement on May 23, 1982, that due to the prohibitive
16 cost to repair a declining building, decrease in enrollment to less than 800 students, and lack
17 of community confidence in its academic standards, C. E. Byrd High School would close the
18 next year; and

19 WHEREAS, committed to a plan to move Caddo Magnet High School, the Caddo
20 Parish School Board responding to community and student efforts seeking a reprieve, the
21 Board approved a multi-million dollar electrical and mechanical renovation, with skeptical
22 approval for the opening of a C. E. Byrd Math Science Magnet Program; and

23 WHEREAS, in the fall of 1984, with fewer than 800 neighborhood students and 52
24 students in the new Math Science Magnet Program, Principal B. L. Shaw hired two
25 exceptional teachers, long time Byrd administrator and graduate, Jerry Malone, a counselor
26 and a secretary to implement the program as well as R. Lynne Fitzgerald from Magnet High
27 School to guide the neighborhood program; and

28 WHEREAS, unwilling to let closure become a reality, the loyal alumni of Byrd, a
29 determined contingent, many of whom were alumni and an exceptional student body, staff
30 and faculty, went to work to "save" Byrd; and

1 WHEREAS, during the next seventeen years, Byrd began a remarkable "Byrd is
2 Back" story that included building the largest group of high school alumni in the country;
3 creating the world's largest JROTC program; hosting the largest high school "Ultimate
4 Reunion" attended by 6,000 graduates and families; generating the second largest enrollment
5 of a Louisiana high school; and bringing back winning athletic tradition of state
6 championships and competitive academic championships excellence; and

7 WHEREAS, on the eve of the Second Ultimate Reunion in February, 1997, only
8 fifteen years after the board proposed to close Byrd, Byrd graduate and Principal, R. Lynne
9 Fitzgerald, stood in the White House Rose Garden proudly representing the thousands who
10 loved and worked tirelessly for Byrd's "comeback" to hear the name of C. E. Byrd High
11 School called as one of the 100 public high schools in the United States to be recognized as
12 a "National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence". Byrd Was Back!; and

13 WHEREAS, Principal Jerry Badgley has played a pivotal role in the growth and
14 transformation of Byrd High School fostering significant advancements in school curriculum
15 as a result of his leadership and guidance, including a new football practice field and
16 enhanced facilities; and

17 WHEREAS, Principal Badgley's efforts have highlighted the impact of school
18 leaders in the community, whose alumni include current state senators, Thomas A. Pressly
19 and Sam L. Jenkins Jr.; former state legislators including Senator Virginia Kilpatrick
20 Shehee; Senator Phil Short; Senator and Judge Robert Kostelka; former state representatives
21 Art Sour, Frank Fulco, and James C. Gardner; United States Senator J. Bennett Johnston Jr.;
22 Saxby Chambliss, United States Senator from Georgia; John Howard Dalton, former United
23 States Secretary of the Navy; Brandon Friedman, former deputy assistant secretary of the
24 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development; Tom Jarriel, ABC News
25 journalist; and many other outstanding public servants including United States District Judge
26 Tom Stagg, United States Circuit Court Judge, Jacques L. Wiener Jr., and Louisiana
27 Supreme Court Justices, Jeffrey P. Victory and Pike Hall Jr.; and

28 WHEREAS, in 1991 the eight-acre area comprising the school buildings and other
29 structures were added to the National Register of Historic Places, recognizing one of the few
30 examples of Jacobean Revival architecture; and

