

1 [Opposing the Closure to John Swett Alternative School]

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3 **Resolution opposing San Francisco’s Board of Education’s decision to close the John**
4 **Swett Alternative School.**

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6 WHEREAS The San Francisco Board of Education (Board of Education) voted at its
7 January 19, 2006 special meeting to close, merge or relocate 13 San Francisco public
8 schools. The Board voted specifically to close John Swett and merge it into John Muir
9 Elementary School and,

10 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisor’s Government Audit and Oversight Committee
11 held a hearing on January 23, 2006 on the school closures in general. A great deal of
12 testimony was focused on the decision to close/merge John Swett Alternative School (John
13 Swett). The Committee was left with unanswered questions as to why John Swett was closed;
14 and,

15 WHEREAS, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) publicized and
16 presented to the Board of Education a list of criteria for school closures, mergers and
17 relocations, John Swett did not meet several of the criteria listed; and

18 WHEREAS, according to SFUSD data
19 (<http://portal.sfusd.edu/data/home/EnrollmentandCapacity.pdf>) John Swett’s enrollment (229)
20 and capacity (81%) exceed that of many schools not on the closure list; and,

21 WHEREAS, it is rumored that the John Swett building was listed as potential office
22 space for the SFUSD in a presentation to the Board of Education’s Building’; and,

23 WHEREAS, the potential use for the space was omitted from later materials discussing
24 the potential lease/rent revenues from the John Swett Site; and

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1 WHEREAS, at the January 23, 2006 Board of Supervisor’s Government Audit and
2 Oversight Committee, when asked to make a commitment that the SFUSD would not use the
3 John Swett building as administrative space, Director of Development, Matthew Kelleman
4 responded, “ I can’t Make that commitment.”; and,

5 WHEREAS, the Westerrn Addition has been the site of several recent homicides. It is
6 supposed that John Swett is located in neutral territory as far as organized gangs are
7 concerned, and is therefor safe for children who attend the school; and,

8 WHEREAS, John Swett has 43.2% African American and 21.1% Latino students and
9 John Muir’s enrollment is 34.2% African American and 53.2% Latino Students, the merging of
10 the two schools do not help address the issues of desegregation efforts in San Francisco;
11 and,

12 WHEREAS, John Swett has a strong arts program, for which Proposition H funds
13 served as seed money; and,

14 WHEREAS, the John Swett school community also raised more than \$200,000 for its
15 art program from private funders. With that grant money, it has trained teachers and staff to
16 carry on the arts program without funture funding source; and

17 WHEREAS, John Swett has a strong San Fancisco School Volunteers Allies for
18 Education partnership (<http://www.sfsv.org/programs.html>) with the California Public Utilities
19 Commission (CPUC). CPUS employees have donated thousands of hours and raised
20 thousands of dollars for John Swett; and

21 BE IT RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the Unified
22 School District to cease and desist from any plans of transferring their administrative offices
23 to John Swett Alternative as a reason for dislocating the John Swett school population to
24 John Muir Elementary; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors requests
2 the Unified School District and the Board of Education halt the Swett-Muir merger and
3 reconsider a more measured plan that supports the present retention of John Swett
4 Alternative and addresses a more effective use of John Muir Elementary without displacing
5 said school population.

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