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Dear Members of the Scholarship Committee,

As a member of the National Alliance of Black School Educators, it is with the highest enthusiasm and confidence that I recommend Ms. Jessica Coleman Brister for Dr. Charles Mitchell, Jr. Leadership Scholarship \$10,000 Scholarship to support her pursuit of an advanced degree in Educational Leadership. I have had the privilege of working alongside Mrs. Brister in various educational contexts and have witnessed firsthand her extraordinary ability to transform schools, develop leaders, and champion equity for all students. Most recently, we have worked diligently on being charter members of the Baton Rouge Alliance of Black School Educators.

Mrs. Brister is a seasoned K–12 educator and district administrator whose professional journey is marked by tangible results and visionary leadership. Over the past two decades, she has served as a teacher, principal, executive director, a School Improvement Support Specialist with the Louisiana Department of Education and most recently as the Supervisor of Early Childhood and Elementary Programs. In this role, she has collaborated with district leaders to build leadership capacity, and design professional learning structures that drive measurable student achievement gains.

One of Mrs. Brister's most remarkable accomplishments was her leadership at Park Elementary School, a reconstituted campus she successfully turned around from an "F" to a "C" rating by implementing data-driven strategies, building a strong instructional culture, and fostering meaningful family and community engagement. Her work exemplifies her strengths in strategic planning, instructional leadership, and team management, as well as her deep commitment to educational equity.

Mrs. Brister's leadership extends beyond improving academic performance. She has consistently invested in others—mentoring emerging principals, facilitating high-quality professional development, and advocating for underrepresented communities. She holds multiple certifications, including Louisiana School Turnaround Specialist and AASA National Principal Supervisor Certification, and she is eligible for Educational Leader Level III–Superintendent Certification, demonstrating her preparedness for advanced leadership roles in education.

Her pursuit of further education in Educational Leadership is a natural next step for a professional of her caliber. Jessica embodies the qualities of a transformational leader—visionary, data-informed, collaborative, and unwaveringly student-centered. I have no doubt that with the support of this scholarship, she will continue to make significant contributions to educational excellence and systemic change, both locally and statewide.

I offer my strongest endorsement for Mrs. Brister's scholarship application. She is precisely the kind of educational leader our schools and communities need. Please feel free to contact me via phone or email should you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Sharmayne Rutledge, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer, Invicta Consulting LLC.

Before anything else, preparation is key to success.