

Message From The Chair



Bill Savidge, C.A.S.H. Chair

It is no secret that 2009 has been a difficult year for California schools, with diminishing state resources resulting in severe cuts to education funding. Because the state's fiscal crisis has had such a significant impact on school facility funding and programs, its implications for the school facilities community has been a consistent theme of my *Messages from the Chair* this year. As this tumultuous year draws to a close, I want to review some of the critical challenges

(More...) Challenging Times Ahead

affecting the school facilities community this year, and then look ahead to what challenges the school facilities community and the C.A.S.H. organization will likely face in 2010.

Since the end of 2008 and throughout 2009 school districts have faced a situation where access to state facility funding has been diminished by the freeze in state infrastructure funding. At the same time access to local funding has been limited by the decline in assessed property valuations throughout the state. This situation has been exacerbated by the Governor and Legislature's concern about accruing more debt and the current difficulty selling California's already approved bonds. In addition, maintenance and operations funding and programs have been severely reduced by statute for the next five years as a result of the State's fiscal constraints. The cumulative result for the school facilities community made 2009 a very uncertain and challenging year.

Recognizing the significance of reduced access to state and local funding, C.A.S.H. responded immediately

by reaching out to our state partners at the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC), the Division of the State Architect (DSA), and the Department of Education (CDE) on matters that impacted the review, approval and processing of applications. In addition, C.A.S.H. worked closely with the Pooled Money Investment Board (PMIB), the State Treasurer's Office (STO), and the Department of Finance (DOF) on the process and timeline for when the state would be able to sell bonds to replenish state infrastructure funding and how much of the funding would be available for school construction projects. Finally, C.A.S.H. has also provided our members with timely information concerning options on how to access local funds in the current fiscal environment, as well as the availability of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding and programs.

Operationally, C.A.S.H. started webcasting the monthly membership meetings in recognition of the tough fiscal times faced by districts, which now cannot afford to send staff to Sacramento. Additionally, C.A.S.H. now offers webinars on timely and topical issues. The feedback from our members on these services has been very positive and we are continuing all of our efforts to utilize new media in reaching out to you our members.

Looking ahead to 2010, it is anticipated that California will again face a multi-billion dollar budget deficit. As always, C.A.S.H. will pursue its bedrock objectives in the legislative, regulatory and budgetary arenas. Our success will be defined within the context of the state's fiscal constraints.

The following are specific issues that C.A.S.H. anticipates will be key parts of

Continued on page 12



REGISTER

Volume XXX, Number 11
November/December 2009

© 2009 The Coalition for Adequate School Housing

ISSN: 1081-9088

Publisher: Coalition for Adequate School Housing • Editor: Greg Golik

The CASH Register is published eleven times a year (January through November) by the Coalition for Adequate School Housing (C.A.S.H.) and distributed to C.A.S.H. members. Over 1,000 rapidly growing school districts, county offices of education, architects, attorneys, bond counsel, financial institutions, developers, contractors, consultants, inspectors, licensed professionals, manufacturers of portable classrooms, maintenance suppliers and others who are concerned about school construction issues hold C.A.S.H. memberships.

The CASH Register solicits articles on school facility-related topics from the membership. If you are interested in submitting an article, please send it or a letter of inquiry to: Editor, CASH Register editorial office, 1130 K Street - Suite 210, Sacramento, CA 95814. Sorry, we are unable to return or acknowledge unpublished manuscripts. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Coalition for Adequate School Housing, its board, staff or general membership.

Message From The Chair

Continued from page 2

our advocacy efforts in 2010:

- Ensuring School Facility Program (SFP) grants receive their statutory increase and are adequate to build complete schools
- Working with stakeholders on state efforts to revise SFP audit guidelines and procedures
- Ensuring that federal funds for school construction and energy efficiency can be accessed
- Helping Districts access resources to continue to fund maintenance and custodial services at our schools
- Encouraging and assisting school districts to incorporate high-performance practices and features into their new construction and modernization projects; and,
- Working toward a statewide school facilities bond.

Finally, with a difficult year past us and perhaps a few more ahead, C.A.S.H. will be looking more broadly to envision program reforms and new sources or new combinations of federal, state and local funding to provide our members with the means to build cost-effective and high-performance buildings that will meet the current and future educational needs of California's school children.

Now more than ever is the time for you to urge your chief business official, superintendent and school board members to send you to the 31st Annual Conference – *C.A.S.H. – Our Foundation, Our Future*. Critical issues such as the status of a 2010 statewide school bond, School Facility Program reform and many other pertinent topics will be covered at this conference.

As always, feel free to contact me at bsavidge@wccusd.net or (510) 307-4544, or contact any of the C.A.S.H. staff with your comments and feedback.

Here's wishing you and your families a wonderful holiday season and a healthy and prosperous New Year! 