Thank you Bill, for your outstanding two years of leadership as Chair of this organization. I am Cathy Allen, Assistant Superintendent of Facilities & Maintenance Services for the Western Placer Unified School District, located in Northern California just up the road about 45 minutes in the beautiful foothills of Placer County.

I thank my Superintendent, Scott Leaman, and our board members for their continuing support during my tenure with the organization. Two members of the Board are here today, Paul Carras, a retired Deputy Superintendent of a neighboring district and Kris Wyatt, a recently retired counselor and teacher. Also joining us today are Mary Boyle, Deputy Superintendent of Educational Services and Bob Noyes, President of ACSA, who recently retired from Western Placer as the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel.

I am especially proud to be joined by my family; my parents, Duane and Barbara Reeves, my husband George and our darling daughter, Kelli Lyn, who is thrilled to be missing the better portion of a school day. As all past Chairs will tell you this job would not be possible without the support of their family.

In the early 90’s, when I first started attending C.A.S.H. conferences, I never thought I’d be standing before you here today as the organization’s leader. During workshops I remember thinking...nobody is asking questions; they must be so much smarter than me. I finally got brave and started raising my hand. Oddly enough, it turns out most people had the same questions. I found that asking questions of presenters not only obtains an educated answer but also garners great feedback from other practitioners in the audience. This interaction is the value of C.A.S.H. and is a reflection on the quality of the sessions, speakers and our peers. I’ve learned a lot since my first conference. Look where it got me!

It has been a pleasure to serve as Vice Chair of C.A.S.H. for the last two years and I am very honored to begin serving as Chair of this prestigious organization.

We have had a rough few years, haven’t we? Globally, nationally and in our own backyards we are experiencing one of the worst economic times in history. Henry Ford admonished, “Don’t find fault; find a remedy.” The C.A.S.H. organization is really good at finding remedies. We’ve been able to put our intelligent minds together and meet the demands placed upon us in the past, and we’ll do it again. Many will disagree about the past and argue about the future; but this is the time where those who are creative, outside the box thinkers and who are committed to the future, will come up with amazing ideas and concepts. This will be the foundation that will shape our program in the years to come.

We have an opportunity to participate in developing a new and improved School Facility Program. Assembly Member Brownley is leading the way with the introduction of Assembly Bill 331. While a bond bill may be a tough sell this year, C.A.S.H. is committed to working with Assembly Member Brownley to communicate to the Legislature and new Brown Administration the ongoing need for funding to build and modernize schools. There will be robust conversations about alternative school facility funding mechanisms, as well as program reforms for the K-12 facility program. This is our chance, once again, to fine-tune the School Facility Program. There are numerous areas where improvements can be made that will help school districts

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continue to meet and provide for the facility needs throughout California now, and into the future, to ensure our students are educated in safe, sustainable and adequate facilities. At the same time, there is intense scrutiny on how the State, and local entities, spend their money. The word “accountability” continues to be a buzz word when discussing state and local budgets. It is our goal to ensure that the program preserves the accountability demanded by voters and to put in place improvements to help districts get the job done more efficiently, in a more timely and cost effective manner.

Another opportunity before us is new leadership in Sacramento. Governor Brown comes to office, a second time, with plans and ideas that will shape California for years to come. Through his staff, C.A.S.H. will work to validate the importance of providing facilities for California’s school-aged children. We have a new State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, with whom we have a long-standing relationship and who has expressed an interest in school facilities reform and a future statewide bond. We look forward to our continued relationship with him and assisting with his efforts on school facilities. New relationships will be forged, new supporters will be cultivated and the work that is done in cooperation with our state agency friends will continue. The faces may change from time-to-time but our purpose is to stay the course. C.A.S.H. has been, and will always be, an organization that is held in high esteem, is known for fighting the good fight and, sometimes challenging the folks across the street to serve aggressively rather than conservatively. Throughout all that, it is widely understood by all, that C.A.S.H. is a professional organization whose members are dedicated individuals, both public and private, driven to do what’s best for the students and staff of California school districts. Our mission is and will continue to be providing for educationally adequate learning environments that are safe and well maintained.

In closing, I take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support of the organization. Your presence here today, in these difficult times, is another example of the dedication we all have to our role in the education of our K-12 students. As I look at my 5th grader sitting here today I know that decisions made from this day forward will affect how she finishes her school career. If that’s not motivation to get it right, I don’t know what is.

Thank you again for this opportunity. It is such an honor to be your Chair! I look forward to the challenge!