

The Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce 2009 Position Statement Education and Workforce Development

POSITION

The Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce believes that the Texas public school systems and institutions of higher education need to be adequately and equitably funded. The chamber endorses an effective P-16 education system that will place an early emphasis on higher education and ensure a successful transition into the state's higher education institutions. To continue to create a well-educated and competent workforce to attract and retain high-growth industries, the chamber urges the legislature to:

- Increase State Funding - the infusion of new state funding into the Texas public school finance system to allow school districts to meet the established accountability standards.
- Modify Texas' school accountability and assessment system to increase transparency and create a level playing field for all school districts. Protect the high school exit exams and continued accountability for public and charter schools in Texas;
- Fully fund tuition revenue bonds and fund college scholarship programs and financial aid programs at levels helping Texas reach its enrollment targets;
- Continue to support research funding and assist all public universities in Texas to compete more successfully for federal and private research industry funding. The chamber further supports the development of additional comprehensive Tier 1 universities;
- Fund dollars for the Emerging Technology Fund;
- Support initiatives to expand and improve the quality of early care and education opportunities for children from birth through five years, to develop the human capital needed for our future workforce;
- Continue funding of the Skills Development program, provide support for trade and technical training for Texas' high-wage, high-growth industries; and
- Further support the maximum funding for the TEXAS Grant Program for eligible students, the restoration of Tuition Equalization Grant Program, and further funding of the B-On-Time Loan Program.

Background

Texas needs to continue to prepare its young people for jobs and careers that are in high demand. The number of students completing competitive high school programs in math and science must increase in order to attract high-paying competitive jobs. The Fort Worth Chamber supports the positions listed above to keep Texas' economy vibrant in the future.

Adopted by the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee on this the 20th day of November, 2008.

Ben Loughry
Chairman of the Board
& CEO

William J. Thornton
President & CEO