

Decisions affect the future

Regarding "Balance budget with strategic cuts, key investments" (Page 7, Feb. 5), Texas Association of Business President and CEO Bill Hammond hit the nail on the head in his essay by pointing out that despite the state budget turmoil we must invest in an [educated](#) workforce to keep Texas' economy moving forward.

It is refreshing to hear business leaders join parents and educators in identifying educational funding as a state priority in our effort to build a skilled workforce.

But for some reason a disconnect has surfaced between that message and legislative action.

The State Board of Education has provided the Texas Legislature more than \$3 billion to state budget writers and it is inconceivable they would zero-out funding for new instructional materials after they (the Legislature) just raised educational standards. Students must have the new instructional materials in order to prepare for, and pass, these more rigorous standards.

The price tag for these new materials is about \$550 million, or one-sixth of that \$3 billion. And the Texas Constitution directs that this money be spent on instructional materials and education programs.

- Mark McDonald, executive director, Texas Curriculum, Austin