

## Nicholas Christ

*Chair – Education Committee*

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The Education Committee of the Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry is made up of community leaders from both the educational and corporate spheres. The Education Committee supports all branches of learning from public, private, and vocational schooling to continuing education and the value of life-long learning. Our approach is inclusive. We believe that education should be available to everyone and that it is an issue all the members of our community should be concerned with and support unequivocally.

In the not-so-distant past, a high school diploma was the gateway to a secure job, a decent wage, and a happy home life. It meant a person was fully prepared for the “real world” high school seniors always talk about at graduation. And while the subject matter of graduation speeches hasn’t changed much, the world’s concept of education has. The reading, writing, and arithmetic skills that were the basis of our grandparent’s, parent’s and our own success are no match for the computer proficiencies, analytical techniques and skilled labor required by today’s workforce.

In response, high schools have adjusted their curriculum; more and more individuals are pursuing higher education or specialized training; and career education, from resume writing to interview tips, is becoming a necessity. The very definition of education has expanded to encompass a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional learning initiatives that can be utilized by people of all ages and skill levels.

Education is, after all, a community issue that spans almost all aspects of life, from health and welfare to financial security. Not only is it essential for a person to achieve individual success, it is the building block of economic growth and prosperity. It is something that affects students, teachers, parents, corporations, employers and their employees. A strong educational system and a learned workforce supports a strong economy, which is the reason the Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce, known for its interactions in the business world, has formed a Committee specifically focused on education.

The Education Committee endeavors to foster an awareness of the multipronged approach necessary to elevate the abilities of the students in Fall River. Embracing the importance of education is the first step toward raising educational attainment and promoting workforce and job readiness. Our goal is to elevate the quality of life in the Greater Fall River Community.

Education is something that concerns all of us, and only by working together will we be able to provide the necessary support and influence the improvements that will secure the future of our community.