

Our People, Our Future

The question came our way much more frequently in the past. The fact that it occasionally is still asked today is a true mystery.

The inquiry: Why is the Indiana Chamber of Commerce “sticking its nose in the middle of” education debates? The answer: Skilled workers, if it hasn’t always been this way, are the absolute number one factor in determining the success of our state’s companies, their employees and our communities.



Yes, many other factors come into play. Tax burdens, health care costs, moving people and products, having adequate and affordable natural resources, and encouraging entrepreneurs are a few of the other critical ingredients. But as Mitch Daniels, who just wrapped up eight years as governor, is fond of saying, Indiana has established a pretty good sandbox or toolkit.

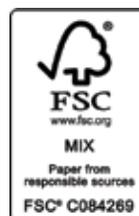
All the sand in the desert or tools in the garage are not enough if people aren’t prepared to take advantage. Organizations of all types and sizes throughout the state (and country) will quickly tell anyone who listens that their employees are their greatest asset. When that human talent is not able to adapt, work in teams or learn new technologies, that critical asset can turn into a liability.

Many of you have likely heard me say or read in these pages that it’s no accident that Outstanding Talent is the top driver listed in the *Indiana Vision 2025* plan. What does that mean? Indiana must excel at all levels of education and workforce training. We have to make sure Hoosiers – whether young students, those just beginning their careers or older employees – have the resources they need to be successful. We have to challenge the status quo. We have to demand improvement and accept innovation.

Any less would be a dramatic disservice. That is why the Indiana Chamber, and all of us, needs to be in the middle of the debate.

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