Trustees Kingsbery and Wong and Chancellor Leslie attended the March 2015 Board Of Trustees Institute. A major outcome of the Institute is to determine an Action Plan that the Board will adopt and commit to accomplishing during the year reporting accomplishments at the next BOTI. Last year, the trustees adopted AlamoENGAGE as their action plan and several key strategies have emerged from the developing Decision-Making Model, to the new Office of Experiential Learning.

This year, trustees Kingsbery and Wong identified the AlamoINSTITUTES, stackable, guided pathways, as their preferred initiative and prepared the following statement under the guidelines of the BOTI for the board’s consideration and adoption.

The BOTI guidelines require the identification of policies and responsible individuals to ensure the project is achieved. These guidelines include four components:

1. Distributive Leadership
2. Use of Data
3. Stakeholder Engagement & Commitment
4. Institutional Transformation

The trustees agreed with the following principles to guide the initiative:

1. Data: Identify obstacles and promising practices:
   a. Obstacles: Columbia College Research Center: Redesigning Community Colleges for Student Success Overview of the Guided Pathways Approach, Davis Jenkins, October, 2014:
      i. Too many choices, too little guidance. Many if not most students, and especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, may not have a clear idea even of the opportunities that are available to them (p.2);
      ii. Paths into and through community college programs are unclear and not well aligned with student goals. The problem is particularly acute in Associate of Arts programs (p.2);
      iii. College advisors steer younger students and those without clear goals to academic transfer programs. Occupational certificate students typically do not take adequate general education courses so the majority do not pursue an associate or bachelor’s degree (p.3);
      iv. Developmental education serves more to divert students than to build skills for college (p3);
      v. Students’ progress is not monitored to ensure they make steady progress toward achieving their goals for program completion and transfer. This includes “pre-select” students
awaiting entrance into such programs as nursing, and who continue to take courses, many never achieving entrance into the desired program (p.3);

b. Promising Practices:
   i. Students indicate that being in a program with a well-defined pathway would improve their chances of persisting, completing and transferring (p.3);
   ii. Studies in the psychology of learning show the importance of setting clear learning goals and providing students with a clear sense of how they are progressing toward those goals. If they are to achieve meaningful learning outcomes for their programs of study, they need to develop knowledge and skills systematically and cumulatively over time, not in a haphazard fashion (p. 4, p. 7);
   iii. Behavioral science indicates that feedback can help improve students’ persistence in school (p. 6);
   iv. Initial examples of Guided Pathways at CUNY’s Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), Florida State University’s Program Maps, Arizona State University’s Pathways, Queensborough Community College’s Freshmen Academies, and Guttman Community College’s Whole-School model and others are validating the Guided Pathways benefit to students (p. 9).

2. Ensure every student across the Alamo Colleges has a clear, stackable guided pathway to achieve her/his career and academic goals:
   a. Increase ease of transition from high school (HB5), through community college to employment or through university to employment;
   b. Create stackable pathways to ensure students can pursue certificates and the AAS, AA or AS degrees, switching between as their academic and career goals evolve;
   c. Advising that helps students evaluate their preparation and provide full understanding of the opportunities available to them so they can make the most informed choice that meets their needs;
   d. Increase the value of each course to minimize students taking too many courses and ensuring the maximum hours transfer to university/college:
      i. Target: reduce the average student’s course completion from 90 to 65 hours by August 2017;
      ii. Targets:
         1. Reduce Part-Time student’s cost of attendance from $73,000 for 3 years to $35,000; and
         2. Reduce Full-Time student’s cost from $53,000 cost of attendance over 3 years to $35,000 by August 2017;
3. Reduce Bexar County taxpayer cost for unnecessary courses from $46 million to $20 million by August 2017;
4. Reduce the loss of transfer credits from an average of 30% loss to 8% loss by August 2017.

3. Ensure every guided pathway is aligned across the Alamo Colleges and with secondary (HB5), post-secondary partners and employers:
   a. Endorsements begin in 8th grade and must transition into one of the 6 appropriate AlamoINSTITUTES and on to the appropriate university program;
      i. Align with HB5;
      ii. Align with university degrees;
      iii. Align with employers requirements
   b. All students should receive information regarding the career earnings, opportunities and certificate/degree requirements for the program being pursued or if they consider changing programs so they have the information to make the choices best for their goals. There should be no “default” into the general education program, which is making the choice for the student rather than the student making her/his choice;
   c. Students pursuing an AA or AS degree but with no immediate intention to transfer, should be provided information regarding the employment and earnings potential and the benefits and disadvantages of this choice.

4. Policies:
   a. Establish the AlamoINSTITUTES, stackable, guided pathways, as the academic design of the Alamo Colleges;
   b. Stipulate alignment across the Alamo Colleges;
   c. Stipulate alignment with secondary, post-secondary and employer partners;
   d. Stipulate that all programs have employment competencies (marketable skills) and learning outcomes including the Board’s policy of Principle Centered Leadership;
   e. Stipulate alignment with advising and employment and career certificate/degree, earnings and other “consumer” information.

5. Participation:
   a. Implement the following policy:
      i. The chancellor is charged with developing a process that will utilize participatory Leadership including the engagement of faculty, students, secondary and post-secondary partners and employers;
      ii. The Chancellor will present the AlamoINSTITUTES design to the Board by March 2016.