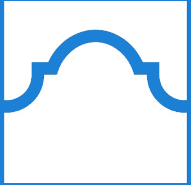




CCATT Annual Meeting
September 18, 2026



ALAMO
COLLEGES
DISTRICT

Board Chair Leadership in High Visibility Moments

Dr. Clint Kingsbery

Immediate Past Chair, Board of Trustees,
Alamo Colleges District

Priscilla Camacho

Chief Legislative, Industry, and External Relations
Officer, Alamo Colleges District



OUTLINE AND KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Outline for today's presentation**

- Why Advocacy Matters and the Role of the Trustee
- Role of the Chair
- Boundaries and Nuances for Elections and Campaigns
- Restrictions on Advocacy
- Trustee Scenarios

- **Key takeaways**

- Understand the board chair's role in legislative advocacy and public communication
- Consider how trustees and the CEO stay aligned during high-visibility issues
- Identify strategies for communicating clearly with legislators, citizens, employees, and the press

Why Advocacy Matters

- Advocacy is important to advance the college's mission
- Policy (state and federal) determines much of how the colleges can operate
- **Trustee's Unique Role in Advocacy**
 - Governance v. Advocacy
 - Trustees govern the institution BUT DO NOT manage day-to-day operations
 - Trustees advocate for the mission of the institution while the Administration advocates for the institution



Governing Principles

- **Trustees have a powerful voice but do not have individual authority to act for the college unless provided that via individual college policy.**
- Texas Education Code § 130.082 establishes the board of trustees as the governing board of a community college not an individual trustee.
- A board adopted legislative agenda or resolution is stronger and allows for saying:
 - “Our board supports...” rather than
 - “I believe...”
- However, the Chair is the leader of the board. The Chair’s job is to provide governance leadership, maintain board unity, support the president/Chancellor, and keep the institution focused on its mission during difficult circumstances.

The Chair's Unique Advocacy Role

- **The Chair of the Board can:**

- Serve as the principal public ambassador for the board.
- Help establish and maintain relationships with legislators.
- Lead legislative visits on behalf of the board.
- Communicate the board's priorities when those priorities have been formally adopted.
- Coordinate with the president/chancellor on advocacy strategy.
- Help ensure trustees present a consistent message.
- Represent the board at major civic, business, and governmental events.
- Helps the board distinguish between:
 - Board responsibilities
 - President/administration responsibilities
 - Individual trustee responsibilities

The Chair Should be the “First Among Equals”



The Board
Acts collectively



The Chair of the Board
Leads the Board



The President/Chancellor
Leads the Institution

Texas law provides that the board acts through resolutions or orders adopted by the board, with the required affirmative vote.

The Chair as the Voice of the Board

- **When the board has adopted a position:**
 - **Chair:**
 - “The Board of Trustees has adopted a legislative priority supporting...”
- **When the board has not adopted a position:**
 - **Chair:**
 - “As board chair, I believe...” OR
 - “I am here to listen and understand the issue before bringing it back to the board.”
- **That distinction protects both the chair and the institution.**

The Trustee Role v. the Administration

Trustees Advocate. The Board Governs. The Administration Executes

Individual Trustee	Board of Trustees	Chair of the Board	Chancellor/President
Build relationships	Establishes Official Priorities	Serves as principal public ambassador for the board.	Executes on the strategy in coordination with Administration
Tells the college story	Adopts the Legislative Agenda	Coordinates with the president/chancellor on advocacy strategy	Coordinates with the Administration on advocacy strategy
Advocates using the legislative agenda	Speaks for the College when authorized	Leads legislative visits on behalf of the board	Provides technical expertise with the administration
Engages Policymakers	Sets the College's Policy	Help ensure trustees present a consistent message	Implements the Policy Priorities and coordinates meetings with elected officials.



What should Trustees advocate for?

- Legislative priorities for your college
- Access and affordability
- Economic mobility
- Investments in Community Colleges
- Workforce programming and Industry Participation
-

What Makes a Trustee Effective?

- **Be Informed. Be Credible. Be Personal. Be Nonpartisan.**
- **Use Data and People to help tell the story**
 - Know your college data
 - Know the economic impact of the college's work
 - Know the Legislative Priorities of the college
 - **3-part story model**
 - The student- who are we serving?
 - The outcome – what happened because of the college?
 - The community impact – Why does it matter to Texas?

Advocacy Boundaries

- **Trustees SHOULD:**

- Speak about the college's mission
- Share their experience as a trustee
- Participate in coordinated college advocacy
- Build relationships
- Support the board adopted policy priorities
- Speak publicly about issues within the scope of your role

- **Trustees SHOULD NOT:**

- Direct staff individually
- Commit college resources without authorization
- Represent personal views as an official board position
- Get involved in operational matters
- Make promises to legislators or other elected officials on behalf of the college without authorization

How to stay aligned during a high visibility moment

- **Core principle-** One institution, one message.
- **The Chair should:**
 - work closely with their President/Chancellor on strategy and messaging
 - remind trustees that the Board speaks collectively, not individually
 - make sure all trustees receive the same essential information
 - allow the president/administration to speak for the institution on operational matters
 - speak for the Board when a Board position is appropriate
 - make sure trustees know what they can and cannot say publicly

Campaigns and Elections are Different

- **A trustee can advocate for:**
 - Community College funding
 - Student Financial Aid
 - Legislative proposals affecting the college
 - Need to distinguish between advocating for a public policy from supporting or opposing a measure on the ballot or a candidate for office
 - This includes individual college bond propositions
- **Simple rule** – advocate for issues using the college's authorized voice; don't use the college as a vehicle for personal campaign activity

Bond Campaigns

- **Advocacy v. Education**
- Individual trustees can advocate for the bond measure, but the board as a whole unit can not.
- Chairs play a critical role as the lead advocate in this work.
- Administrators are limited to education and can't advocate.
- Texas Election Code § 255.003 prohibits an “officer or employee of a political subdivision” from spending or authorizing the spending of public funds for political advertising.
 - Bond Propositions are considered “measures” under this Texas law.
- Additionally, Texas Education Code § 11.169 outlines that the board of trustees of a community college district may not use state or local funds or other resources of the district to electioneer for or against any candidate, measure (e.g., a bond election), or political party.

Bond Campaigns- Advocacy v. Education

- **Examples of Advocacy:**

- “Our citizens now have the opportunity to position Alamo Colleges for the 21st century. Please support the vision. Our future depends on your commitment.”
- “Put children first”
- “Our facilities are really old.”
- “These security improvements will keep our children safer.”

- **Examples of Education:**

- A List of the anticipated projects
- Polling locations, dates and times
- Demographic study results
- Tax impact of the bond
- Voter registration information
- Locations for the proposed sites
- Age of the buildings (i.e., this building was built in 1950)

Alamo Colleges District 2025 Bond



2025 Bond Information

On May 3, 2025, Bexar County voters made history by approving the Alamo Colleges District's \$987 million bond—the largest in our history. Here's how it will transform our community:

Strengthening Education and Workforce Connections

The San Antonio area has experienced one of the fastest growing populations in the U.S. and this growth is expected to continue. The approved bond addresses this growth.

Preparing for Growth & Providing Access

With a projected enrollment of 100,000 by 2029, the Alamo Colleges District is committed to increasing access to education and training that aligns with our community and industries. This focus positions our learners for successful careers and economic mobility in an ever-changing workforce landscape.

Preparing for Workforce Development

The Alamo Colleges District, the region's #1 provider of workforce education, partners with industry to offer programs that prepare students for industry jobs that are in demand. The bond aligns our programming to our region's key sectors with expansions and new locations including schools and centers focused on the following key sectors:

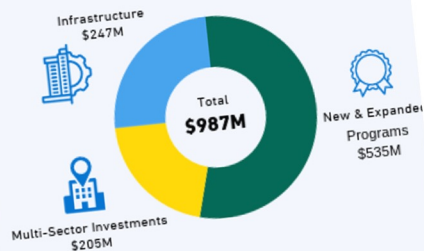
-  Engineering
-  IT/Cybersecurity/
Emerging Technologies
-  Automotive Technology
-  Healthcare
-  Applied Technology &
Construction Trades
-  Transportation



79,000 Enrollment
Fall 2024

100,000 Enrollment
Fall 2029

Projected Bond Breakdown



ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Dr. Clint Kinnelberg, Chair Dr. Lorena "Lorena" Pulido Dr. Yvonne Katz

- What did the Alamo Colleges do as part of the 2025 Bond Campaign?
 - PAC was created by ACD Supporters
 - Chair served as lead advocate for presentations
 - Small group of administrators designated for speaking engagements
 - Messaging was focused on enrollment growth and workforce program expansion

Use of Public Resources

- **General prohibitions of use of public resources for any type of political activity including during a bond campaign**
- “Can I use college staff, email, travel, or materials when I’m advocating?”
 - Depends on the activity and applicable law
- **Practical rules** – Before using colleges resources for advocacy ask:
 - Is this an official college activity?
 - Has the board authorized the position?
 - Is this an appropriate use of district resources?
 - Does the district policy impose additional restrictions?
 - Has the Chancellor/President of Government Relations staff coordinated the activity?
- **Best practice** – have the college Government Relations Staff with General Counsel establish the rules of use of staff time, travel, communications, and other institutional resources.

Conflicts of Interest

- **Texas Education Code § 336.058 addresses the financial interests involving contracts and trustees**
- Individual boards also adopt policies outlining additional limitations and requirements for disclosing potential conflicts of interest.
- Trustees should disclose or seek counsel when?
 - A legislative or policy issue directly affects their business
 - Their employer or individual business is seeking a college contract
 - This includes a business they have a financial relationship with
 - A family member has a relevant financial interest
 - They may personally benefit from the board action
- Being a community leader is an asset – but relationship must be disclosed and managed when they create a conflict.

Open Meetings Act

- Trustees can communicate individually with other elected officials; however, the problem arises when trustees collectively deliberate about public business outside a properly noticed meeting.
- **Texas Open Meetings Act** – defines a meeting broadly to include deliberation involving a quorum concerning public business or policy over which the governmental body has supervision or control.
- The fact that the conversation occurs by email, text, phone, or social media rather than in person does not automatically take it outside of open meetings act requirements.

Open Meetings Act

- **Trustees CAN:**

- Attend legislative receptions
- Participate in conferences (generally)
- Talk with community leaders
- Attend public events with other trustees

- **Trustees CAN'T:**

- Group texts involving a quorum
- Email chains among trustees discussing legislative strategy
- Private meetings involving a quorum
- Coordinating positions outside a properly posted meeting

Trustees Scenarios

- **Scenario 1:** A trustee privately calls a legislator from their own phone and says “ As a trustee, I believe you should invest more in community colleges?”
 - **Yes**
 - This is ok provided the trustee isn't misrepresenting the official position of the board.

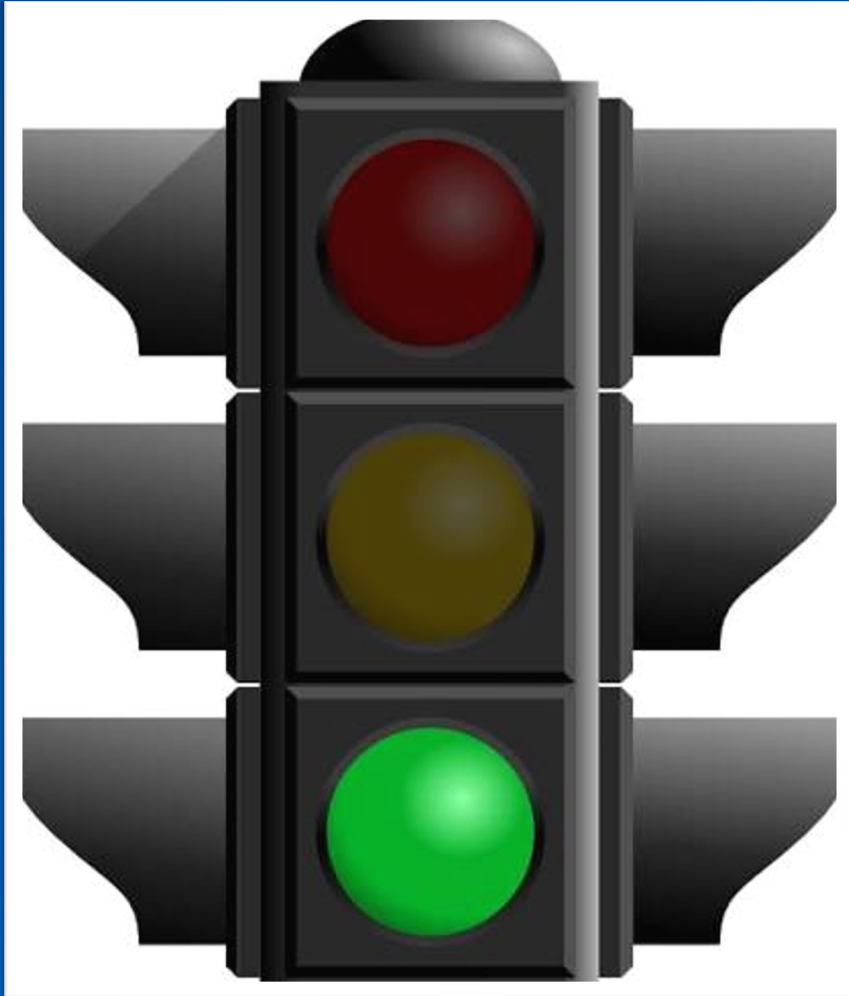
Trustees Scenarios

- **Scenario 2:** A trustee sends an email to other trustees saying, “Here’s how I think we should respond to this bill.”
 - **No.**
 - Very likely you will raise Open Meetings Act issues if this occurs with a quorum of your board members.

Trustees Scenarios

- **Scenario 3:** A trustee asks the college Chancellor/President to have staff prepare talking points supporting a trustee's individual political position.
 - **No.**
 - Advocacy materials should be developed through the authorized process with your President/Chancellor and/or government relations staff.

Green-Yellow-Red Advocacy Model



- **GREEN**

- Tell the College story
- Shared student success stories
- Explain community Impact
- Advocate for board-approved priorities
- Participate in coordinated legislative and other elected official events

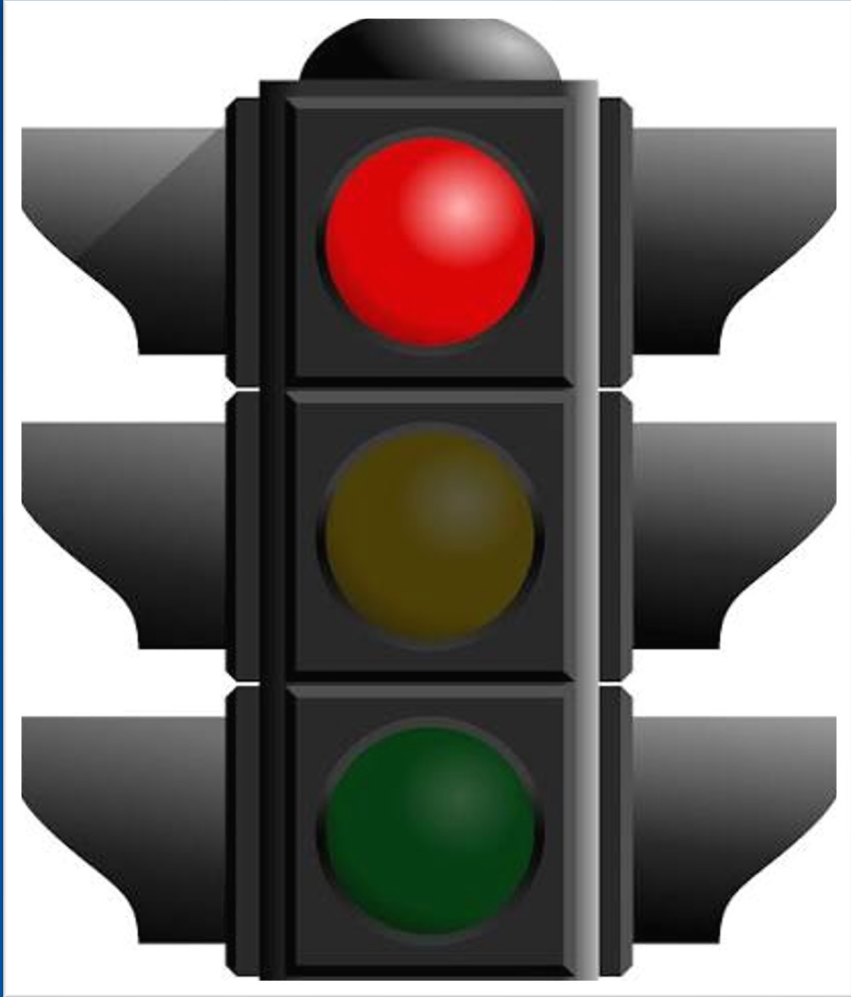
Green-Yellow-Red Advocacy Model



- **YELLOW**

- Speaking on behalf of the entire board (this is really for the chair if given authority by board policy)
- Using college staff/resources (can't be for personal reasons/financial gain/personal political events)
- Coordinating communications with other trustees
- Advocacy involving a potential conflict of interest
- Advocacy involving pending litigation

Green-Yellow-Red Advocacy Model

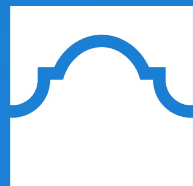


- **RED**

- Circumventing Open Meetings Act
- Commit college to action without authority
- Direct employees individually
- Communicating with employees individually around the administrative reporting structure
- Use public resources for political campaigning (this includes for advocacy supporting bond measures)
- Use of confidential information obtained via board service
- Participate in matters where a disqualifying conflict exists

Final Thoughts

- **Know your authority; Know your boundaries; Speak with credibility**
- When in doubt, ask
 - “Is this my voice, the board’s voice, or the college’s voice – and am I authorized to use it?”
- **The Chair's job is not to have all the answers.** The Chair's job is to make sure the Board asks the right questions, follows the right process, supports the institution, and makes decisions in the best long-term interests of the college and its students.
- **Role for each member of the team:**
 - Every trustee: Be an ambassador.
 - The chair: Be the convener and principal board spokesperson when authorized.
 - The board: Set policy and legislative priorities.
 - The chancellor/president: Lead implementation and institutional strategy.



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THANK YOU

