

BOTI Impact Report



Texas Success Center



INTRODUCTION

Community colleges provide open-door postsecondary education opportunities to over 750,000 undergraduates in Texas, about 54% of the undergraduate population enrolled in public two- and four-year institutions of higher education (IHEs)¹ including a substantial portion of first-generation, low-income, and historically underrepresented students². Two-year colleges have consistently served the majority of students enrolled in public higher education in Texas since 2010, and enrollment in public two-year colleges is predicted grow at a faster rate than enrollment in public universities through 2030³. Community colleges provide workforce preparation and opportunities for continued study through transfer to four-year IHEs. Of all the degree earners at Texas four-year IHEs in 2015-16, 75% were formerly enrolled in community college within the previous ten years⁴.

Despite the growing enrollment in public community colleges in Texas, the majority of Texans do not have postsecondary credentials critical to succeed in the modern economy. Texas education stakeholders recognize the need to prepare a highly-skilled workforce and have implemented the 60x30TX Higher Education Plan to increase the percentage of Texans aged 25-34 with a certificate or degree to 60% by 2030. However, there is still progress to be made. In 2017, only 44% of the target population completed a certificate, associate, bachelor's or master's degree from a Texas IHE⁵.

The Texas Success Center continues to support the implementation of Texas Pathways to address statewide completion rates and to encourage higher transfer rates from community colleges to university partners. Based on the American Association of Community College (AACC) Pathways Model, Texas Pathways is a statewide strategy focused on supporting all 50 Texas community college districts to design and implement structured academic and career pathways at scale, for all students. The Texas Pathways model is based on intentionally designed, clear, coherent, and structured program maps—which include specific course sequences, progress milestones, and program learning outcomes—that guide each student into and through postsecondary education with the goal of exiting with a credential into a career with labor market value. To meet these goals, Texas IHEs are redesigning the entire student experience to help students connect, enter, progress, and succeed through programs of study aligned with transfer and/or career goals.

Board of Trustees Institute

The 2018 annual Board of Trustees Institute (BOTI) took place March 26-28 in Santa Fe, NM. Twenty-seven Texas community college districts designated as Achieving the Dream colleges or Texas Pathways cadre 1 colleges were invited to the BOTI. More than 60 college leaders, including CEOs and board members, from 19 Texas community colleges attended. The institute focused on the role of the board in enabling front door pathways to student success. The goal set for the 2018 BOTI was to have every participating board make or reaffirm commitments to action to empower their CEO and set the climate for institutional change toward a comprehensive student success strategy.

¹ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [THECB], "Enrollment Forecast: 2019-2030," (2019).

² National Center for Education Statistics, "QuickStats: Independent Students: Student and Spouse's Income by Carnegie Classification 2015," (2019). ; Doug Shapiro, Afet Dunder, Faye Huie, Pheobe K. Wakhungu, Xin Yuan, Angel Nathan, and Youngsik Hwang, "Completing college: A national view of student attainment rates by race and ethnicity – Fall 2010 cohort (Signature Report No. 12b)," (2017).

³ THECB, "Enrollment Forecast," 2019.

⁴ National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, "Snapshot Report: Contribution of Two-year Public Institutions to Bachelor's Completions at Four-year Institutions," (2017).

⁵ THECB, "Texas Public Higher Education Almanac: A Profile of State and Institutional Performance and Characteristics," (2019).



BOTI Attending Colleges	
Alamo Colleges	Lee College
Alvin Community College	Lone Star College
Austin Community College	McLennan Community College
Brazosport College	Midland College
College of the Mainland	Paris Junior College
El Paso Community College	San Jacinto College
Galveston College	South Texas College
Grayson College	Temple College
Houston Community College	Wharton County Junior College
Kilgore College	

BOTI institute members heard from state and national leaders in pathways implementation, pathways policy, data monitoring, change leadership, developmental education, and fiscal considerations. Leaders participated in breakout work sessions to create individualized commitments to action based on provided resources, institutional data, and best practices to promote institutional governance focused on student success, equity, and completion.

Scope of Analysis

The following report examines the commitments to action (CTA) created by the participating colleges to determine the impact of the BOTI on board actions aimed at supporting student success, equity, and completion agendas. Responses were aggregated and coded from 19 CTAs submitted by BOTI participants. After the BOTI, each college was asked to return an impact report with a self-assessment of progress made on CTA items. Data was collected from impact reports submitted by 8 colleges. A search of board minutes and college websites provided data for colleges that did not return an impact report. Board and college actions directly related to the BOTI CTA items found in the impact reports and/or search of online resources were included in the analysis.

FINDINGS

The CTAs and associated impact reports were divided into four categories: (1) distributive leadership, (2) use of data, (3) stakeholder engagement and commitment, and (4) institutional transformation. CTA and impact report responses from each category were coded and thematically analyzed.

Distributive Leadership

The distributive leadership approach builds capacity for change by emphasizing collective collaboration among executives, academic leaders, and professional staff. Each of the 19 CTAs included proposed action on distributive leadership aimed at various outcomes: (a) guided pathways, (b) student success, and (c) equity and representation. Board and college actions were taken by 11 colleges on parts or all of the CTA commitments.

Guided pathways. Boards and CEOs committed to making guided pathways visible by formally adopting principles into policy and strategic planning in various sectors.

- Austin Community College committed to ensuring all policies support the college’s strategic plan of “Student Success through Guided Pathways” as college policies transitioned to align with the Texas Association of



School Boards (TASB). In November 2018, Pathways lead and Provost Dr. Charles Cook introduced the student-success-focused strategic plan and it was approved by the board in February 2019.

- The board and CEO at Brazosport College committed to aligning updates to the strategic plan to be consistent with the four pillars of guided pathways. In April 2018, the board adopted the revised strategic plan – Vision 2025. The first goal of the Strategic Plan is student success. The following pathways-aligned strategies are listed to meet this goal: (a) create coherent pathways to student goals, (b) help students choose and enter a pathway leading to their educational and career goals, (c) help students stay on and complete their chosen pathway, and (d) ensure students are learning on their chosen pathway.
- At Kilgore College, the board and CEO committed to making the achievement of degrees and certificates with labor market value a high institutional priority and to support this priority with adequate funding. In December 2018, the board approved an extended strategic plan with the following pathways-aligned mission statement: “Kilgore College provides a learner-centered environment that focuses on student access, success and completion via collaborative partnerships. KC promotes access through its open-door admission, distance learning opportunities, dual credit courses, developmental education, continuing education, and comprehensive financial aid programs. KC promotes success through high-quality innovative instruction and holistic student support services and activities. KC promotes completion by providing a foundation for students to flourish either through university transfer or entry into the workforce as highly skilled and technologically advanced employees. KC leads and promotes partnerships through outreach to area schools and universities, small business/entrepreneurial expansion, adult education and literacy, responsiveness to economic development needs, and promotion of social and cultural advancement.”
- The Lee College Board committed to creating a policy to define how guided pathways improves student success. In March 2019, the board approved a pathways-aligned policy: “Lee College subscribes to the principles set out in the Guided Pathways for Student Success Model. Through Guided Pathways, the college will adhere to the four pillars: clarify the path, enter the path, stay on the path, and ensure learning, as the vehicle for achieving student success, completion and transition to a career or transfer to a university. The Pathways Model will also optimize and leverage student-centered resources to prioritize success outcomes, while simultaneously improving efficiencies and effectiveness. The Guided Pathways for Student Success Model begins with student CONNECTION through ENTRY, in efforts to assist with student PROGRESS, leading to COMPLETION and TRANSITION to a career or university.”
- Work at the BOTI was discussed at Midland College Board meetings in April 2018, December 2018, January 2019, and February 2019. The board endorsed the administration’s efforts to adopt guided pathways and approved a new pathways-aligned mission statement [excerpt]: “We prepare and inspire diverse students to start, strive and succeed. STRIVE: Support student development and meaningful progress toward educational goals.
- At South Texas College, BOTI attendees committed to meeting with the CEO to request information regarding how Pathways has been specifically incorporated into the college’s strategic plan. As a result, the board met with CEO to review work done on Pathways, and the college made several Pathways presentations to inform college faculty and staff.

Student success. The focus on student success was evident in all sections of the CTAs. Leadership in some colleges committed to integrating student success is policy, planning, and monitoring processes.

- The Kilgore College Board and CEO committed to creating a “Student Success Policy” that clearly articulates focus on students. After significant work, the board approved the following student success policy in March 2019, one year following the BOTI: “The Kilgore College Board of Trustees, in keeping with the College’s Mission, recognizes that learning is the primary focus of the institution. Emphasizing a learner centered



culture, the board decrees that student success will be Kilgore College's prime directive. This policy actively shifts the board and the College from an 'at all costs' contact hour generation culture to a culture where the emphasis is instead placed upon student outcomes-based success measures including completion, retention, and graduation. This policy is a decree to do the right thing for the right reason for students."

- The McClennan Community College Board committed to creating a Student Success Council that included a board member. In August 2018, the College Success Team was created. The Team included one board member and holds monthly meetings to monitor student success.
- At the BOTI, Wharton County Junior College committed to continuing the Pathways work and implementing an advising structure to improve retention and student success. Following the BOTI, in May 2018, the board officially approved the purchase and implementation of EAB Navigate, a student advising and data analytics software for use within the institution's new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The college has begun the implementation of EAB Navigate for use with faculty, staff, and students.

"Instead of expecting students to be 'college ready,' we commit to expecting the college to be 'student ready.'"

Kilgore College

Equity and representation. Recognizing the need to better serve all students, colleges committed to adopting equity policies to educate stakeholders and to make data-informed decisions to promote equity in practice.

- The board and CEO at Austin Community College committed to providing opportunities for widespread engagement by and professional development of all employees. One opportunity will be an annual, required workshop on ways the college may achieve equity in terms of student success. This goal was introduced at the April 2018 board meeting during the summary of the BOTI experience.
- The board and CEO at Brazosport College committed to including a goal in the strategic plan entitled "social and economic mobility" focused on measures related to equity and inclusion. The adopted Vision 2025 sets specific targets for student success disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status (SES). The following pathways-aligned strategies are listed to meet these benchmarks: (a) expand financial support services to underrepresented students as well as those enrolled in dual credit, evening, online, and mini-mester classes, (b) increase understanding of equity and inclusion among faculty and staff, and (c) ensure that we meet the needs of underserved students.
- At Grayson College, the board and CEO committed to officially adopt an equity statement and review that statement on an annual basis. After introducing the goal at the March 2018 board meeting following the BOTI, the board approved the following pathways-aligned equity statement in June 2018: "At Grayson College, equity refers to providing what students need to be successful through the intentional design of the college experience. At its base, our approach to equity is rooted in fairness. We believe that access to a high-quality education in an inclusive environment is the right of all individuals and is imperative for the continued advancement of a strong democracy and workforce.

"At Grayson College, equity refers to providing what students need to be successful through the intentional design of the college experience."

We know the college serves as a beacon of hope for preserving access to higher education and success for all students, particularly students of color, low-income students, and other historically underrepresented student populations.



Structural inequalities and systemic poverty that are often the result of historic and systemic social injustices have a negative impact on our vision of access and success. We acknowledge these inequities typically manifest themselves as the unintended or indirect consequences of unexamined institutional or social policies. All members of our team must commit to the pursuit of dismantling these barriers on our path to providing equity for students. This starts with routinely scrutinizing structural barriers to student success and is followed by executing an intentional approach to creating a climate of enacting equity-minded policies, practices (including employment practices and talent management) and behaviors that lead to success for all students."

Use of Data

All 19 attending colleges committed to collecting and using data from various sources such as the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), the National Student Clearinghouse, and transfer partners to inform college improvement strategies. Commitments and actions were organized into the following categories: (a) reviewing data, (b) monitoring what matters (MWM)/key performance indicators (KPIs), (c) data-informed decision making, and (d) ensuring institutional data resources. Board and college actions were taken by 17 of the colleges on part or all of the CTA commitments.

Reviewing data. BOTI colleges committed to including the review of data in board meetings, planning retreats, and college planning sessions.

- Alamo Colleges trustees and the community are provided Accountability Reports focused on board-defined Student Success Performance Indicators and plans/strategies to continuously improve.
- The Alvin College President, institutional research department and/or the Executive Leadership team provide data reports to the board at each meeting.
- The Brazosport College Board received data-driven Performance Reports at the June 2018, October 2018, and January 2019 meetings.
- Each quarter, the Houston Community College strategic planning committee receives data on action plans and KPIs.
- After the BOTI, two San Jacinto College Board members expressed interest in improving data collection and analysis to inform decision making in an April 2018 board workshop. In May 2018, the board committed to reviewing data to better support student success. The pathways-aligned theme for the board's work was: "No student will fail at San Jacinto College because of a barrier we overlooked or created."

Monitoring what matters/Key performance indicators. At the 2018 BOTI, Dr. Cynthia Ferrell introduced data from THECB 2017 Higher Education Almanac⁶, highlighting statewide data and indicating where attendees could find institutional data. Dr. Byron McClenney presented Monitor What Matters (MWM)⁷, a list of questions and associated data points necessary for front-door transformational change at scale. Eight colleges made specific commitments to monitor the MWM metrics mentioned in the BOTI presentation. Colleges also committed to establishing and/or using key performance indicators (KPIs) to guide reform initiatives.

- Alamo Colleges maintain a Strategy Map to publicly disclose progress on key performance metrics, processes, and strategic initiatives.

⁶ THECB, "Texas Public Higher Education Almanac: A Profile of State and Institutional Performance and Characteristics," (2017).

⁷ Byron McClenney, "Using Data to Monitor What Matters," *13 Ideas That are Transforming the Community College World*, (2019).



- Alvin Community College committed to tracking MWM data points. The President provided the Board of Regents a report on the first seven goals at the October 2018 board meeting, and the five remaining goals at the November 2018 board meeting. The President proposed she and the board agree to a targeted area for improvement to be assigned to the President for the 2019-2020 year. Additionally, the college provided more opportunities for orientation, employed a retention coordinator to provide outreach to students who fail to register, signed an articulation agreement mapping four years of study with its largest transfer partner, and introduced co-requisite courses for English and math.
- At the April 2018 board meeting, the Austin Community College Board directed the CEO to develop 10 student progress reports to assist the board to monitor what matters. In August 2018, the board heard the first report on enrollment and completion.
- The Galveston College Board committed to developing the data necessary to answer the MWM questions at the June 2018 board meeting.
- The board and CEO of Houston Community College committed to developing a reporting policy based on student success metrics. The policy was approved in December 2018 requiring that every junior college district submit an annual report with data on: (a) course completion, (b) number/types of degrees awarded, (c) licensing exam pass rates, (d) transfer rates, (e) TSI pass rates, (f) percentage of academically disadvantaged students enrolled, (g) percentage of economically disadvantaged students enrolled, (h) racial/ethnic composition of student body, and (i) percentage of student contact hours taught by full-time faculty.
- The Kilgore College Board of Trustees committed to monitoring progress of student outcomes. The board heard a report from IPEDS in June 2018 and a KPI progress report in December 2018. Additionally, for Fall 2019, Kilgore College is creating a Student Success Scorecard with data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, Pell grant status, and full-time/part-time status.
- The Midland College Board found the MWM questions to be eye-openers and committed to prioritizing the analysis of the MWM data points. The board reviewed descriptive data from THECB Almanac and student achievement data, including KPIs in December 2018.
- South Texas College committed to using MWM institutional data and THECB data to stimulate board action on student success improvement. As a result, the THECB Almanac data were presented at several board and committee meetings to allow the board to closely monitor data benchmarks.
- Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) developed a monthly newsletter highlighting key student success data sent out to all employees of WCJC by the Office of Planning.

Data-informed decision making. In addition to the review of data, many BOTI colleges committed to using data strategically in decisions at the board, administration, and departmental levels.

- The Alamo Colleges' Board requires that all presentations be infused with the most current data to help inform their decision-making.
- The Kilgore College Board committed to using multiple sources of data, including the voices of students, to inform policy decisions, strategic planning and resource allocation. In April 2018, the board focused on student success points for funding allocation and the Student Success committee reviewed a student satisfaction survey in November 2018 to inform strategy. Additionally, the CEO committed to having departments use data to identify and address leakage points. As a result, departments use data such as grade distributions and labor market returns in program evaluation.



- Lee College committed to using multiple sources of data to inform policy decisions, strategic planning, and resource allocation. The board approved a Student Success Scorecard with data on equitable student access, retention, and completion to analyze and interpret student outcomes.
- McLennan Community College committed to using data to set retention and completion goals. In April 2018, the board heard a presentation from the Association of Community College Trustees on accountability, accreditation, and a data framework to analyze enrollment and completion trends. In December 2018, the board received institutional enrollment and completion data, which resulted in a restructured advising process.
- After a review of the 2017 THECB Almanac data provided at the BOTI, the Wharton County Junior College board recognized that WCJC average semester hours to associate degree has continued to increase, and that Pell rate participation has continued to decline. WCJC reviewed institutional data to determine causes for the increase in semester hours. The institution's Financial Aid department began working with additional staff, a new director, and a strategic consultant to improve processes.

Ensuring institutional data resources. Given the commitment to effective use of data, some colleges committed to allocating the resources necessary to collect and analyze student data.

- The board at College of the Mainland committed to maintaining institutional research functions to communicate student outcome data.
- The Kilgore College CEO committed to ensuring the college's capacity to track, analyze, and communicate disaggregated data, and to ensure data integrity. To meet these goals, the college provides ongoing training on Jenzabar—a student information system that provides analytic tools—to faculty and staff.
- At Midland College, the administration created an Institutional Research (IR) Office to identify, monitor, report and publish student achievement data and state student success data. The IR office also produces key performance data for assessment of administrative units and for evaluation of program and discipline efficacy. Data reported includes retention, hours to degree, completion rates and numbers, and, effective Fall 2018, student pathways choices. In the past three years, the College has seen improvements in retention and completion.
- In 2018, the Wharton County Junior College Board approved the addition of a Vice President of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (VPPIE) to oversee strategic planning and data for evaluation of success. The VPPIE has provided the board with data and updates related to the SACSCOC process and institutional QEP to support student success initiatives. Additionally, the board approved the purchase of institutional assessment software to facilitate planning and the collection of assessment data across all institutional divisions in May 2018. The college began the implementation process for Weave Assessment Management Software which will house future planning and assessment data.

Stakeholder Engagement and Commitment

Sixteen colleges made commitments to further engage institutional partners, school district partners, university partners, and community stakeholders in guided pathways work. The commitments fell into two categories: (a) internal collaboration and (b) external outreach. Board and college action were taken by nine colleges on part or all of the CTA commitments.



Internal collaboration. Boards and CEOs committed to supporting collaboration amongst college stakeholders such as board members, administrators, full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and staff members to move guided pathways implementation forward.

- At Austin Community College, the board committed to reviewing its policies to ensure they encourage collaborations across the institution that support student success. The board planned to ask the CEO to examine campus operations and a regional approach to promote greater expertise and extended hours for student services. The regional approach to serving students was introduced in September 2018.
- The board and CEO at College of the Mainland and Kilgore College committed to developing a shared vision of student success and completion through collaboration with multiple institutional stakeholders.
- At Lee College, the board committed to building an understanding of student success from a guided pathways point of view, and to create conditions to improve college and career readiness. In February 2019, the board heard about pathways alignment from the Business Technology department, which reported program alignment with high school endorsements, the creation of program maps, and AAS degrees aligned with certificates.
- Kilgore College and Paris Junior College committed to involving adjunct faculty in guided pathways work. In August 2018, adjunct faculty were included in the Student Success Summit at Kilgore College.
- The Wharton County Junior College Board committed to reviewing minutes from major stakeholder committees at the college on a monthly basis to remain aware of faculty and staff needs, wants, and perceptions. Additionally, the VPPIE facilitated “Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat” sessions with stakeholders from each campus to share data and bring feedback to the executive leadership team.

External outreach. BOTI participants committed to reaching out to engage independent school districts (ISDs), universities, and community partners in the commitment to guided pathways implementation.

- The Alvin Community College Board committed to becoming more knowledgeable about guided pathways and ways to engage ISD partners in guided pathways work. As a result, the CEO committed to providing training to the Alvin Community College Board and Alvin ISD (AISD) Board. The college board initiated a joint meeting of both boards in October 2018. Many AISD programs have since been mapped to college programs, with work continuing in this area. Additionally, in December 2018 a college board member attended the Dallas Promise meeting to explore ways to smoothly transition students from high school to college.
- Brazosport College adopted a revised strategic plan in April 2018 that supported outreach to many stakeholders: “Brazosport College will ensure ongoing and mutually beneficial collaboration with stakeholders (including school districts, employers, community, etc.) and continued development of a healthy campus culture that exemplifies our core values.” Some outcomes of this commitment include: the Catalyst pathway model implemented with ISD partners, the newly-established “College Now” program that supports dual-credit scholarships, and the strengthened role of advisory councils.
- Lee College committed to making the public aware of its pathways-aligned student success agenda. Guided pathways was announced in the 2018 Report to the Community: “As an HSI ACHIEVING THE DREAM LEADER COLLEGE, planning for the future needs of our students, as well as increasing our stance on diversity, is at the core of our mission. Lee College serves the community by providing innovative and quality education to our diverse students along guided pathways to gainful employment, personal enrichment and life-long learning” (p. 9). The same message is included on the Lee College website.
- McLennan Community College committed to strengthening guided-pathways partnerships with area ISDs. In October 2018, the board heard a presentation on high school pathways. The President, Vice President of Instruction, and Program Director for Pathways began visits to individual ISD superintendents, trustees,



principals, and counselors to align dual credit with guided pathways pillars and communicate MCC's commitment to dual credit quality and rigor.

- The Midland College Board supports collaboration with high school and university partners and committed to defining a policy for engagement and follow through. Midland College provides ISDs with pathways information for dual credit students. Additionally, the board supports pathways alignment with four-year partners by approving new pathways programs such as the engineering field of study aligned with the Texas A&M Engineering Academy.

Institutional Transformation

Seventeen colleges made commitments to institutional transformation of organizational structures, policies, and practices to support student success through guided pathways. Commitments were in the following areas: (a) guided pathways, (b) advising, (c) retention/completion, (d) teaching and learning, (e) equity, (f) fiscal considerations, and (g) institutional learning. Board and college action was taken by 13 colleges on part or all of the CTA commitments.

Guided pathways. Many colleges committed or reaffirmed commitment to redesigning the student experience to align with the guided pathways model. Commitments included reforms to onboarding, advising, program alignment, and college systems.

- Alamo Colleges reaffirmed their commitment to guided pathways. The board policy E.1.3 outlines AlamoINSTITUTES: guided pathways that assist students to select a career path early, leading to a sustaining wage job or university transfer where every course counts. Alamo has continued work on 215 transfer advising guides with seven primary transfer institutions by strengthening related articulation agreements and university alignment.
- The CEO at Alvin Community College reaffirmed the integration of guided pathways into the college's core institutional work. Eight career pathways have been identified. All credit and Continuing Education programs have been aligned to each pathway. The pathways are published in the catalog and on the website.
- Grayson College committed to reaching full implementation of its guided pathways work – Connect, Commit, Complete – by Fall 2018. In July 2018, the President reported to the board on Grayson College's focus on student success: "This year we focused on building deeper connections with our students. As a pathways college, our goal is for students to explore their options, discover the right path, be guided on the path with increasing momentum, and ultimately complete their degree in as timely and efficient manner possible."
- Kilgore College committed to systematically including student success into core institutional work. In December 2018, the board approved a pathways-aligned strategic plan.
- McLennan Community College committed to ensuring guided pathways was fully developed and appropriately supported. The college continues to develop pathways, and information about each pathway (meta-major) and aligned degrees is available on the website.
- Midland College reaffirmed its commitment to guided pathways. The board continues to endorse guided pathways, and the college completed review of all program curricula to restructure programs into areas of interest (meta-majors) for transfer and employment.
- The board at South Texas College supports guided pathways and committed to leading the college to a formal adoption of pathways.



Advising. Colleges committed to redesigning the onboarding, advising, and monitoring processes to support student success through guided pathways.

- Alamo Colleges reaffirmed their commitment to the AlamoADVISE case-management advising model by adopting the Trustee BOTI Action Plan in May 2018. The board committed to reaching AlamoADVISE model milestones: setting a FY2019 target of 70% of students meeting with an advisor at 15, 30, and 45 semester credit hours. Additionally, the board committed to assessing student progression through enrollment, and set a goal of setting formal academic plans for 70% of students in FY 2019.
- Alvin Community College adopted and launched the Ellucian Student Planning module in November 2018 to collect data and monitor student progress on pathways.
- Brazosport College committed to scaling its pathways advising component, “ACE it.” In the adopted strategic plan, Brazosport plans to provide comprehensive training for all “ACE it” personnel by May 2019.
- Grayson College reaffirmed its commitment to using Student Planner software to allow students to create and monitor a full two-year program and enroll in sequenced coursework. The college will use data from Student Planner to strategically revise the course schedule. Student Planner was launched in April 2018 and the board received an update in July 2018.
- McLennan Community College committed to continue to develop pathways and to assign advisors to specific pathways. The college added services to its Completion Center to provide holistic advising and to increase disability advising.
- The reorganization of student services at Midland College provided more opportunities to collect and refine student information. Student data has become more accurate and complete, allowing advisors to ensure students remain on track and complete in a timely manner. Midland College regularly monitors first-time-in-college (FTIC) enrollment by pathway, advising loads, and student progress toward their goals.
- The Wharton County Junior College Board committed to continuous improvement of the onboarding front-door processes. In May 2018, the board approved the purchase and implementation of EAB Navigate for student advising and data analytics.

Retention and completion. Colleges committed to assisting students to stay on path and complete programs of study.

- The boards of Austin Community College, Grayson College, Lone Star College, and McLennan Community College committed to exploring innovative ways to increase retention such as adding eight-week course options and/or providing low-cost or free summer course options to increase retention and full-time status students.
- Alamo Colleges committed to increasing completion rates for college-level math and English gateway courses. The board set targets for FY 2019 and committed to supporting the attainment of these targets.
- Grayson College reaffirmed its commitment to increasing completion with guided pathways and shared its prior success based on previous efforts. The board reported that the intentional focus on completion has led to faster student progression through programs, specifically, a reduction of six months in time to completion (average time to completion is 3.6 years). Additionally, students are completing fewer hours (19% reduction to 79 hours) and are completing degrees at higher rates (5% increase in past year).



Teaching and learning. As colleges move forward in pathways work, the integration of improvements in teaching and learning have come into focus. Some colleges acknowledged the importance of the role of faculty-student experiences and committed to supporting improved teaching and learning in the classroom.

- Alamo Colleges committed to a target of 85% of students enrolled in a student success course within their first semester in FY 2019 based on the board policy that the district’s long-term, institution-wide procedures support and promote student engagement and commitment to learning while requiring strategies in the pathways model that are proven to increase student success.
- Grayson College committed to implementing a free College Connections course effective Fall 2018 for all FTIC students. The course will be taught by student success coaches and will include the specific outcomes of career exploration, pathway selection, creating a two-year plan of courses for the student based upon what will be offered by the college. The board received an update on the course at the July 2018 board meeting.
- The Kilgore College Board and CEO committed to expand the use of effective teaching practices, and to consider making support mandatory for underserved students. Additionally, they committed to support the use of technology to increase access to learning options, intensify faculty/student interaction, and improve flexibility for students. A Title III grant is supporting these initiatives. The CEO committed to improving the quality of faculty recruitment and orientation, requiring faculty candidates to demonstrate knowledge of effective pedagogy, and to orient all new and existing faculty to the needs of developmental students. The CEO now meets with all new hires to discuss Kilgore College’s vision. Teaching and learning elements were added to the strategic plan that was adopted in December 2018.

Equity. Equity remained a theme in institutional transformation for three colleges.

- In February 2019, an equity committee at Austin Community College composed of department chairs, deans, and staff revised hiring guidelines and processes to include mandatory equity training for all hiring committees to seek new faculty that engage in equity-mindedness in teaching practices.
- At Houston Community College, the board committed to requiring program review processes to include a focus on equity, inclusion, and diversity. In May 2018, the board’s strategic planning committee heard a presentation on these three topics.
- The board and CEO at Kilgore College committed to ensuring students “see themselves” reflected in Kilgore College’s board, administration, faculty, and staff. In June 2018, Kilgore College appointed Janice Bagley, the first African American female, to serve on the board. Additionally, the college is working on diversifying new hires and reports progress in Hispanic and African American hires.

Fiscal considerations. Boards committed to using student success to guide budget decisions and allocating resources to support guided pathways reforms at their colleges.

- In line with the BOTI presentation on fiscal considerations and return on investment (ROI) for guided pathways implementation, Alamo Colleges presented a ROI methodology and template for all strategic and program initiatives to the board for approval. During 2017 and 2018, the ROI methodology was expanded to capture other non-financial benefits of the district’s strategic initiatives for various constituents such as the student, parent, Alamo Colleges District, community, businesses, and federal/state as applicable. These benefits were reported out to the board in July 2018 when funding in the operating budget was approved for high school programs, a summer momentum program, AlamoINSTITUTES, and AlamoADVISE. Additionally, Alamo Colleges updated their Economic Impact Study in October 2018 finding that for every \$1



spent by students, there was \$7.20 in student lifetime earnings, \$3.70 in added taxpayer savings, and \$22.50 in societal benefits as defined by added state revenues and social savings.

- The Alvin College Board committed to focusing on student success and completion when considering budgets. The college develops the budget collaboratively using a rubric that includes student success criteria.
- At College of the Mainland, the board committed to approving, monitoring, and funding change efforts that support student success. In November 2018, they heard reports on student success measures and special programs like the Minority Men for Excellence.
- The Kilgore College Board and CEO committed to use data, stakeholder input, student success goals, and state funding patterns in budgeting. After a budget workshop in July 2018, institutional priorities for the use of data and funds for success initiatives were added to the extended strategic plan.
- Lee College and Paris Junior College committed to using data and stakeholder input for planning and budget considerations. These colleges also committed to prioritizing certificate and program completion in policy development and budgeting.
- In January 2019, the Wharton County Junior College Board approved an amended its memorandum of understanding with the WCJC Foundation to further enhance the relationship between the college and the foundation, and to allow for increased opportunities to promote fundraising opportunities for the college.

Institutional learning. As colleges move forward with guided pathways, many committed to creating opportunities to reflect and revise for continued improvement.

- The board and CEO at Kilgore College committed to budgeting for continuous institutional learning and board professional development. Board members attended the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Board Development Conference in March 2018, the BOTI in March 2018, the Community College Association of Texas Trustees Conference in June 2018, the ACCT Annual Conference in October 2018, and the THECB Leadership Conference in November 2018.
- The Lee College Board committed to comprehensive and ongoing evaluation of student outcomes and program impacts. The board has planned an annual retreat to review and learn from the Student Success Scorecard.
- The San Jacinto College Board committed to developing a Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 with the following goals: (a) recognize accomplishments from the last plan and areas requiring continued improvement including student success data addressing diversity and equity, (b) create a plan to address current and future challenges (internally, externally, and students), and (c) develop clear measures of success to update dashboard. The need for a new strategic plan was introduced in April 2018, and in May 2018 a fifth strategic goal of continuous improvement was added to align with pathways.
- The South Texas College Board committed to increased attendance at future BOTI conferences to assist the progression of the college to greater student achievement.

BOTI EVALUATION

Attendees provided feedback and testimonies about the BOTI experience. An external evaluator found that 2018 BOTI participant evaluations were outstanding, with 100 percent rating the institute overall as either “effective” or “very effective.” The evaluator concluded that such a high level of satisfaction indicated participants were highly supportive of creating a college culture focused on student success, equity, and completion.



The commitment to board development and guided pathways implementation is evident in the impact report testimonies given by attendees:

- “Instead of expecting students to be ‘college ready,’ we commit to expecting the college to be ‘student ready.’” – Kilgore College
- “The Board of Trustees Institute (BOTI) Action Plan adopted annually by our board has helped accelerate our progress in achieving our 2020 Wildly Important Goal (WIG) of 15,000 degrees/certificates awarded and has supported the attainment of our students’ post- graduation employment and baccalaureate degree achievement targets. The BOTI Action Plan reinforces our WIG around degree and certificate completion and our system-wide strategic plan.” – Alamo Colleges
- “We are very excited to share the many things we are doing for the upcoming year, and we are very grateful for the support of the Texas Success Center Pathways project, which has helped to shape our future directions. By doing more for our students to be successful we will plant beautiful seeds for a very prosperous region capable of contributing to a strong Texas.” – Grayson College
- “The conference was very informative. We enjoyed learning from other board members.” – South Texas College

“This is work that changes the lives of our students, our community, and the country.” – BOTI Board Member Attendee

CONCLUSION

The BOTI has had a measurable impact on the adoption of Texas Pathways in participating institutions by providing targeted professional development, access to peer institutional leadership, time for reflection, and strategic planning tools for boards and CEOs. Based on the analysis in this report, the following recommendations may support guided pathways implementation by both BOTI attendees and board members unable to attend the BOTI.

1. BOTI attendees should commit time to completing CTAs, with a clear deadline for submission within one month after the BOTI. CTA goals could be categorized as short-term (to be completed within 6 months), long-term (to be completed within a year), or continuous (to be ongoing). Additionally, board members should develop a reporting plan for the follow-up impact report to track progress on CTA items to make the work useful for continuous reflection on progress.
2. BOTI attendees can expand access to the lessons learned at the BOTI by making a formal agenda item to review BOTI information and invite feedback on the CTA. Additionally, attendees could invite institutional leadership to a series of pathways-focused board meetings or workshops to support collaborative progress on CTA goals.
3. Board members should continuously engage with the CEO to foster a student success-focused culture within the institution they serve. Additionally, board members should interact with ISD boards, university boards, and community partners to promote guided pathways implementation at all levels.
4. Boards should continue to focus on guided pathways implementation using institutional data. Boards that have a few years of data collection could collaborate with experienced peer college boards to discuss the impact of board actions on short-term and longitudinal outcomes. Experienced boards could also mentor college boards embarking on the data analysis process by sharing successful methods and potential pitfalls



when collecting and interpreting data for strategic planning.

5. Boards should consider equity as a driving force to guided pathways work by: developing an equity statement that pertains to the board and institution's work, keeping equitable access and outcomes for all students in mind when approving pathways and programs, using an equity lens on data collection and analysis, and supporting equity-minded hiring, teaching, learning, and professional development processes.

ARTIFACTS

Many participating colleges have integrated guided pathways into board meeting agendas and minutes, strategic plans, mission statements, and external communications. A few examples are provided here:

- [Alamo Colleges BOTI Action Plan](#)
- [Alamo Colleges Economic Impact Study Infographic](#)
- [Alamo Colleges Strategy Map](#)
- [Austin Community College's Report to the Board and Community: August 2018](#)
- [Brazosport College Strategic Plan – Vision 2025](#)
- [Brazosport College Dual Credit Catalyst Flier](#)
- [Grayson College's Equity Statement](#)
- [Kilgore College Mission Statement: March 2019 Board Minutes \(pp. 4792-4793\)](#)
- [Lee College's Report to the Community - Driving Diversity \(p. 9\)](#)
- [San Jacinto College's Vision, Mission, and Values](#)
- [Wharton County Junior College Monthly Newsletter: March 2019](#)