



ALAMO  
COLLEGES

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Alamo Colleges Family  
FROM: Dr. Bruce Leslie, Chancellor  
DATE: May 6, 2009  
RE: **Student Success**

During the April Regular Board of Trustees Meeting, the board charged me to improve student success across the Alamo Colleges. This matter arose as a result of an Achieving the Dream conference, paid for by the Houston Endowment, that brought the Trustee chairs, vice chairs and presidents/chancellors of the Texas Achieving the Dream colleges together to discuss longitudinal success rates at each of the colleges. Using data submitted by each of the colleges, it became clear that our college developmental student success rates have been substantially below the similar population success rates of the other Texas colleges. Our four-year completion/transfer rates using the 2003 student cohort data are 3.4% at San Antonio College, 4.6% at Palo Alto College, 6.0% at St. Philip's College and 6.1% at Northwest Vista College. This compares with 13.4% at El Paso Community College and 22.4% on average at the five Lone Star Colleges.

The good news is that through Achieving the Dream, we have over the past five years initiated a number of strategies across our colleges to improve student completion and transfer rates. We have had some successes but have never brought most of these strategies to scale. Thus, we've shown progress for perhaps a couple of hundred students but must now bring these results to thousands of students. Thus, the board's charge is both timely and appropriate as we have laid the foundation for accelerated impact and are much further ahead today than we were even a year ago. On the other hand, we have much work to do to achieve the level of success our students deserve. There is every indication that when our students complete their degrees or transfer to universities that our employers and universities are very satisfied with the quality of our graduates and transfer students. Unfortunately, far too few of our students achieve this level of success and it is appropriate that we utilize the skills we have obtained, the dedication of our faculty and the focus of our energies and resources to make a major improvement in these results.