

**CONTINUATION OF INITIAL APPROVAL STATUS AND REPORT OF SURVEY VISIT  
 ST. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL OF NURSING AND TECHNOLOGY  
 VOCATIONAL NURSING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

Consider continuation of the initial approval status of St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology Vocational Nursing Educational Program in Weslaco, Texas based on the 2008 NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rates, review of the 2008 Nursing Educational Program Information Survey (NEPIS), and report of the survey visit conducted by Texas Board of Nursing (BON) staff on November 19-20, 2008.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

Program	Year	Approval Status	NCLEX-PN® Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
<b>St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology Vocational Nursing Educational Program</b>	2008 Preliminary Results through 12/31/08	Initial	58.33%	7/12

- On July 19, 2007, St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology was approved by the Texas BON to begin operation of a vocational nursing (VN) educational program in Weslaco, Texas.
- The current VN program director was appointed to the director position when the program was approved in July 2007. The VN program director has the qualifications required by the rule and was a clinical nursing instructor for a nursing program in a community college.
- The program enrolled an initial cohort of thirteen (13) students and these thirteen (13) students graduated from the program in October 2008.
- The program has enrolled a second cohort and a third cohort of fifteen (15) students each with the second cohort scheduled to graduate on April 2, 2009 and the third cohort scheduled to graduate on November 5, 2009.
- On November 19-20, 2008, BON staff conducted a focused survey visit of the program to evaluate the program's status regarding compliance with the Texas BON rules and regulations in regard to the program's initial approval status. A report of the survey visit findings is attached (See Attachment One).
- At the time of the November 19-20, 2008 survey visit, three (3) of the thirteen (13) graduates had taken the NCLEX-PN® examination and all three (3) had passed the examination. Through December 31, 2008, twelve (12) of the thirteen (13) graduates have taken the NCLEX-PN® examination. Seven (7) of the thirteen (13) graduates/candidates have passed the examination and five (5) have failed.
- As required by Rule 214.4(c)(2)(B), Approval and when the 2008 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates are finalized, St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology VN Program will be instructed to complete a Self Study report related to the 2008 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate of 58.33% in order to evaluate factors that contributed to the graduates' performance on the NCLEX-PN® examination and include in the report a description of the corrective measures to be implemented. Since this will be the program's first Self Study Report, BON staff will review the report after submission and make any applicable suggestions to assist the program in determining appropriate corrective actions. The Self-Study Report will be filed in the BON office for further reference.

## **PROS AND CONS:**

### Pros-

- The November 19-20, 2008 survey visit revealed the following significant positive findings (See Attachment One):
  - Dedicated VN Program Director and VN faculty, as well as the School Administrator
  - An Advisory Committee is in place that meets twice a year and is composed of members of the community and representatives from local health care facilities.
  - The VN program director and both full-time faculty and part-time faculty make up the faculty organization and meet a minimum of every other month.
  - Upon admission into the program, each student receives a booklet with the Texas Nursing Practice Act and all the Texas BON rules and regulations. Testing on this jurisprudence content is conducted throughout the program of study.
  - Faculty are available from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. day every Friday to tutor any student requesting assistance.
  - Emphasis on nursing professionalism and the process of rewarding students' achievement is demonstrated by the pinning and graduation ceremonies during which students/graduates are presented certificates with state seals by a state representative.
  - Faculty conduct ongoing reviews of content for students throughout the program of study and conduct a 2-3 day content review at the end of the program of study using NCLEX-like questions to assist with the students' preparation for the NCLEX-PN® examination.
- In early December 2008, as soon as the program learned the preliminary results from the 2008 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates indicated that the program's pass rates would be below 80%, the program immediately began addressing possible causative factors for the candidates' NCLEX-PN® examination failures by contacting BON staff and requesting the failing candidates' NCLEX-PN® Candidate Performance Reports.

### Cons-

- The November 19-20, 2008 survey visit revealed the following areas of concern: (See Attachment One), including:
  - The two full-time nursing faculty plus the director and four part-time nursing faculty have the qualifications required in the rule, but most do not have experience teaching nursing in an academic setting.
  - Lack of current student policies related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission to program that clearly reflect the intent of Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations in regard to patient safety and unprofessional conduct.
  - Required student activities/assignments are present in several courses, e.g., independent development of nursing care plans, that are outside the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses as outlined in Rule 217.11(2)(A)(iii) related to *Standards of Nursing Practice*.
  - A formal testing program throughout the program of study with mandatory remediation is not being utilized.
  - Lack of specific criteria for faculty to use in the selection of new affiliating agencies/clinical facilities or clinical practice settings.
  - The Fundamentals and Personal Development courses lack specific mention of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations, including the Texas Standards of Nursing Practice, in the course objectives and content outline.
- Preliminary results for the program's 2008 pass rate show a 51.33% pass rate with only one (1) remaining candidate from the first cohort of thirteen (13) graduates to take the NCLEX-PN® examination. If this remaining candidate passes the examination, the program's pass rate will still be below 80%.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Move to continue the initial approval status of St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology Vocational Nursing Educational Program based on the 2008 NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rates, review of the 2008 Nursing Educational Program Information Survey (NEPIS), and report of the survey visit conducted by BON staff, accept the report of the survey visit, and issue the commendations, recommendations, and requirements to be met based on staff recommendation, as indicated in the attached letter (See Attachment Two).

**SURVEY VISIT  
SUMMARY REPORT**

**NAME OF NURSING PROGRAM:** St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology in Weslaco, Texas Vocational Nursing (VN) Educational Program

**NURSING PROGRAM DIRECTOR:** Marta Elva Perez, MSN, RN, VN Program Director

**REASON FOR SURVEY VISIT:** Focused survey visit to evaluate the program's compliance with Texas BON rules and regulations in regard to initial approval status.

**DATE(S) OF SURVEY VISIT:** November 19-20, 2008

**SURVEY VISITOR(S):** Robbin Wilson, MSN, RN

**TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING (BON) APPROVAL STATUS:** Initial

**DATE OF LAST BON SURVEY VISIT:** June 7, 2007 prior to Texas BON approval of the program

**NAME OF ACCREDITING/LICENSING AGENCIES:** No accreditation. Licensed by the Texas Workforce Commission

**ACTIVITIES DURING SURVEY VISIT:**

Board staff:

- Met with the School Administrator, Martha Montelongo;
- Interviewed Marta Elva Perez, MSN, RN, VN Program Director;
- Interviewed VN students and VN faculty;
- Reviewed records and documents;
- Conducted a summary conference with the College Administrator, the VN Program Director, and the VN faculty.

**SURVEY VISIT FINDINGS:**

Positive findings revealed during the survey visit include:

- The VN Program Director and VN faculty, as well as the School Administrator, are dedicated to the success of the program and the success of the students.
- The VN program has an Advisory Committee composed of members of the community and representatives from local health care facilities. The Advisory Committee meets twice a year.
- The faculty organization, consisting of the VN program director and both full-time faculty and part-time faculty, meets a minimum of every other month.
- Faculty believe in an open-door policy and the faculty are available from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. every Friday to tutor any student requesting assistance.
- Upon admission into the program, each student receives a booklet with the Texas Nursing Practice Act and all the Texas BON rules and regulations. Testing on this jurisprudence content is conducted throughout the program of study.
- The VN program conducts a pinning ceremony for each cohort of students four (4) months after the cohort's start of the program of study. Students wear blue scrubs until after the pinning ceremony and then students wear white uniforms. Additionally, the female students wear a white cap with a black half-stripe and the male students wear a black half-stripe on their sleeves. Upon graduation, the students receive black full-stripes to wear on their caps or sleeves, as appropriate. During interviews with graduates from the program, positive comments were heard regarding the positive impact the pinning and graduation ceremonies, the wearing of white uniforms and caps and the black half and full stripes have on the students' attitudes toward nursing professionalism.

- State Representative Armando Martinez, District 39, has attended both pinning ceremonies and the graduation ceremony. At both the pinning and graduation ceremonies Mr. Martinez presented the students/graduates certificates of achievement with a State of Texas seal.
- The nursing faculty conduct ongoing reviews of content for students throughout the program of study and conduct a 2-3 day content review at the end of the program of study using NCLEX-like questions to assist with the students' preparation for the NCLEX-PN® examination.

Areas of concern revealed during the survey visit include:

- There are two full-time nursing faculty plus the VN program director and four part-time nursing faculty employed and all have the qualifications required in the rule, but most do not have experience teaching nursing in an academic setting.
- The program does not have current student policies in place related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission to program that clearly reflect the intent of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations in regard to patient safety and unprofessional conduct.
- Required student activities/assignments are present in several courses, e.g., independent development of nursing care plans, that are outside the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses as outlined in Rule 217.11(2)(A)(iii) related to *Standards of Nursing Practice*.
- While informal tutoring is available to students upon request and an ongoing tutoring period is designated, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Fridays, a formal testing program throughout the program of study with mandatory remediation is not being utilized.
- The faculty does not have specific criteria in place to use in the selection of new affiliating agencies/clinical facilities or clinical practice settings.
- According to interviews with the faculty and students, jurisprudence content is emphasized throughout the program of study, especially at the beginning and end of the program of study, but the syllabi for the Fundamentals and Personal Development courses lack specific mention of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations, including the Texas Standards of Nursing Practice, in the course objectives and content outline.

#### **PROPOSED COMMENDATIONS:**

1. Commend the VN program director and VN faculty, as well as the school administrator, for their dedication to the success of the program and the success of the VN students.
2. Commend the program for the emphasis on nursing professionalism and the process of rewarding students' achievement as demonstrated by having pinning and graduation ceremonies with a State Representative presenting the students/graduates certificates with state seals.

#### **PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The VN program director and the school administrator are encouraged to explore the feasibility of acquiring outside educational consultants experienced in nursing education to conduct ongoing training for the VN faculty with an emphasis on, but not limited to, curriculum development, teaching techniques, student evaluation methods, test analysis and test construction.
2. The VN program director and VN faculty are encouraged to explore the feasibility of purchasing and utilizing a total testing program throughout the program of study with mandatory remediation for students not passing any unit or course examination.
3. The VN program director and VN faculty are encouraged to explore the feasibility of incorporating a mandatory formal NCLEX-PN® preparatory course into the program of study just before students graduate from the program.

#### **PROPOSED REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Rule 214.8(d) related to *Students*: A review of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the VN Educational Program syllabi and interviews with the VN program director, VN faculty, and students revealed that the program does not have current student policies in place related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission to the program that clearly reflect the intent of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations in regard to patient safety and unprofessional conduct. **Therefore**, the VN program director and the VN faculty shall develop/revise current student policies related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program,

and readmission to the program that clearly reflect the intent of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations in regard to patient safety and unprofessional conduct as outlined in Rule 214.8(e)(1-4).

2. Rule 214.9(a) related to *Program of Study*. A review of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the VN Educational Program syllabi and interviews with the VN program director, VN faculty, and students revealed that required student activities/assignments are present in several courses, e.g., independent development of nursing care plans, that are outside the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses as outlined in Rule 217.11(2)(A)(iii) related to *Standards of Nursing Practice* and the Fundamentals and Personal Development courses lack specific mention of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations, including the Texas Standards of Nursing Practice, in the course objectives and content outline. **Therefore**, the VN program director and the VN faculty shall revise course requirements/assignments to eliminate those activities/assignments that are not part of the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses in Texas and revise the syllabi for the Fundamentals and Personal Development courses to include specific mention of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations, including the Texas Standards of Nursing Practice, in the course objectives and content outline.
3. Rule 214.10(b) related to *Clinical Learning Experiences*: A review of the Faculty Handbook and interviews with the VN program director and the VN faculty revealed that faculty does not have specific criteria in place to use in the selection of new affiliating agencies/clinical facilities or clinical practice settings. **Therefore**, the VN program director and the VN faculty shall develop specific criteria to use in the selection of new affiliating agencies/clinical facilities or clinical practice settings that address safety and the need for students to achieve the program outcomes (goals) and course objectives through the practice of nursing care or observational experiences taking into consideration those areas outlined in the rule.

**DRAFT LETTER**

January 29, 2009

Marta Elva Perez, MSN, RN, Program Director  
Vocational Nursing Educational Program  
St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology  
3001 North Westgate  
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Dear Ms. Perez:

At the January 22-23, 2009 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) considered the initial approval status of the St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology Vocational Nursing (VN) Educational Program in Weslaco, Texas, based on the 2008 NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rates, review of the 2008 Nursing Educational Program Information Survey (NEPIS), and report of the November 19-20, 2008 survey visit conducted by board staff.

Based upon the review of documents, it was the decision of the Texas BON to continue the Initial Approval status of the St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology VN Educational Program, accept the survey visit report, and issue the following commendations, recommendations, and requirements to be met.

**COMMENDATIONS:**

1. Commend the VN program director and VN faculty, as well as the school administrator, for their dedication to the success of the program and the success of the VN students.
2. Commend the program for the emphasis on nursing professionalism and the process of rewarding students' achievement as demonstrated by having pinning and graduation ceremonies with a State Representative presenting the students/graduates certificates with state seals.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The VN program director and the school administrator are encouraged to explore the feasibility of acquiring outside educational consultants experienced in nursing education to conduct ongoing training for the VN faculty with an emphasis on, but not limited to, curriculum development, teaching techniques, student evaluation methods, test analysis and test construction.
2. The VN program director and VN faculty are strongly to explore the feasibility of purchasing and utilizing a total testing program throughout the program of study with mandatory remediation for students not passing any unit or course examination.
3. The VN program director and VN faculty are strongly encouraged to explore the feasibility of incorporating a mandatory formal NCLEX-PN® preparatory course into the program of study just before students graduate from the program.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Rule 214.8(d) related to *Students* requires that "The program shall have well-defined written nursing student policies based upon statutory and Board requirements, including nursing student admission, dismissal, progression, and graduation policies that shall be developed, implemented and enforced." A review of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the VN Educational Program syllabi and interviews with the VN program director, VN faculty, and students revealed that the program does not have current student policies in place related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission to the program that clearly reflect the intent of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations in regard to patient safety and unprofessional conduct. **Therefore**, the VN program director and the VN faculty shall develop/revise current student policies

related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission to the program that clearly reflect the intent of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations in regard to patient safety and unprofessional conduct as outlined in Rule 214.8(e)(1-4).

2. Rule 214.9(a) related to *Program of Study* requires, in pertinent part, that “The program of study shall include both didactic and clinical learning experiences and shall be . . . designed to prepare graduates to practice according to the Standards of Nursing Practice as set forth in the Board's Rules and Regulations . . .” A review of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, the VN Educational Program syllabi and interviews with the VN program director, VN faculty, and students revealed that required student activities/assignments are present in several courses, e.g., independent development of nursing care plans, that are outside the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses as outlined in Rule 217.11(2)(A)(iii) related to *Standards of Nursing Practice* and the Fundamentals and Personal Development courses lack specific mention of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulation, including the Texas Standards of Nursing Practice, in the course objectives and content outline. **Therefore**, the VN program director and the VN faculty shall revise course requirements/assignments to eliminate those activities/assignments that are not part of the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses in Texas as outlined in Rule 217.11(2)(A)(iii) related to *Standards of Nursing Practice* and revise the syllabi for the Fundamentals and Personal Development courses to include specific mention of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations, including the Texas Standards of Nursing Practice, in the course objectives and content outline.
3. Rule 214.10(b) related to *Clinical Learning Experiences*: A review of the Faculty Handbook and interviews with the VN program director and the VN faculty revealed that faculty does not have specific criteria in place to use in the selection of new affiliating agencies/clinical facilities or clinical practice settings. **Therefore**, the VN program director and the VN faculty shall develop specific criteria to use in the selection of new affiliating agencies/clinical facilities or clinical practice settings which address safety and the need for students to achieve the program outcomes (goals) and course objectives through the practice of nursing care or observational experiences taking into consideration those areas outlined in the rule.

Recommendations are suggestions based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rule. The program must respond, but in a method of the program's choice. Requirements are mandatory criterion based on program assessment directly related to the rule that shall be addressed in the manner prescribed.

Documentation of the status of the program's address of the above recommendations and requirements to be met shall be submitted to the Board office by March 31, 2009 with a final status report submitted by June 1, 2009. If you have any questions, or if we may be of any assistance, please contact board staff at (512) 305-6815 or by email at [robbin.wilson@bon.state.tx.us](mailto:robbin.wilson@bon.state.tx.us).

Sincerely,

Linda R. Rounds, PhD, RN, FNP  
Board President

Robbin Wilson, MSN, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

xc: Martha R. Montelongo, School Administrator, St. Michael's School of Nursing and Technology