

**Report of a Partnership Between Nursing Education and Practice
Rural Education Nursing Consortium
Frank Phillips College, Amarillo College and Five Rural Hospitals
In the Texas Panhandle**

Summary of Report:

Dr. Shannon Carroll, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at Frank Phillips College (FPC) notified the Board of Nursing on May 6, 2020, that “Frank Phillips College in Borger, Texas, and Amarillo College (AC) in Amarillo, Texas, have joined rural hospitals in Borger, Dalhart, Dumas, Hereford, and Perryton to form the Rural Nursing Education Consortium (RNEC), a partnership designed to help rural communities fill a great need for qualified nurses at hospitals, clinics, and doctor offices across the Panhandle of Texas.”

Historical Perspective:

- FPC is a small community college that was established in 1948 in Borger, Texas, located 40.6 miles north of Amarillo, Texas. The college has extension campuses at Perryton, Dalhart, and Hereford. FPC serves nine of the most northern counties in the Texas Panhandle and enrolls about 1,348 students, most of whom are part-time. FPC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). FPC operates a Board-approved vocational nursing (VN) education program.
- AC is a public community college in Amarillo, Texas, that was established in 1929 and enrolls over 10,000 students. AC is also accredited by SACSCOC, approved by THECB, and operates Board-approved VN and associate degree nursing (ADN) nursing education programs.
- Responding to the shortage of nurses in rural hospitals in the Panhandle, five hospitals and two community colleges met in late 2019, and established the RNEC. The leaders from the hospitals and colleges designed a curriculum whereby students living in the five areas could earn a VN certificate from FPC with classes provided by Instructional Television (ITV) and face to face classes to students in Borger, Dalhart, and Perryton. After students complete the VN program and take the NCLEX-PN® examination, they will enroll in ADN courses from AC. Upon completion of the ADN track, the students would be awarded the ADN from AC, and apply to take the NCLEX-RN® examination.
- The colleges have financial and community support from the hospitals in Borger, Dalhart, Dumas, Hereford, and Perryton to help support the costs of the programs. The hospitals need a larger pool of LVN and ADN nurses who will work in their local hospitals and stay in the community.
- Further details are provided in the slides in Attachment #1.

Requirements in the Process:

- The expansion has been approved by the Higher Education Regional Council in May 2019 with a follow-up meeting in May 2020. SACSCOC has approved the project.
- Approval from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is in process.
- AC holds approval for extension sites in Dumas and Hereford.
- Board of Nursing staff approved extension sites for FPC at Hereford and Dumas.
- Board Staff also approved a major curriculum change for the FPC VN program streamlining the curriculum for a better fit for articulation with the AC ADN curriculum.

Pros:

- The five hospitals reached out to FPC and AC because of their serious need for nurses.
- FPC and AC decided to collaborate to meet the needs of all five communities rather than each college beginning new programs at each campus.
- Each site has distance learning equipment.
- The quality of instruction will be enhanced with a home-based nursing instructor in the classroom at each site. Each course will be taught by the faculty member with expertise in the scheduled content.
- All lab spaces will have similar equipment, simulation capabilities, and supplies.
- The Program Director will visit all locations several times during each semester.
- An ongoing assessment of the success of the program will be implemented.
- Each hospital will provide funding to cover expenses over and beyond income from tuition.
- The consortium has received approximately one million dollars in grant funding to provide needed equipment and supplies.
- The projected implementation date is August 3, 2020.
- This is an positive model for the state to meet the needs for rural nurses in Texas.

Cons:

- This initiative is a work in progress.

This report is for information only. No Board action is necessary.

Rural Nursing Education Consortium

AMARILLO COLLEGE & FRANK PHILLIPS COLLEGE

PROVIDING NURSING CREDENTIALS TO SMALL, RURAL
TOWNS IN THE PANHANDLE

BETHANY CALLAWAY, MSN, DIRECTOR OF RNEC

DR. SHANNON CARROLL, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Foundations

- ❑ Four hospitals facing nursing shortages
- ❑ Two community colleges with excellent nursing programs
- ❑ Hospitals will underwrite the cost.
- ❑ Amarillo College and Frank Phillips College will share spaces.
- ❑ Frank Phillips College provides LVN certificate program.
- ❑ Amarillo College provides ADN program.
- ❑ RNEC Executive Board (four hospital CEO's, two college Presidents)

Progress

- ❑ Board approval for all hospitals and colleges
- ❑ Memorandum of Understanding signed by all six executives
- ❑ First Substantive Change for FPC to offer full program at Hereford and Dumas submitted to SACSCOC
- ❑ Conversation with the Texas Board of Nursing
- ❑ Approval of curriculum changes by FPC and AC
- ❑ Notifications to FPC Board of Regents and Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee

Employees

- ❑ Director of RNEC: Bethany Callaway, FPC
- ❑ Faculty for each campus approved by FPC and AC as well as Executive Board.
- ❑ Each campus has full-time LVN instructor and full-time ADN instructor.
- ❑ Instructors will stay with students at their campus.
- ❑ Campuses include FPC Borger and Dalhart and AC Dumas and Hereford.

Course Delivery

- ❑ Courses will be delivered via Live, Instructional Television using TEAMS and identical equipment.
- ❑ Courses will originate at the home campus of the instructor and delivered to the other three campuses via ITV.
- ❑ Each campus has a technology expert to assist with issues.
- ❑ Each campus has adequate bandwidth to send and receive.
- ❑ Faculty will be trained in best practices for live delivery.
- ❑ Faculty will be able to teach the class in case of connectivity issues.

Next Steps

- ❑ Amarillo College will submit a Substantive Change application to offer ADN in Borger and Dalhart.
- ❑ FPC and AC will submit application for extension sites to BON.
- ❑ FPC will submit certificate changes to THECB for approval.
- ❑ Faculty will be hired for each location.
- ❑ Clinical sites will be secured in each town for both programs.
- ❑ Marketing campaign will begin in June, 2020.
- ❑ Admissions to LVN program will begin in June, 2020 for each location.

Notes of Interest

- ❑ Each college has autonomy over its program, but RNEC will coordinate and trouble-shoot on behalf of the colleges.
- ❑ The RNEC model is a transition program from LVN to ADN.
- ❑ Amarillo College and Frank Phillips College have a strong and historical working relationship.
- ❑ College presidents and CAO are involved in RNEC to a degree that they can maintain compliance and accreditation.
- ❑ Hospital CEO's will not influence the colleges in such a way as would be inconsistent with the missions and purposes of the colleges, including admission, grading, and curriculum decisions.