

**Consideration of Proposal for Innovative Pilot Project  
 Vista College in El Paso, Texas  
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request:**

Consider the Innovative Pilot Project Proposal submitted by Vista College Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in El Paso, Texas, requesting a waiver of Rule 214.9(a)(1) requirement for a minimum of 1,398 clock hours in a VN education program: 558 hours for classroom instruction and 840 hours for clinical practice. The innovative pilot project proposes a reduction in hours by a total of 213 hours (below the 1,398 required hours) for both classroom time and clinical practice in an approved revised curriculum.

**Historical Perspective:**

- Vista College (formerly known as Computer Career Center) in El Paso has been in operation since 2006.
- Tami Little, DNP, RN, CNE has been the Program Director for all sites since August 2015.
- Vista College has a main campus for VN education in El Paso and three (3) extension campuses in Amarillo, Beaumont, and Lubbock.
- Vista College reported the following enrollments for the campuses in the 2015 Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS):

➤ El Paso – main campus	111 students
➤ Amarillo – extension site	22 students
➤ Beaumont – extension site	41 students
➤ Lubbock – extension site	44 students
Total	218 students

- According to Rule 214.3(b)(2), instruction provided for extension sites shall be consistent with the main campus program's current curriculum and shall enable students to meet the same goals, objectives, and competencies.
- Since three (3) of the sites are extensions of the El Paso campus, the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for all sites are combined. The Beaumont and Amarillo sites were recently added and they have not had candidates to be included in the pass rate yet.
- NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five (5) years are presented below:

Examination Year	BON Approval Status/Requirements	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First-Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2015	Full	86.18% (preliminary)	131/152
2014	Full	89.47%	85/95
2013	Full with Warning	67.26%	76/113
2012	Full – Self-Study	74.55%	41/55
2011	Full	84.06%	58/69

### **General Background Information Related to Innovative Project Proposals:**

- Rule 227 provides established procedures whereby nursing education programs may apply to conduct an innovative pilot project that requires a waiver of Board rules.
- According to the rule, pilot projects must have a defined length, not to exceed two (2) years. The length of an approved pilot program may be extended upon applicant request and approval by the Board.
- Rule 227 also requires that all pilot projects shall be subject to intermittent monitoring and evaluation by the Board to ensure compliance and to gather evidence that the program goals are met.
- The Board has entertained and approved six (6) innovative pilot projects in professional nursing education programs since this rule was approved by the Board in April 2005; it was revised in January 2014 to expand the opportunity to VN education programs.

### **Background Information Related to the Vista College Innovative Pilot Project:**

- During meetings of the Board-appointed Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) on July 31, 2015, and September 18, 2015, members discussed the requirements in Rule 214 for minimum didactic and clinical hours in VN education programs. Over the last few years, VN education program directors have expressed concerns that the required hours may be too high and may need to be reevaluated.
- This issue follows reports from nursing education programs, from clinical settings, and from concerned constituents that there is increasing scarcity of clinical placements for the growing enrollment in nursing education programs.
- After much discussion and acknowledgement that there was not sufficient evidence from experience or research to support a change in the required hours, ACE recommended advising VN programs of the possibility of conducting innovative pilot projects to test the effectiveness of alternate hours in class and clinical and to provide evidence of the outcomes. Board Staff have encouraged interested VN programs to design an innovative pilot project to evaluate the effectiveness of alternatives.
- Vista College submitted the first proposal to be received in the Board Office that requests a waiver of the required program hours to demonstrate the effectiveness of an alternative to the required classroom and clinical hours (See Attachments #1, #2, #3, and #4 for the Vista College Proposal and Addenda to Proposal).
- As described in the Vista College proposal, the faculty and administrators recently designed a major curriculum change that updated and enhanced their program of study. The curriculum change focuses on “need to know” and essential content, and includes all required content listed in Rule 214.
- Rule 214 describes the process for approval of curriculum changes as one where Board Staff review and approve all major curriculum changes based upon compliance with Board rules, currency, and sound educational principles. A Major Curriculum Change Proposal was submitted by Vista College to Board Staff and approved on February 10, 2016, for implementation on September 6, 2016.
- With the curriculum plan in place, the faculty and administrators considered the optimal hour allocation for classroom and clinical learning experiences, and are requesting a waiver from Rule 214 to permit a reduction of 213 total hours.
- During the implementation of the Pilot Project, the program will be responsible to comply with all other requirements in Rule 214. If the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate falls below 80%, the program will be required to submit a Self-Study Report and will be subject to the same standards for ongoing program approval.

- Students interested in enrolling at Vista College will be informed that the program is engaged in a pilot project and an acknowledgement form must be signed by students indicating their understanding of the nature of the pilot program (See Attachment #5).
- Rule 227 lists general selection criteria for the applications, as well as rules for monitoring and evaluating innovative pilot projects.
- The following narrative provides an evaluation of the proposal based upon the selection criteria in the rule.

## **Evaluation of Proposed Pilot Project:**

### Description and Rationale for the Pilot Project

- Although the new curriculum plan reduces the total number of program hours by 213 hours, the content of the curriculum is substantially equivalent to programs with 1,398 total curriculum hours. Primarily, the program reduced redundancy and duplicity from their curriculum without sacrificing focus on content required skill mastery. (See Tex. Occ. Code §301.1605.)
- The new curriculum consists of 465 didactic hours and 720 clinical hours with a focus on quality instruction in both didactic and clinical experiences. (This represents a reduction of 93 hours in didactic and 120 in clinical hours.)
- The change in the curriculum of fewer required hours is only possible by waiving the Rule. The reduced hours are expected to remedy the issue of recruiting and retaining an adequate number of qualified faculty and to lessen burdens on clinical facilities. These changes do not require additional financial resources. Letters of support from administration are included in the proposal.

### Methodology

- Design of Plan: Initially, faculty and administrators participated in a four (4) day workshop to evaluate and revise the total curriculum. Course changes were based upon eliminating redundant content and reordering content to improve leveling, integrating material where possible, adding new health assessment and pathophysiology courses, placing greater emphasis on pharmacology, reducing hours in specialty areas, and increasing hours for mental health content for aging clients. No more than twenty-five (25) percent of clinical hours in medical-surgical clinical courses and no more than fifty (50) percent of clinical hours in specialty courses will be dedicated to simulation. Simulation experiences will be implemented slowly throughout the curriculum to ensure that there is standardization across campuses and that student learning experiences are effective.
- Students will be enrolled in the new curriculum with reduced hours on September 6, 2016, if approved by the Board.
- Following Board approval, the changes in required hours in the curriculum must also be approved by the Texas Workforce Commission and by the Council on Occupational Education (their accreditation organization). (These agencies defer to Board of Nursing for initial approval of nursing curricula.)

### Expected Outcomes and Measurement

The program will base their ongoing evaluation on criteria including:

- Student performance during each semester indicating a need for remediation based upon exam scores and clinical performance; and

- NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates at each site following graduation of the first cohort completing the program using the revised curriculum.

The program will also follow the performance of the graduates through employer surveys in the future.

#### Timeline for Project

- If approved, the program will be implemented beginning September 6, 2016, at all sites.
- Data will be compared to the previous year to determine if students meet the same benchmarks with fewer hours.

#### Controls to Maintain Quality

- The program will track students by continually monitoring grades in each course to identify at-risk students for a referral to the director. Course faculty will meet with individual students to assist them to develop a Success Plan that addresses remediation needs.
- Remediation activities to meet students' specific needs will include individual and group tutoring, modules, meetings with the Student Services Coordinator, and counseling.
- The Student Services Coordinator will also be a resource for addressing specific psychosocial needs of students.
- In addition to grades, students will be monitored for attendance, clinical performance, standardized test scores, results from math competency tests, and behavioral issues, followed by a post-intervention performance review.

#### **Staff Rationale for Recommendation:**

Vista College administrators and faculty have revised the VN education curriculum for quality improvement and have designed the innovative pilot project to determine the effectiveness of reduced hours in the classroom and clinical learning experiences. The proposal will provide an opportunity for a nursing education program to test a new model and will provide valuable data for future discussion. The length for the project is based upon the two (2) year period defined in Rule 227.

In order for Board Staff to provide monitoring and evaluation to ensure compliance with the criteria in Rule 227 and to obtain evidence that program goals are being met, the program shall be required to provide periodic data related to student need for remediation, success of remediation, graduation rates, and NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates, to ensure that the continuing success of the program using reduced hours.

#### **Staff Recommendation:**

Approve the Vista College Vocational Nursing Education Program Proposal for an Innovative Pilot Project, as outlined in the program's submitted application, to begin September 6, 2016, subject to the requirements/conditions outlined in the attached proposed Board Order (See Attachment #6 for draft letter and Board Order).



## Proposal for an Innovative Vocational Nursing Pilot Program

Vista College  
6101 Montana Ave  
El Paso, TX 79925

April 5, 2016

Tami Little, DNP, RN, CNE  
Corporate Director of Nursing  
[tlittle@vistacollege.edu](mailto:tlittle@vistacollege.edu)

Carol S. Kleinman, PhD, RN, NEA-BC  
Vice President of Nursing  
[ckleinman@vistacollege.edu](mailto:ckleinman@vistacollege.edu)

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## **Proposal for an Innovative Vocational Nursing Pilot Program**

Vista College seeks to implement an innovative vocational nursing program of 1185 hours at each of its locations. Vista College requests a waiver of currently required didactic and clinical hours that will reduce the hours in the revised curriculum by 93 didactic hours to 465 hours and clinical hours by 120 to 720 hours.

The college requests that the following Texas State Board of Nursing rules be waived:

- 214.9(a)(1) The program of study shall include both didactic and clinical learning experiences and shall be a minimum of 1,398 clock hours: 558 hours for classroom instruction and 840 hours for clinical practice
- 214.9(c)(3) Hours in clinical learning experiences shall be sufficient to meet program of study requirements with a minimum of 840 hours

### **Rationale and Support for the Innovative Pilot Program**

#### **Description of the rationale for the pilot program**

The decision to develop an innovative pilot program was initiated in response to an invitation from the Advisory Committee on Education of the Texas Board of Nursing. The invitation was extended to vocational nursing programs in the state to develop and submit pilot programs to study the effectiveness of fewer didactic and/or clinical hours.

One important rationale for the development of the pilot program is the constant challenge of recruiting qualified faculty. Reducing the number of required didactic and clinical hours will reduce the number of full time and clinical faculty needed and may decrease the level of competition among programs for the limited number of available faculty.

Another ongoing challenge is the difficulty in obtaining appropriate clinical sites for students in prelicensure nursing programs at all levels. Reducing the number of clinical hours required will also limit the number of sites and number of hours needed and may relieve some of the current congestion in clinical facilities. This pilot program provides an opportunity to test an alternative option to current clinical hour requirements.

The enhanced emphasis on “need to know” material required by a curriculum of fewer didactic hours improves nursing education through its focus on the inclusion of only essential course content. Curriculum drift and the perceived need of many faculty to cover all content possible results in students being overwhelmed with the volume of material they are required to learn and creates the risk of inadvertently teaching content beyond the established scope of vocational nurse practice.

In many academic programs, students are often non-traditional: older, with families, many single parents, and most working at least part time. Reducing the number of hours in the curriculum reduces the time burden and will allow students more time for study, work, and personal fulfillment, increasing their quality of life.

A random sampling of nursing education regulations of six nearby states reveals wide variation in clock hour requirements for vocational/practical nurse education programs. While not representative of the entire country, this information may provide some insight into the wide range of requirements for these VN/PN programs.

Nonetheless, it remains unclear whether differences in hourly requirements have an impact on program outcomes. Vista College plans to examine outcomes of the revised curriculum to determine if a program of fewer hours is able to demonstrate similar or improved outcomes as compared to the current curriculum.

**Random Sampling of Nursing Education Regulations**

State	Regulation	Vocational/Practical Nursing Program Requirement
Arizona	R4-19-206.C5	The curriculum is designed so that a student who completes the program will have the knowledge and skills necessary to function in accordance with the definition and scope of practice.
California	Section 5432	A minimum of 1530 hours of instruction comprised of 576 hours of theory and 954 clinical hours.
Colorado	3CCR 716-1 Chapter 2 3.15C	A minimum of 300 theory hours and 400 clinical hours, for a total of 700 hours are required.
Louisiana	Title 46 Part XLVII Subpart 1 Chapter 9 Subchapter E	A program shall cover a minimum of 1500 clock hours or an equivalent number of credit hours of scheduled instruction. At least 700 clock hours or an equivalent number of credit hours shall be the minimum number of theory hours and at least 800 clock hours or an equivalent number of credit hours shall be the minimum number of clinical hours.
New Mexico	16.12.3.12B3	The curriculum shall extend over a period of time sufficient to provide essential, sequences learning experiences which enable a student to develop nursing competence and shall evidence an organized pattern of instruction consistent with principles of learning and educational practice.
New York	Part 52.12	The program should be a minimum of nine months in length.
Oklahoma	485:10-5-9	A minimum of 1300 clock hours or 32 semester credit hours in practical nursing education including classroom, clinical, and laboratory courses; and not to exceed 1600 clock hours or 40 semester credit hours.

**Description of state and regional needs and priorities that affect the pilot program/Indication that state and regional needs and priorities are addressed**

Prelicensure curricula must be examined and evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure currency and efficacy. A quality imperative exists that mandates the examination of new curricular models to determine if current requirements best prepare graduates for safe, competent practice. Pilot programs are a small scale effort conducted to evaluate the feasibility of a larger change. Vista College’s pilot curricular model will provide data upon which reexamination of current curricular requirements may be based. Such evaluation may inform change that will have a positive impact on vocational nursing programs statewide.

Qualified faculty are difficult to find, especially in the smaller communities in which many programs are located, and many programs often compete for the limited pool of available instructors. Reduction of the number of teaching hours required reduces some of the demand and may alleviate some of the challenges related to faculty recruitment. Clinical courses are often taught by adjunct faculty; fewer clinical and lab hours similarly reduces adjunct faculty recruitment needs.

Obtaining appropriate clinical sites is the other challenge faced by virtually all programs in the state, regardless of educational level. The existence of multiple programs in the same area results in keen competition for available sites. Programs often struggle to find locations that provide good learning

experiences, particularly vocational nursing programs. Many healthcare facilities have reduced the number of days and hours available for student placements due to increased patient acuity, nurse burnout, and census-related issues. Some have reduced the number of students they will accept in each clinical group, often doubling the need for sites; this is especially true in specialty areas.

To further add to the challenge, healthcare facilities have become more selective about the programs from which students are accepted and tend to give priority to higher-degree educational programs for available placements. Reducing the number of clinical hours required in vocational nursing programs will reduce the need for clinical sites and the number of rotations needed.

Statewide limitations on such essential resources as faculty and clinical site availability mandate judicious use of these scarce resources. Reducing the number of clinical hours required in vocational nursing education programs will reduce the number of clinical faculty required and reduce the demands on limited clinical facilities, increasing opportunities for all.

#### **Administrative support for the pilot program**

A letter of support from the Chief Executive Officer of Education Futures Group is included as Appendix A.

#### **Financial support for the pilot program**

Vista College is a successful company that has been in operation since 2006. Of its 10 campuses, five have vocational or practical nursing programs, four in Texas. Vista has provided financial support for the programs since their inception and continues to do so. A letter from the Vista College Chief Financial Officer, included as Appendix B, clearly states the commitment of the college to ensure financial support of the pilot program.

As the proposed curriculum reduces required clock hours for students, no additional funds are needed to implement the pilot program. Existing equipment and supplies and current faculty are sufficient to meet needs; current levels of support are adequate to implement and maintain the pilot program. No additional funds will be required to implement the program at any of the campus locations.

#### **Evidence that the applicant is able to continue the pilot program on a long-term basis**

Education Futures Group, the Vista College parent company, has committed to sustain its vocational nursing programs indefinitely and has the financial ability to do so, ensuring the ability to continue the pilot program as long as needed.

### **Full Description and Methodology of the Innovated Pilot Program**

#### **Detailed description of the pilot program/Methodological design of the pilot program with details about full implementation**

The development of the pilot program requires many steps and will end with the successful implementation of the program, if approved, and positive outcomes. The Vista College pilot program began with a collaborative meeting of administrators and faculty from each of the Vista College Nursing Departments. The meeting began with a “blank slate” upon which participants expressed their vision and values related to a high performing vocational nursing program and the new nurses such a program would graduate. The outcome of that meeting allowed the process to continue with the development of a full methodological design for the implementation and evaluation of the pilot program.

### Curriculum Development

Vista College's new curriculum was developed during a four-day Curriculum Development Workshop held at its El Paso, Texas campus in August 2015. The Vista College Vice President of Nursing and the Corporate Director of Nursing facilitated the workshop, which included the Directors of Nursing of the four vocational nursing programs and faculty representatives from each.

Development of the new curriculum was based on a review of current courses, identification of more relevant courses and content appropriate to current LVN scope of practice, and consideration of the roles and responsibilities of vocational nurses in the workforce. Many of the faculty are or were vocational nurses engaged in clinical practice in addition to their teaching roles and contributed valued expertise related to foundational educational needs for vocational nurse graduates.

The process began with the faculty and leadership group developing a Nursing Department mission statement that flowed from and was integrated with the Vista College mission. The new mission statement formed the foundation upon which Student Learning Outcomes and Program Outcomes were built. A curriculum could then be developed based on identification of courses that allow students to achieve Student Learning and Program Outcomes.

Decisions related to clock hours required for didactic and clinical content for each course were made based on a number of elements. These include

- Texas Board of Nursing Differentiated Essential Competencies
- National Association of Professional Nurse education competencies
- National League for Nursing Practical Nurse Competencies and Outcomes
- Quality and Safety Education for Nurses competencies
- NCLEX Test Blueprint
- College metric-based data
- Scope of practice requirements
- Faculty feedback
- Student evaluations
- Evaluation of "need to know" material
- Time required for acquisition of clinical skills
- Time required for demonstration of application and synthesis of acquired knowledge

The resulting curriculum is based on identification of courses, content, and clock hour requirements that ensure students will achieve all stated outcomes. All content identified in Rule 215 is covered in the reduced-hour curriculum. Streamlining content, eliminating redundancy, and improving integration of concepts created efficiencies that allow enhanced focus on content related to professional values, the Nurse Practice Act, Standards of Nursing Practice and nursing care of adults, children and older adults, individuals with mental health problems and individuals in maternity settings.

Faculty then began the work of developing individual syllabi for each course; faculty teaching in the same content areas worked together across campuses to ensure consistency. Course descriptions and course competency objectives were developed. Course competency objectives were mapped to overarching Student Learning Outcomes and are the basis for the development of weekly objectives, resulting in detailed outlines for weekly content.

The curriculum will be taught over four 15-week semesters and requires 213 fewer clock hours than the 1398 currently required by the State of Texas. The new curriculum consists of 465 didactic hours and 720 clinical hours for a total of 1185 hours.

### Vocational Nursing Curriculum Plan

	Total Credits/ Contact Hours	Didactic Credits/ Contact Hours*	Laboratory Credits/ Contact Hours**	Clinical Credits/ Contact Hours***
<b>Semester 1</b>				
Introduction to Vocational Nsg	3/45	3/45	0/0	0/0
Anatomy and Physiology	3/45	3/45	0/0	0/0
Health Assessment	3/75	1/15	2/60	0/0
Medication Math	1/15	1/15	0/0	0/0
Medical Terminology	1/15	1/15	0/0	0/0
The Older Adult	2/30	2/30	0/0	0/0
	<b>13/225</b>	<b>11/165</b>	<b>2/60</b>	<b>0/0</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>				
Pathophysiology	2/30	2/30	0/0	0/0
Medical Surgical Nursing	8/240	3/45	2/60	3/135
Pharmacology I	2/30	2/30	0/0	0/0
	<b>12/300</b>	<b>7/105</b>	<b>2/60</b>	<b>3/135</b>
<b>Semester 3</b>				
Advanced Medical Surgical Nsg	7/210	3/45	1/30	3/135
Pharmacology II	2/30	2/30	0/0	0/0
Mental Health Nursing	3/75	2/30	0/0	1/45
	<b>12/315</b>	<b>7/105</b>	<b>1/30</b>	<b>4/180</b>
<b>Semester 4</b>				
Parent Child Health	4/90	3/45	0/0	1/45
Vocational Nursing Capstone	8/255	3/45	1/30	4/180
	<b>12/345</b>	<b>6/90</b>	<b>1/30</b>	<b>5/225</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>49/1185</b>	<b>31/465</b>	<b>6/180</b>	<b>12/540</b>

\*15 Didactic Contact Hours = 1 Semester Credit

\*\*30 Lab Contact Hours = 1 Semester Credit

\*\*\*45 Clinical Contact Hours = 1 Semester Credit

Changes made to the old curriculum were based on elements previously described. Specific content changes are described in the table below and changes in clock hours are presented in the subsequent table.

### Specific Content Changes

Course/Content Area	Changes Made	Rationale
Introduction to Vocational Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidation of content from several old courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminated redundant content</li> <li>Provides a more comprehensive overview of the role of the vocational nursing in the current healthcare environment</li> </ul>
Anatomy and Physiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New dedicated course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus through an entire course allows greater enhancement of learning than possible when the material was integrated throughout several courses</li> </ul>
Health Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New dedicated course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocational nurses are increasingly required to have high level assessment skills</li> <li>A dedicated assessment course ensures graduates</li> </ul>

		are better able to perform both comprehensive and focused assessments
Medication Math Medical Terminology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New dedicated courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggregates content that was previously integrated across several other courses</li> <li>• Early delivery provides a better foundation for subsequent courses</li> <li>• Allows early identification of students with mathematic and/or language challenges</li> </ul>
The Older Adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New dedicated course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaks to the reality that vocational nurses often find employment in community-based care settings</li> <li>• A significant portion of the patients cared for by VNs will be older adults</li> <li>• Course focuses on the processes of aging, the experience of aging, and the impact of both on aging adults and their health status</li> </ul>
Pathophysiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New dedicated course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides students a basic understanding of disease processes related to signs, symptoms, and health conditions observed in practice</li> </ul>
Medical Surgical Nursing Advanced Medical Surgical Nursing Vocational Nursing Capstone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical-surgical content taught in two courses with leveled laboratory skills</li> <li>• New Capstone course developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courses were revised to ensure content is leveled appropriately through teaching knowledge and skills of increasing complexity</li> <li>• Nursing skills are leveled throughout the sequence of medical-surgical courses</li> <li>• Laboratory hours assigned to each course reinforce all skills in prior courses and cumulatively before graduation in preparation of workplace requirements</li> </ul>
Pharmacology I Pharmacology II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content is taught over two terms instead of one</li> <li>• Courses are now aligned with medical-surgical courses</li> <li>• Increased from 30 didactic hours to 60 didactic hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of vocational nurses often has a significant emphasis on medication administration</li> <li>• Increasing course hours allows the inclusion of additional pharmacology content to better graduates for practice</li> <li>• Pairing with medication-surgical courses facilitates students' learning the connection between pharmacological therapies and nursing care</li> </ul>
Parent Child Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased total course hours by combining Obstetrical and Pediatric courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhances focus on the family unit</li> <li>• Decreased content hours are consistent with the NCLEX test blueprint</li> <li>• Vocational nursing scope of practice limits the amount of content needed</li> </ul>
Mental Health Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased from 8 clinical hours to 45 clinical hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course focuses on the mental health needs of the older adult population</li> <li>• Increased clinical hours enhances students' ability to apply theoretical content to practice</li> </ul>

## Change to Curriculum Hours

Lecture Content Areas	Current Curriculum	New Curriculum	Rationale
Foundational Nursing Concepts	180 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Science</li> <li>• Basic Nursing</li> <li>• Foundations of Nursing</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> </ul>	195 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anatomy and Physiology</li> <li>• Health Assessment</li> <li>• Medical Terminology</li> <li>• Medication Math</li> <li>• The Older Adult</li> <li>• Pathophysiology</li> </ul>	The previous four courses had considerable overlap in some content yet other content remained uncovered. Separate courses were created that allowed specific content to be covered in a more clear and efficient manner. Courses in Medical Terminology and Medication Calculation allow students to focus exclusively on those content areas in a condensed timeframe during the first semester. A specific course in Anatomy and Physiology provides focused information on the structure and function of the human body and a dedicated course in Pathophysiology builds on that material with deviations from normal function due to disease.
Pharmacology	30 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pharmacology</li> </ul>	60 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pharmacology I</li> <li>• Pharmacology II</li> </ul>	The amount of content required by vocational nurses to safely and competently administer medications mandated a significant increase in the number of hours taught. Two courses were developed and paired with the med/surg courses to provide context for student learning.
Medical Surgical Nursing Concepts	240 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing in Health and Illness I</li> <li>• Nursing in Health and Illness II</li> <li>• Nursing in Health and Illness III</li> </ul>	135 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical Surgical Nursing</li> <li>• Advanced Medical Surgical Nursing</li> <li>• Vocational Nursing Capstone</li> </ul>	Evaluation of content in the med/surg course sequence through a comprehensive content analysis revealed significant overlap and redundancy of material being taught. Nursing were also found to be teaching material outside the VN scope of practice. Content was not previously mapped to the NCLEX-PN test plan; appropriate mapping resulted in a need for fewer content hours. Content sequence was revised and streamlined, with content moving from simple to complex. The sequence now culminates in a capstone course that allows students to synthesize previously acquired knowledge and apply it to clinical situations of increased complexity than had been available.
Maternal Child Nursing Concepts	90 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Health Nursing</li> <li>• Maternal Newborn Nursing</li> </ul>	45 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Child Health</li> </ul>	Examination of the NCLEX Test Plan reveals that only a small portion of the test is based on knowledge of obstetrical or pediatric content. Previous courses had included a vast amount of content had suffered "curriculum creep" due to the perceived need to include all material covered in the text. In addition, job placement for VNs is rarely

			in the obstetric or pediatric environment. Content was reviewed, dramatically decreased, and combined into a single course.
Mental Health Nursing Concepts	30 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health and Illness</li> </ul>	30 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health Nursing</li> </ul>	Didactic hours remained the same but the emphasis has changed with additional hours dedicated to the mental health needs of the older adult.
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>465</b>	
<b>Lab/Clinical Content</b>	<b>Current Curriculum</b>	<b>New Curriculum</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Foundational Nursing Concepts	180 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Nursing Skills</li> <li>• Pharmacology</li> </ul>	60 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Assessment</li> </ul>	The previous pharmacology course contained 60 hours of lab that included medication calculation and medication administration in addition to repetitious ATI modules that did not promote learning. The new curriculum contains a separate Medication Calculation course; medication administration is taught in the med-surg courses. Basic Nursing skills covered all nursing skills and front-loaded these before students were ready. The content has now been distributed more appropriately through the med-surg sequence and the old course was eliminated.
Medical Surgical Nursing	555 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Vocational Nursing I</li> <li>• Clinical Vocational Nursing II</li> <li>• Clinical Vocational Nursing III</li> </ul>	570 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical Surgical Nursing</li> <li>• Advanced Medical Surgical Nursing</li> <li>• Vocational Nursing Capstone</li> </ul>	Hours were revised to provide additional lab instruction and to accommodate the capstone course in which students attend clinical experiences in the same setting two days each week.
Maternal Child Nursing	90 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Health Clinical</li> <li>• Maternal Newborn Clinical</li> </ul>	45hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Child Health</li> </ul>	As stated above, the reality of vocational nurse employment patterns do not indicate a need for as many clinical hours as had been provided.
Mental Health Nursing	45hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health and Illness</li> </ul>	45hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health Nursing</li> </ul>	No change was made to the number of clinical hours.
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>720</b>	

### Simulation

Simulation experiences will be integrated into clinical courses over a period of time. Implementation of simulation as an alternative to direct patient care requires an adequate number of faculty members who are formally trained in simulation pedagogy including theory-based debriefing and equipment and supplies to create a realistic environment. Simulation will be implemented based on the conditions described within the NCSBN study to effectively substitute simulation for traditional clinical experiences.

Once faculty are prepared and simulation equipment and supplies are acquired, no more than 25% of clinical hours in medical surgical courses and no more than 50% of clinical hours in specialty courses will be dedicated to simulation . Simulated experiences will be implemented slowly through the curriculum to ensure standardization across campuses and student learning experiences are effective.

The chart below presents the maximum number of hours that may be dedicated to simulation experiences in each clinical course.

**Maximum Clinical Hours Dedicated to Simulated Experiences**

<b>Courses to include simulation</b>	<b>Total clinical hours</b>	<b>Maximum clinical hours dedicated to simulation</b>
Medical Surgical Nursing	135	33
Advanced Medical Surgical Nursing	135	33
Mental Health Nursing	45	22
Parent Child Health	45	22
Vocational Nursing Capstone	180	45
<b>Total Clinical Hours</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>155</b>

Leadership and Faculty Orientation

Extensive faculty orientation to the new curriculum is essential. The Vice President of Nursing and Corporate Director of Nursing will initially orient campus-based nursing leadership: Directors of Nursing and Academic Coordinators. They will follow up with a comprehensive orientation on each campus in sessions that will include the Directors of Nursing, Academic Coordinators, and faculty. Admissions representatives, who are the first individuals to speak with perspective nursing students, will also be oriented extensively to the new curriculum through PowerPoint and live presentations. This information is included in the table below which presents the entire methodological design of the pilot program.

### Methodological Design of the Pilot Program

Actions	Person Responsible	Completion date	Expected outcomes	Evaluation methods for outcomes	Follow up actions
<b>Curriculum Revision</b>					
Develop new curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty retreat with representatives from each campus to develop curriculum</li> <li>Faculty collaborate to develop individual syllabi</li> </ul>	Vice President of Nursing  Corporate Director of Nursing  Directors of Nursing  Nursing faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8/2015</li> <li>1/2016</li> </ul>	Revised VN curriculum including new: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nursing Department Mission Statement</li> <li>Student Learning Outcomes</li> <li>Program Outcomes</li> <li>Curriculum Plan</li> <li>Course syllabi with weekly competency objectives and content outlines</li> </ul>	Review of curriculum documents	None
Submit application for curriculum change to Board of Nursing staff	Vice President of Nursing  Corporate Director of Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitted 2/2016</li> <li>Approval received 3/2016</li> </ul>	BON Staff approval	Letter of approval	None
Submit curriculum change application to COE	Compliance Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitted 4/2016</li> <li>Approval 6/2016</li> </ul>	COE approval	Letter of approval	None
Submit curriculum change application to TWC	Compliance Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitted 6/2016</li> <li>Approval 8/2016</li> </ul>	TWC approval	Letter of approval	None
<b>Teach-out old curriculum</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with campus leadership to discuss teach-out plan</li> <li>Identify campus-specific needs for program completion for all current students</li> <li>Campus and nursing leadership collaborate to develop specific plan for each campus</li> </ul>	Vice President of Nursing  Corporate Director of Nursing  Campus Directors  Directors of Education	5/2016	Specific plan to teach-out old curriculum and phase in new curriculum at Lubbock campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedules revised</li> <li>Classrooms identified</li> <li>Faculty needs identified</li> <li>Lab space made available</li> <li>Clinical placements secured</li> </ul>	Review of documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom and clinical schedules</li> <li>Classroom and laboratory space allocation</li> <li>Clinical affiliation agreements</li> <li>Faculty assignments</li> </ul>	Implementation of teach-out plan

Actions	Person Responsible	Completion date	Expected outcomes	Evaluation methods for outcomes	Follow up actions
<b>Implement new curriculum</b>					
Product training provided on new curriculum for corporate and campus-based departments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campus Director</li> <li>• Director of Education</li> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Financial Aid</li> <li>• Registrar</li> <li>• Student Services</li> </ul>	Vice President of Nursing  Corporate Director of Nursing	6/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All departments are informed of new curriculum</li> <li>• Corporate and campus leadership successfully complete post-product training quiz</li> </ul>	Review of post-product training information	Retraining of individuals who do not pass quiz
Develop course sequence plan for new curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with corporate leadership to discuss sequence of courses and curriculum roll-out for first two years</li> <li>• Develop academic calendar for new VN curriculum</li> </ul>	Vice President of Nursing  Corporate Director of Nursing  Corporate Registrar  Vice President of Academics	7/2016	Academic calendar for first two years developed	Review of calendar	None
Revise the catalog and other documents to reflect new curriculum	Compliance Department	8/2016	All documents reflect new curriculum	Review of documents and other locations of information	None
Involve student admissions team in rollout of new program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient admissions team to essential components of new program</li> <li>• Revise admissions document to reflect new program requirements</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Admissions  Directors of Admissions for each campus	8/2016  Ongoing in subsequent semesters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions documents revised</li> <li>• First cohort successfully recruited</li> <li>• All admission processes completed</li> <li>• Recruitment and enrollment for subsequent semesters based on identified admission criteria</li> </ul>	Review of enrollment documents	Ongoing collaboration between nursing, campus leadership, and admission departments

Actions	Person Responsible	Completion date	Expected outcomes	Evaluation methods for outcomes	Follow up actions
Develop overlap plan for Lubbock campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise class and clinical schedule at Lubbock campus to ensure seamless transition from old to new curriculum</li> <li>• Recruit faculty to teach additional hours needed</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Nursing  Directors of Education  Directors of Nursing	9/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule developed that accommodates all students in the old and new program</li> <li>• Classroom and lab space accommodates all student needs</li> <li>• Faculty are added or provided overload compensation for additional teaching hours</li> </ul>	Review of schedule and faculty assignments	Ongoing evaluation to ensure adequacy of overlap plan until all old students have graduated
Create course schedules for each semester <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 2016</li> <li>• January 2017</li> <li>• May 2017</li> <li>• September 2017</li> <li>• January 2018</li> <li>• May 2018</li> <li>• September 2018</li> <li>• January 2019</li> <li>• May 2019</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Nursing  Directors of Nursing	One month prior to each semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8/2016</li> <li>• 12/2016</li> <li>• 4/2017</li> <li>• 8/2017</li> <li>• 12/2017</li> <li>• 4/2017</li> <li>• 8/2018</li> <li>• 12/2018</li> <li>• 4/2019</li> </ul>	Course schedule developed for each cohort prior to beginning of semester. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Didactic course schedule</li> <li>• Clinical schedule</li> <li>• Lab schedule</li> </ul>	Review of schedules	None
Faculty orientation and assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient current faculty to new curriculum</li> <li>• Implement orientation and complete onboarding of new faculty</li> <li>• Schedule qualified faculty each semester</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Nursing  Directors of Nursing  Campus Directors	One month prior to each semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8/2016</li> <li>• 12/2016</li> <li>• 4/2017</li> <li>• 8/2017</li> <li>• 12/2017</li> <li>• 4/2017</li> <li>• 8/2018</li> <li>• 12/2018</li> <li>• 4/2019</li> </ul>	Faculty assignments for all courses each semester ensure coverage for all educational needs	Review of teaching assignments	None

Actions	Person Responsible	Completion date	Expected outcomes	Evaluation methods for outcomes	Follow up actions
Obtain text books and resources for courses each semester <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 2016</li> <li>• January 2017</li> <li>• May 2017</li> <li>• September 2017</li> <li>• January 2018</li> <li>• May 2018</li> <li>• September 2018</li> <li>• January 2019</li> <li>• May 2019</li> </ul>	Directors of Nursing  Nursing Faculty  Campus Business Office Managers	One month prior to each semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8/2016</li> <li>• 12/2016</li> <li>• 4/2017</li> <li>• 8/2017</li> <li>• 12/2017</li> <li>• 4/2017</li> <li>• 8/2018</li> <li>• 12/2018</li> <li>• 4/2019</li> </ul>	Text books and resources received on time	Review of resources received	None
Review/revise course syllabi each semester as needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 2016</li> <li>• January 2017</li> <li>• May 2017</li> <li>• September 2017</li> <li>• January 2018</li> <li>• May 2018</li> <li>• September 2018</li> <li>• January 2019</li> <li>• May 2019</li> </ul>	Nursing Faculty	One month prior to each semester: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8/2016</li> <li>• 12/2016</li> <li>• 4/2017</li> <li>• 8/2017</li> <li>• 12/2017</li> <li>• 4/2017</li> <li>• 8/2018</li> <li>• 12/2018</li> <li>• 4/2019</li> </ul>	Approved syllabus for each course	Course syllabus	None
Provide new student orientation prior to each semester <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 2016</li> <li>• January 2017</li> <li>• May 2017</li> <li>• September 2017</li> <li>• January 2018</li> <li>• May 2018</li> <li>• September 2018</li> <li>• January 2019</li> <li>• May 2019</li> </ul>	Directors of Nursing  Nursing Faculty	Week prior to each semester <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9/2016</li> <li>• 1/2017</li> <li>• 5/2017</li> <li>• 9/2017</li> <li>• 1/2018</li> <li>• 5/2018</li> <li>• 9/2018</li> <li>• 1/2019</li> <li>• 5/2019</li> </ul>	Each new student participates in orientation	Orientation rosters and other materials	None

Actions	Person Responsible	Completion date	Expected outcomes	Evaluation methods for outcomes	Follow up actions
Implement courses each semester <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 2016</li> <li>• January 2017</li> <li>• May 2017</li> <li>• September 2017</li> <li>• January 2018</li> <li>• May 2018</li> <li>• September 2018</li> <li>• January 2019</li> <li>• May 2019</li> </ul>	Directors of Nursing  Nursing Faculty	Each semester <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9/2016</li> <li>• 1/2017</li> <li>• 5/2017</li> <li>• 9/2017</li> <li>• 1/2018</li> <li>• 5/2018</li> <li>• 9/2018</li> <li>• 1/2019</li> <li>• 5/2019</li> </ul>	Courses implemented	Course documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance rosters</li> <li>• Course syllabus</li> <li>• Grade book</li> </ul>	None
Identify and support at-risk students	Director of Nursing  Faculty  Student Service Director and staff  Director of Education	Ongoing	Students who demonstrate issues related to academic performance are referred to appropriate resources for assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Skills remediation</li> <li>• Math review</li> <li>• Medication calculation remediation</li> <li>• ATI module reviews</li> <li>• Well Connect psychosocial referrals</li> <li>• Student service assistance with housing, transportation, child care</li> </ul>	Review of student reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance records</li> <li>• Grades</li> <li>• Clinical performance</li> <li>• ATI exam scores</li> <li>• Math competency exam results</li> <li>• Behavioral issue documentation</li> </ul>	Review post-intervention performance

Actions	Person Responsible	Completion date	Expected outcomes	Evaluation methods for outcomes	Follow up actions
Implement evaluation plan based on selected metrics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TEAS entrance examination</li> <li>• ATI Proctored examinations</li> <li>• ATI Predictor examination</li> <li>• NCLEX results</li> <li>• Employer Satisfaction Surveys</li> </ul>	Vice President of Nursing Corporate Director of Nursing Directors of Nursing Statistical Analyst	At the end of each semester and six months post-graduation for employers	Data reveal superior outcomes when comparing results of old and new curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data collection</li> <li>• Data analysis</li> <li>• Statistical correlation</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Ensure consistency of program delivery and operations at all campuses	Vice President of Nursing Corporate Director of Nursing Corporate Director of Education	Ongoing	All campus locations will provide the Pilot Program in a consistent manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site visits to campuses</li> <li>• Classroom, lab, and clinical observations</li> <li>• Assessment of and intervention for at-risk students</li> <li>• Use of same course documents</li> <li>• Equivalent academic resources provided at each campus</li> <li>• Uniform simulation activities</li> <li>• Equivalent clinical facilities</li> <li>• Same evaluation activities</li> </ul>	Intervene on campuses that are not delivering the program in the expected manner

### **Expected outcomes of the pilot program and methods to measure expected outcomes**

The purpose of the Vista College Pilot Program is to implement a vocational nursing curriculum model based on fewer hours than currently required and to validate the model as providing equivalent or superior outcomes when compared to those of the current program. The question to be answered is: “Will a curriculum of 1185 clock hours provide the same outcomes for vocational nursing students as a program of 1398 hours?”

Metrics that will be correlated after each semester include:

- TEAS entrance examination
- ATI Proctored examinations
- ATI Predictor examination

Once students are in the final semester and have graduated, metrics that will be correlated include:

- TEAS entrance examination results and ATI Predictor examination results
- TEAS entrance examination, ATI Predictor examination, and NCLEX results
- Employer Satisfaction Surveys

It is hoped successful outcomes of the pilot program will serve to inform changes to educational requirements for vocational nursing programs in the State of Texas through the validation of a new curricular model. As improved educational practice inevitably leads to improved clinical practice, it is hoped that graduates of programs using the revised curricular model will have enhanced competencies upon entering the practice environment.

### **Timeline for pilot program**

Vista College plans to implement the new curriculum in September 2016. The timeline for the pilot program is presented in the methodological design of the pilot program table on page 10. Specific start and end dates for each semester are in the table below.

<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>
September 5, 2016	December 16, 2016
January 9, 2017	April 21, 2017
May 8, 2017	August 18, 2017
September 4, 2017	December 15, 2017
January 8, 2018	April 20, 2018
May 7, 2018	August 17, 2018

### **Controls to Maintain Quality Education and Ensure Delivery of Safe and Competent Nursing Care**

#### **Description of methods incorporated into the pilot program to ensure that students in the pilot receive an equivalent, quality education compared to students in the standard program**

Resources do not permit the simultaneous implementation of the current Vocational Nursing education program and the proposed 1185 hour program so a control group will not be used.

Applicants will be informed they are enrolling in a pilot program during the admission process and will sign an Acknowledgment Form indicating the nature of the pilot program has been explained to them; a sample form is included as Appendix D.

### **Ongoing evaluation plan to determine the students' progress in the pilot program**

Each semester data will be collected based on student performance on selected standardized examinations. These include:

- TEAS entrance examination
- ATI Proctored examinations
- ATI Predictor examination
- NCLEX results
- Employer Satisfaction Surveys

Results of student performance on these examinations will be correlated between the old and new curricula in an attempt to formulate conclusions about program outcomes.

### **Plan for corrective measures to remediate students if evidence indicates that students are not meeting objectives**

Early identification of at-risk students in a prelicensure nursing program is essential if students are to be successful. Many students are challenged by issues related to academic preparation, family, psychosocial needs, employment, and others.

The Nursing Department will track student grades in each course to identify trends in student performance. Students whose grades are dropping will be referred to the Director of Nursing or designee. Course faculty will meet individual students to discuss possible reasons for the situation and assist students in developing a Success Plan. Remediation activities identified to meet students' specific needs may include individual and group tutoring, ATI modules, meetings with the Student Services Coordinator, and referral to WellConnect, the contracted provider for student counseling. The campus Student Services Coordinator will also be used as a resource for specific psychosocial needs each student may be experiencing.

Students' clinical issues will be addressed by the didactic instructor for the course upon referral from the clinical instructor. Lab practice, case study assignments, and simulation support will be used to address student clinical issues.

**Appendix A: Letter of support from CEO of Education Futures Group**

**Appendix B: Letter of support from CFO of Vista College**

## **Appendix C: Nursing Program Identification Information**

**Appendix D: Innovative Pilot Program Acknowledgement Form**

Nursing Program Identification Information

Name of Program: Vista College

Type of Program:  VN  ADN  BSN  Alternate Entry

Name of Program Director: Tami Little

Mailing address of nursing program:

6101 Montana Ave

El Paso, TX 79925

BON Approval Status:  Full  Full with Warning  Conditional  
 Initial  Initial with Warning

Name and Contact information for Individual Submitting Application to the BON:

Name: Tami Little

Address: 300 N. Coit Rd. Ste 1400

City and State: Richardson, TX 75080

Phone Number: 602-538-5688

Email Address: tlittle@vistacollege.edu

FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

I, Tami Little, hereby attest to the truth and accuracy of the

Information in the application.

Signature of Individual Submitting Application



Print Name Tami Little



To Whom It May Concern,

As the Chief Executive Officer of Education Futures Group, the parent company of Vista College, I wholeheartedly endorse the vocational nursing education pilot program being proposed to the Texas Board of Nursing.

Vista College has long been invested in the development and implementation of quality education programs at all its campus locations. Successful growth has allowed the company to implement vocational nursing education programs across four Texas campuses, an investment that demonstrates commitment to the enhancement of the nursing workforce in the communities we serve through the graduation of safe, competent vocational nurses. Despite occasional challenges, the program has demonstrated successful outcomes and will continue to do so.

The addition of senior level nurse educators to the corporate structure, individuals with strong curriculum development expertise, has allowed the company to expand into enhanced curriculum development activities. The proposal for a pilot study that will evaluate a revised vocational nursing curriculum of fewer hours than currently mandated by the Board of Nursing, represents the kind of creative thinking and initiative that is the hallmark of Vista College.

I urge you to approve this project, one that may have a positive impact on the education of vocational nurses in Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Tolbert".

Jim Tolbert  
Chief Executive Officer

AMARILLO, TEXAS  
BEAUMONT, TEXAS  
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS  
EL PASO, TEXAS  
KILLEEN, TEXAS  
LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO  
LONGVIEW, TEXAS  
LUBBOCK, TEXAS  
ONLINE

November 9, 2015

The Texas Board of Nursing:

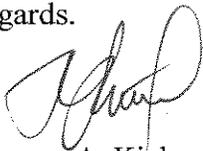
Vista College is a successful company that has been in operation since 2006. Of its 10 campuses, five have vocational or practical nursing programs; four of which are in Texas. Vista College has provided financial support for the programs since their inception and plans to continue to do so. Further, the nursing programs have continued to grow and have become self-sustaining through the availability of a significant applicant pool and robust job opportunities in the communities we serve.

As the Chief Financial Officer of Education Futures Group (Vista College's Parent), I am pleased to confirm the commitment of continued financial support for the vocational nursing programs. Our nursing program has been successful and has produced graduates of which our company is proud.

As a company, we are excited at the opportunity afforded by the pilot project and the potential of influencing vocational nursing education in Texas. The company is committed to the financial support of the project from the time of its inauguration and beyond.

We appreciate the opportunity to partner with you as we continue to improve the educational experience for our students and the quality of graduate for the employers and communities we serve.

Regards.



Thomas A. Kiel  
Chief Financial Officer  
Education Futures Group/Vista College  
300 N. Coit Rd. Suite 650  
Richardson, Tx. 75080  
972 733 3431 xt. 1740

**Appendix D: Innovative Pilot Program Acknowledgement Form**



**Vocational Nursing Program  
Innovative Pilot Program Acknowledgment**

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Vista College’s Vocational Nursing program is implementing an Innovative Pilot Program approved by the Texas Board of Nursing. The purpose of the Pilot Program is to determine if a curriculum of fewer hours is as effective as longer programs.

<b>Applicant Initials</b>	<b>Acknowledgement Statements</b>
	I have been made aware that I am being considered for admission into a Vocational Nursing program of fewer hours than those currently required by the Texas Board of Nursing.
	I understand this will have no impact on the cost of the program.
	I understand this means I will have fewer hours of class time each week.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Name Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Admission Rep. Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Admission Rep. Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

DRAFT LETTER

Tami Little, DNP, RN, CNE, Director  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
Vista College  
6101 Montana Ave.  
El Paso, Texas 79925

Dear Dr. Little:

At the April 21-22, 2016 meeting of the Board of Nursing, Board members considered the Proposal for an Innovative Pilot Project from Vista College Vocational Nursing Education Program in El Paso, Texas, requesting a waiver of Rule 214.9(a)(1) that requires a minimum of 1,398 hours in a vocational nursing education program. The Board wishes to thank Carol Kleinman, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, Vice President of Nursing, and Andrea Rashad, MSN, MBA, RN, Regional Director for Nursing, for being present to answer questions about the proposal.

Based upon the discussion and review of documents, it was the decision of the Board to approve the Vista College Vocational Nursing Education Program Proposal for an Innovative Pilot Project, as outlined in the program's submitted application, to begin September 6, 2016, subject to the requirements/conditions in the attached Board Order.

If you have questions or need further clarification, please contact Board Staff at [susan.lee@bon.texas.gov](mailto:susan.lee@bon.texas.gov) or 512-463-4631.

Sincerely,

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director

Copy: Carol S. Kleinman, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, Vice President of Nursing

## BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

\*\*\*\*\*

### ORDER OF THE BOARD

In the Matter of  
Vista College  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
El Paso, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on April 21, 2016, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the Vista College Vocational Nursing Education Program in El Paso, Texas, Proposal for an Innovative Pilot Project to waive the Board requirement in Rule 214.9(a)(1) for a minimum of 1,398 clock hours in a vocational nursing education program. The Board considered the Proposal pursuant to Sections 301.157 and 301.1605, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapters 214 and 227.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, as well as the presentation by the representatives from Vista College in El Paso, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby grants APPROVAL of the Vista College Innovative Pilot Project as outlined in the program's submitted application, to begin September 6, 2016, subject to the requirements/conditions outlined below:

1. The program shall provide to Board Staff the following data for each site no later than the identified dates during the reporting period beginning September 6, 2016, and ending September 5, 2018:
  - Student data for each nursing course at each site after the end of each semester indicating the number of students enrolled in the reduced hour curriculum who require remediation. End-of-semester reports are due no later than:
    - January 20, 2017, for semester ending December 16, 2016;
    - May 21, 2017, for semester ending April 21, 2017;
    - September 18, 2017, for semester ending August 18, 2017;
    - January 20, 2018, for semester ending December 15, 2017;
    - May 20, 2018, for semester ending April 20, 2018; and
    - September 17, 2018, for semester ending August 17, 2018.

- Student data for each nursing course at each site after the end of each semester indicating the effectiveness of remediation (student retention) for students in the pertinent courses in the reduced hour curriculum. Reports are due no later than:
  - January 20, 2017, for semester ending December 16, 2016;
  - May 21, 2017, for semester ending April 21, 2017;
  - September 18, 2017, for semester ending August 18, 2017;
  - January 20, 2018, for semester ending December 15, 2017;
  - May 20, 2018, for semester ending April 20, 2018; and
  - September 17, 2018, for semester ending August 17, 2018.
- The graduation rate for the first students graduating at each site from the reduced hour curriculum no later than May 20, 2018, for students graduating April 20, 2018.

Pursuant to 22 Tex. Admin. Code, §227.4, and Tex. Occ. Code §301.1605, the Board reserves the right to request additional information from the program during the pilot project to ensure that the Board's interest in protecting the interests of the public are being met.

Entered this 21st day of April, 2016

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Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director  
On Behalf of the Texas Board of Nursing