

**Notification of Closure of Nursing Education Program
Brightwood College in Corpus Christi and San Antonio, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Programs**

Summary of Request:

Consider the Brightwood College corporate headquarters verification to the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) that the Brightwood College Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in San Antonio, Texas and the Brightwood College VN Education Program in Corpus Christi, Texas closed, effective December 5, 2018.

Historical Perspective:

- The Education Corporation of America (ECA), based in Birmingham, Alabama and operating 71 campuses nationally, with 14 campuses in Texas, abruptly announced closure of all its career colleges on December 5, 2018.
- ECA offered educational programs under the names of Brightwood College, Brightwood Career Institute, and Virginia College that mostly offered vocational training and associate degree programs.
- Two Brightwood College sites in Texas, one in San Antonio and one in Corpus Christi, offered VN Programs. The San Antonio VN Program had been in operation since 1996, originally as Texas Careers. The Corpus Christi VN Program was approved to begin in 2007 as Career Centers of Texas. In 2010, both programs' names were changed to Kaplan College by the parent corporation.
- In 2015, ECA purchased the schools and the names of the campuses with VN Programs were changed to Brightwood College.
- The move to close the campuses allegedly followed the December 4, 2018 decision by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools to suspend ECA's accreditation.
- It was reported that about 20,000 students across the country in a number of majors were enrolled at the time of the sudden closure.

Current Situation:

- Board Staff began getting calls from students on December 5, 2018 reporting that Brightwood College was closing and asking guidance. Board Staff emailed John P. Carreon, Senior Vice President, Regulatory Affairs and Associate General Counsel at ECA, seeking clarification. Mr. Carreon telephoned to notify the Board that this was true and that the two Texas Brightwood College VN Programs closed and would not provide a teach-out for the currently enrolled students. Board Staff requested a formal written notice of closure.
- Mr. Carreon provided a formal letter announcing the closure on January 8, 2019 (Attachment #1).

- On December 6, 2018, Board Staff communicated the school closure to all Texas approved VN Education Programs in anticipation of the Brightwood College students contacting the programs to inquire about transfer options.
- According to the Brightwood College VN Program Directors, the San Antonio Campus had 118 students enrolled in four cohorts and the Corpus Christi campus had 135 students enrolled in four cohorts at the time of the closure. Therefore, a total of 253 VN students were left without an education plan as of December 5, 2018.
- Other approved VN Programs have been approached by students about a possible transfer pathway, but each program has to consider individual transfer and residency policies, as well as other regulations. The handling of student loans presents another barrier to progression of education for these students.
- Other state agencies involved with the situation are the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and the Texas Higher Education Board (THECB).
- Staff at THECB advised Board Staff that student transcripts will be accessible through their web site as well as a list of schools prepared to assist Brightwood College students.
- The US Department of Education has posted information on their web site in the way of a fact sheet to guide students and is conducting weekly conference calls with regulating agencies in the affected states.
- No definite avenue for teach-out has been finalized.

This report is for information only.



January 7, 2019

Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE, FAAN, ANEF
Nursing Consultant for Education
Texas Board of Nursing
333 Guadalupe St #3-460
Austin, TX 78701

Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN, CNE
Nursing Consultant for Education
Texas Board of Nursing
333 Guadalupe St #3-460
Austin, TX 78701

Re: Closure of Vocational Nursing Programs at
Brightwood College, Corpus Christi and San Antonio (Ingram) Campuses

Dear Dr. Hooper and Dr. Ayars,

Pursuant to Texas Board of Nursing - 3.1.3.a. Education Guideline, I am providing you notice that Vocational Nursing programs at Brightwood College, Corpus Christi and San Antonio (Ingram) campuses on December 7, 2018 and December 21, 2018, respectively. Unfortunately, the Colleges parent company, Education Corporation of America, announced on December 5, 2018 that it would close all 69 of its ground campuses once each school completed all courses currently being taught. This did allow a number of students to graduate from their programs including some from the VN programs.

The students who completed the VN programs in December as well as other program completers received their AOGs from the Dean of Nursing at the campus before the school closed. All other VN students who could not complete in December 2018, could possibly transfer to another school, but if not, they are entitled to apply for a close school discharge with the US DOE. Information on transfer schools and Q&A can be found at www.ecacolleges.com.

I thank you for your years of dedication to our schools when they were Kaplan, and then Brightwood. You both are shining examples of how a nursing regulator can work with schools for everyone's betterment. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (312) 206-4717 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John P. Carreon
Senior Vice President, Regulatory Affairs and Associate General Counsel