

AGENDA ITEM #5.D.I



BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES, AND HOUSING AGENCY • GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR
Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians
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DATE	August 21, 2020
TO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board Members <input type="checkbox"/> Education and Practice Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Officer Review
FROM	<input type="checkbox"/> Education and Practice Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Officer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SNEC
REVIEWED BY	Marie Cordeiro, MN, RN Supervising Nursing Education Consultant (SNEC)
PREPARED BY	Faye Silverman, MSN/Ed., RN, PHN, WOCN Nursing Education Consultant (NEC)
PROGRAM	Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program – Consideration of Placement on Provisional Status (Director: Dr. Larisa Revzina, San Mateo, San Mateo County -Private) Addendum to Education and Practice Committee Report (July 27, 2020)

PROGRAM REQUEST:

Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program (Program) is presented to the full Board via the Education and Practice Committee with the recommendation for the program to be placed on provisional approval.

BACKGROUND:

From April 2018 to present, the program had nine consecutive quarters in which the NCLEX-PN® pass rates were below 10 percentage points of the respective average annual pass rates for the state. This data is non-compliant with the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 2530(l) which states:

“The program shall maintain a yearly average minimum pass rate on the licensure examination that does not fall below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for first time candidates of approved vocational nursing schools for the same period.”

On July 27, 2020, this program appeared before the Education and Practice Committee via a Webex meeting. The Committee recommended to accept all of the NEC's recommendations except for recommendations # 4 and # 6 listed below.

Staff strongly recommends the reinstatement of recommendations #4 and #6.

Staff Recommendation # 4. Require the program to admit no additional classes without prior approval by the Board.

Staff Rationale: Admission of additional students, including those that fall within the current pattern of admissions as defined in CCR, title 16, section 2526.1(d) would be a disservice to those students and a potential risk to public safety. The uncertainties of the pandemic create the potential for a lower standard of education, especially in light of the demonstrated deficiencies, is counter to the goals of the program and to the mission of BVNPT.

At this writing, the assigned NEC has not had the opportunity to discuss causes of and possible remedies for the non-compliant NCLEX-PN® pass rates with the program director, and hence .is unable to provide guidance for resolution and a concrete plan to rectify the deficiencies. The program director and faculty should be enabled to prioritize developing and implementing their remediation plans, and we believe that the addition of more students would detract from that effort. Ongoing admissions, which the Board approved for this school on October 10, 2007, would not increase the efficacy and efficiency of the program; instead, it would maintain enrollment in a program from which many students would not wholly benefit. The Board's failure to cease ongoing admissions will prevent the NEC from ensuring the program's return to regulatory compliance. This, in turn, creates a long-term risk to public safety.

Staff Recommendation # 6. Require the program to provide no less than one instructor for every ten students in clinical experience.

Staff Rationale: When a program exhibits deficiencies with regulatory compliance, it is sound educational practice to designate qualified staff to focus on review of problem areas. California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 2534 (d) states that for supervision of clinical experience, there shall be a *maximum* of 15 students for each instructor, which allows the Board the flexibility to direct the program to field a smaller ratio. Requiring the instruction and oversight of one instructor for fewer students (10 rather than 15) allows for increased depth and breadth of clinical instruction.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

The NEC is concerned about the removal of recommendations # 4 and # 6 from the report.

The NEC must communicate closely with the program director, and evaluate the following elements to ensure complete compliance with the following regulations:

- Section 2530(a): Sufficient program resources
- Section 2534: Adequacy of clinical experience
- Section 2530(l): Licensure examination pass rates

The COVID-19 pandemic cannot be underestimated in its effect on every aspect of life, including the education of health care providers. The Board is aware that clinical sites for health career students have greatly decreased and in some cases have disappeared. Through no fault of their own, program directors are losing critical clinical sites and are unable to continue with a curriculum that mandates measured clinical experience. The programs may not be able to maintain adequate resources and staff. Attempts to rectify problems in normal times may be exponentially more difficult during this pandemic. However, this cannot be a reason to treat students unfairly by continuing to admit them to a program that lacks resources and acceptable pass rates.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Please note: These are not NEC decisions, rather the recommendations presented at the Executive Officer Review, the Education and Practice Committee and/or the full Board.

1. Place Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program on provisional approval for the two-year period beginning August 21, 2020; and issue a certificate accordingly.
2. Issue a notice of change in approval status to the program identifying specific areas of non-compliance and requirements for correction as referenced in Section 2526.1 and Section 2530(l) of the California Code of Regulations.
3. Require the program to submit an action plan to correct their NCLEX-PN® first time testers pass rate by October 1, 2020.
4. Require the program to admit no additional classes without prior approval by the Board.
5. Require the program to submit a report to the Board in six months, no later than March 15, 2021, and fifteen months, no later than June 15, 2022. The report must include a comprehensive analysis of the program, timeline for implementation, and the effect of employed interventions. The following elements must be addressed in the analysis:
 - a. Terminal Objectives
 - b. Evaluation of Current Curriculum
Please submit:
 - 1- Instructional Plan
 - 2- Theory and Clinical Objectives for each Term
 - 3- Lesson Plans for each Term
 - c. Student Policies to include:
 - 1- Admission Policy

- 2- Screening and Selection Policy
 - 3- Attendance and Remediation Policy
 - 4- Evaluation of Student Achievement
 - 5- Credit Granting Policy
 - d. Evaluations of Approved Clinical Facilities which determine adequacy in number and variety to accommodate current and projected students.
 - e. Evaluations of Theory and Clinical Faculty
 - f. Methodologies for:
 - 1- Faculty Meetings
 - 2- Clinical Evaluations
 - g. Evaluations of interventions implemented to increase the program's annual average pass rates.
6. Require the program to provide no less than one instructor for every ten students in clinical experiences.
 7. Require the program to comply with all approval standards in Article 4 of the Vocational Nursing Practice Act, commencing at Business and Professionals Code, section 2880, and Article 5 of the Board's Regulations, commencing at California Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 2526.
 8. Require the program to demonstrate incremental progress in correcting the violations. If the program fails to satisfactorily demonstrate incremental progress, the full Board may revoke the program's approval.
 9. Place the program on the Board's August 2022 agenda for reconsideration of provisional approval.

ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

Staff strongly recommends reconsidering and approving recommendations #4 and #6. Failing that, staff recommends the following:

Require the program to submit documents in final form by the fifteenth day of the second month preceding the month of the Board meeting at which the changes will be considered. For this program, the deadline for the first submission is September 15, 2020. Subsequent submissions of documents prior to the start of each class will follow the same guidelines.

Documentation must include the following:

- Current Enrollment Table
- Faculty Spreadsheet
- Facility Spreadsheet
- Faculty Student Clinical Assignment for all Terms
- Maternity and Pediatric Faculty Student Clinical Assignment
- Any other documents requested relative to the following elements:
 - Sufficient program resources as specified in Section 2530(a)
 - Adequacy of clinical experience as specified in Section 2534

- Licensure examination pass rates as specified in Section 2530(l)

Approval of this recommendation enables the NEC to analyze the program resources and licensure examination pass rates *prior* to the admission of a new cohort. The above time line allows the NEC to bring the program back for further Board action, if necessary, but this is not the best path forward.

This recommendation is supported by California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 16, Section 2533 (f) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations, which states:

“(f) All curricular changes that significantly alter the program philosophy, conceptual framework, content, objectives, or other written documentation as required in Section 2526, shall be approved by the Board prior to implementation. Proposed curricular changes must be submitted to the Board in final form by the fifteenth day of the second month preceding the month of the Board meeting at which the changes will be considered. Revisions should include:

- (1) Explanation of changes;
- (2) Rationale for proposed revision;
- (3) Description of revised curriculum materials, and;
- (4) Changes to behavioral objectives, if applicable.”



DATE	July 27, 2020
TO	Board Members
VIA	Marie Cordeiro, MN, RN Supervising Nursing Education Consultant
FROM	Faye Silverman, MSN/Ed., RN, PHN, WOCN Nursing Education Consultant
SUBJECT	Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program – Consideration of Placement on Provisional Status (Director: Dr. Larisa Revzina, San Mateo, San Mateo County -Private)

STAFF SUMMARY:

In accordance with Section 2526.1(c) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations,

“The Board may place any program on provisional approval when a program does not meet all requirements as set forth in this Chapter and in Section 2526...”

Section 2530(I) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states:

“The program shall maintain a yearly average minimum pass rate on the licensure examination that does not fall below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for first time candidates of approved vocational nursing schools for the same period.”

Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program is presented to the Board for consideration for placement on provisional approval. This program has not been compliant with the licensure examination pass rate regulations for the last nine quarters.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Place Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program on provisional approval for the two-year period beginning August 21, 2020; and issue a certificate accordingly.

2. Issue a notice of change in Approval Status to the program identifying specific areas of non-compliance and requirements for correction as referenced in Section 2526.1 and Section 2530(l) of the California Code of Regulations.
3. Require the program to submit an action plan to correct their NCLEX-PN® first time testers pass rate by October 1, 2020.
4. Require the program to admit no additional classes without prior approval by the Board.
5. Require the program to submit a report to the Board in six months, no later than March 15, 2021, and fifteen months, no later than June 15, 2022. The report must include a comprehensive analysis of the program, timeline for implementation, and the effect of employed interventions. The following elements must be addressed in the analysis:
 - a. Terminal Objectives
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Please submit:
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 - 5- Credit Granting Policy
 - d. Evaluations of Approved Clinical Facilities which determine adequacy in number and variety to accommodate current and projected students.
 - e. Evaluations of Theory and Clinical Faculty
 - f. Methodologies for:
 - 1- Faculty Meetings
 - 2- Clinical Evaluations
 - g. Evaluations of interventions implemented to increase the programs annual average pass rates.
6. Require the program to provide no less than one instructor for every ten students in clinical experiences.
7. Require the program to comply with all approval standards in Article 4 of the Vocational Nursing Practice Act, commencing at Business and Professionals Code, section 2880, and Article 5 of the Board's Regulations, commencing at California Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 2526.
8. Require the program to demonstrate incremental progress in correcting the violations. If the program fails to satisfactorily demonstrate incremental progress, the full Board may revoke the program's approval.

9. Place the program on the Board's August 2022 agenda for reconsideration of provisional approval.

STAFF RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Published examination statistics confirm the program's non-compliance with regulations for the last nine quarters. The program has nine consecutive quarters that range from 12 to 19 percentage points below the state annual pass rates.

The Program Director has submitted NCLEX action plans over the last nine quarters to correct the falling NCLEX-PN first time takers pass rates. None of the implementations have been effective and provisional approval is recommended.

History of Prior Board Actions

(See Attachment A, History of Prior Board Actions)

Enrollment

By letter dated August 6, 2018, Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program was approved for an ongoing admissions pattern of full-time classes of 36 students four times per year, admitting two in January, morning and evening, and two in July, morning and evening.

By letter dated June 11, 2020, the program was notified that the approval of its ongoing admissions was rescinded and that it would be required to obtain Board approval prior to admitting students.

By letter dated July 7, 2020, the Executive Officer withdrew the letter dated June 11, 2020; recalled and annulled the order in the letter dated June 11, 2020, rescinding approval of the program's ongoing admissions and requiring the program to obtain Board approval prior to admitting students; and reinstated the letter dated August 6, 2018, approving the ongoing admissions of students, pending further action by the Board.

The following table represents current and projected student enrollment based on current and proposed class starts and completions. The table indicates a maximum enrollment of 116 students for the period July 2019 through July 2020.

ENROLLMENT				
CLASS DATES		# Students Admitted	# Students Current or Completed	Total Enrolled
Start	Complete			
7/1/19 (VN Cohort 57 - AM) (*7/31/2020)		34	20	20
7/1/19 (VN Cohort 58 - PM) (*7/31/2020)		18	19	20 + 19 = 39
1/6/20 (VN Cohort 59 - AM) (*1/29/21)		35	32	39 + 31 = 71
1/6/20 (VN Cohort 60 - PM) (*1/29/21)		17	10	70 + 11 = 81
7/13/20 (VN Cohort 61 - AM) (*7/30/2021)		36	16	81 + 16 = 97
7/13/20 (VN Cohort 62 - AM) (*7/30/2021)		36	19	97 + 19 = 116

*Indicates projected graduation date

Licensing Examination Statistics

The following statistics, furnished by Pearson VUE and published by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing as “Jurisdictional Summary of All First-Time Candidates Educated in Member Board Jurisdiction” for the period April 2018 through June 2020, specify the pass percentage rates for graduates of the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program on the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical / Vocational Nurses (NCLEX-PN®) and the variance from state average annual pass rates.

NCLEX-PN® Licensure Examination Data							
Quarterly Statistics					Annual Statistics*		
Quarter	# Candidates	# Passed	% Passed	State Quarterly Pass Rate	Program Average Annual Pass Rate	State Average Annual Pass Rate	Variance from the State Average Annual Pass Rate
Apr – Jun 2018	38	20	53%	79%	63%	76%	-13
Jul – Sept 2018	15	10	67%	77%	60%	76%	-16
Oct – Dec 2018	27	19	70%	79%	60%	79%	-19
Jan – Mar 2019	26	17	65%	80%	62%	81%	-19
Apr – Jun 2019	30	17	57%	83%	64%	81%	-17
Jul – Sep 2019	16	11	69%	79%	65%	79%	-14
Oct – Dec 2019	24	15	63%	79%	63%	79%	-16
Jan – Mar 2020	3	3	100%	78%	63%	79%	-16
Apr – Jun 2020	21	14	67%	81%	67%	79%	-12

*The Annual Pass Rate changes every quarter. It is calculated by dividing the number of candidates who passed during the current and previous three quarters by the number of candidates who tested during the same period. If no data is available for the relevant period, the statistic is carried over from the last quarter for which data is available.

California Code of Regulations, section 2530(I) states:

“The program shall maintain a yearly average minimum pass rate on the licensure examination that does not fall below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for first time candidates of approved vocational nursing schools for the same period.”

Based on the most current data available (January through March 2020), the program’s average annual pass rate is 67 percent. The California average annual pass rate for graduates from approved vocational nursing programs who took the NCLEX-PN® for the first time is 79 percent. The average annual pass rate for Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program is twelve percentage points below the state average annual pass rate.

Faculty and Facilities

Section 2534 (d) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states:

“For supervision of clinical experience, there shall be a maximum of 15 students for each instructor.”

The current number of Board-approved faculty totals 13 including the program director and the assistant program director. The director and assistant program director have 100% administrative duties. Of the total faculty two instructors are designated to teach theory only; 9 instructors are designated to teach clinical. Six of the nine instructors which are designated to teach clinical are part-time instructors.

Based upon a maximum enrollment of 116 students, 8 instructors are required for clinical supervision. One of the recommendations in this report is: Require the program to provide no less than one instructor for every ten students in clinical experiences. Given this information, 12 instructors are required for clinical supervision for the 116 students. The utilization of faculty at clinical facilities is such that clinical instruction is **not** covered adequately.

Section 2534 (b) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states:

“Schools shall have clinical facilities adequate as to number, type, and variety of patients treated, to provide clinical experience for all students in the areas specified by Section 2533. There must be available for student assignment, an adequate daily census of patients to afford a variety of clinical experiences consistent with competency-based objectives and theory being taught.”

The program currently does not have approved clinical facilities that are adequate as to type and variety of patients treated to enable current and proposed students to meet clinical objectives in accordance with Section 2534 (b) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations.

Attachment A: History of Prior Board Actions

Agenda Item XX.X.X., Attachment A

GURNICK ACADEMY OF MEDICAL ARTS, SAN MATEO VOCATIONAL NURSING PROGRAM

History of Prior Board Actions

- On February 4, 2005, the Executive Officer approved the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, request to begin a vocational nursing program with the admission of 45 students into a full-time class starting on February 7, 2005, with a projected graduation date of March 10, 2006.

The Executive Officer also approved the program's curriculum with a total of 1530 hours, including 576 theory and 954 clinical hours.

- On November 7 – 8, 2005, the assigned consultant completed an onsite inspection of the program to determine compliance with regulatory requirements.
- On February 3, 2006, the Executive Officer approved initial full accreditation¹ for the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program for the period February 3, 2006, through February 2, 2010, and issued a certificate accordingly.

The Executive Officer approved the program's request to admit 45 students into the full-time class starting February 20, 2006, to **replace** the class graduating on March 10, 2006.

The Board also approved the program's request to admit 45 students into a second full-time class starting August 14, 2006, with a projected completion date of September 30, 2007, thereby increasing the frequency of admissions.

- On May 31, 2007, the Board notified the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program, that their average annual pass rates had fallen 10 percentage points below the state annual average for the past four (4) quarters.
- On June 30, 2007, the director submitted a plan to improve pass rates.

¹ Prior to January 1, 2012, references in article 4 of the Vocational Nursing Practice Act and article 4 of the Psychiatric Technicians Law provided that the Board accredits all vocational nursing and psychiatric technicians programs. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Sections 2883 and 4532 (Senate Bill 539, Chapter 338, Statutes of 2011), **accredit** was changed to **approve**. There was no change to the Board's authority or jurisdiction.

- On July 11, 2007, correspondence was sent to the director verifying that the February 2007 class start had begun without prior Board approval.
- On July 30, 2007, the director submitted an explanation regarding the February 2007 class starting without prior Board approval. The director stated she now understands the process and plans to request ongoing admissions in October.
- On August 9, 2007, the Board notified the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program, that their annual average pass rate had fallen 10 percentage points below the state annual average for the past five quarters.
- On October 10, 2007, the Executive Officer approved the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program request to admit 45 students into a full-time class beginning on October 15, 2007, to **replace** students graduating September 30, 2007.

The Executive Officer approved the program's request for ongoing admissions, to **replace** graduating classes, only, for the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program with the following stipulations:

- a. No additional classes are added to the program's current pattern of admissions without prior Board approval. The program's current pattern of admissions includes two full-time classes of 45 students each calendar year.
 - b. The director documents that adequate resources, i.e. faculty and facilities are available to support each admitted class of students.
- On February 2, 2009, the Executive Officer approved continued full accreditation for the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program for the period February 3, 2010 through February 2, 2014, and issued a certificate accordingly; **and**, approved the program's request to increase the frequency of admissions to four (4) full-time classes of 30 students per year, beginning with morning and evening classes commencing January 6, 2010; **and**,

Approved ongoing admissions, to **replace** graduating classes, only, for the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program with the following stipulations:

- a. No additional classes are added to the program's current pattern of admissions without prior Board approval. The program's current pattern of admissions includes four full-time classes of 30 students each calendar year.
 - b. The director documents that adequate resources, i.e. faculty and facilities are available to support each admitted class of students.
- On June 22, 2012, the Executive Officer Approve the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program's request to increase the number of

students per class from 30 students to 36 students, beginning with morning and evening classes commencing July 9, 2012; **and**, approved the program's request to increase the maximum number of students admitted per class to **replace** graduating classes **only**, with the following stipulations:

- a. No additional classes are added to the program's current pattern of admissions without prior Board approval. The program's current pattern of admissions includes two (2) full-time classes, one (1) am and one (1) pm, of 36 students each in January and two (2) full-time classes, one (1) am and one (1) pm, of 36 students each in July of each year; **and**,
 - b. The director documents that adequate resources, i.e. faculty and facilities are available to support each admitted class of students; **and**
 - c. The program's average annual pass rates remain no more than ten (10) percentage points below state average annual pass rates.
- On February 5, 2014, the Executive Officer approved continued full accreditation for the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program for the period February 3, 2014, through February 2, 2018 and issued a certificate accordingly. Continue approval of the program's ongoing admission pattern to **replace** graduating classes **only**, with the following stipulations:
 - a. No additional classes are added to the program's current pattern of admissions without prior Board approval. The program's current pattern of admissions includes two (2) full-time classes, one (1) am and one (1) pm, of 36 students each in January and two (2) full-time classes, one (1) am and one (1) pm, of 36 students each in July of each year; **and**,
 - b. The director documents that adequate resources, i.e. faculty and facilities are available to support each admitted class of students; **and**
 - c. The program's average annual pass rates remain no more than ten (10) percentage points below state average annual pass rates.
 - On July 31, 2018, the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians (Board), considered the consultant's report relative to Gurnick City Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program; Consideration of Continued Approval. **The following Decisions were rendered:** Continue approval of the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program for a four-year period beginning February 2, 2018, and issue a certificate accordingly. Continue approval of the program's ongoing admission pattern with the following stipulations:

No additional classes are added to the program's current pattern of admissions without prior Board approval. The program's current pattern of admissions include two full-time classes, one morning and one evening, of 36 students each in January and two full-time classes, one morning and one evening of 36 students each in July of each year; and, b. the director documents that adequate resources, i.e. faculty and facilities are available to support each

admitted class of students; and the program's average annual pass rates remain no more than ten percentage points below state average annual pass rates. Continue to monitor the program's licensure examination pass rates.

The Board's decisions on July 31, 2018, were communicated in writing to the program by letter dated August 6, 2018.

By letter dated June 11, 2020, the program was notified that the approval of its ongoing admissions was rescinded and that it would be required to obtain Board approval prior to admitting students.

By letter dated July 7, 2020, the Executive Officer withdrew the letter dated June 11, 2020; recalled and annulled the order in the letter dated June 1, 2020, rescinding approval of the program's ongoing admissions and requiring the program to obtain Board approval prior to admitting students; and reinstated the letter dated August 6, 2018, approving the ongoing admissions of students, pending further action by the Board.



July 22, 2020

Faye Silverman, MSN/Ed, WOCN, PHN
Nursing Education Consultant
Board of Vocational Nursing & Psychiatric Technician
2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 205
Sacramento, CA 95833

Re: VN Program in San Mateo Campus

Dear Ms. Silverman,

Please accept this letter as the official response of Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts (“Gurnick”) to agenda item XII. B. (i) for the Education and Practice Committee Meeting on July 27, 2020. We will address each agenda item in order as follows:

NEC Recommendations

1. Place the Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts, San Mateo, Vocational Nursing Program on provisional approval for the two-year period beginning August 21, 2020; and issue a certificate accordingly.

Response:

Gurnick is committed to continuous review of its academic programs to strengthen and support the achievement of student learning goals. On January 14, 2020, our former Nursing Education Consultant, Margarita Valdes, placed the San Mateo Program on progress monitoring as an alternative to provisional approval in order to achieve our goal of meeting the required NCLEX-PN passage rate. We believe that progress monitoring is appropriate and are fully committed to working with our new NEC, Faye Silverman, to improve our graduates’ passage rates.

To facilitate progress monitoring, we request monthly meetings with Ms. Silverman to discuss the status of our initiatives and receive support and feedback on our plans to increase NCLEX scores. This will allow us to demonstrate the continuous trend of increased pass rates and give us an opportunity to receive recommendations and support from our assigned NEC. Ms. Silverman has shared with us her approach to working with other programs like ours that need to increase exam passage rates and we understand she has successfully helped them reach their goals while avoiding provisional approval. After working with Ms. Silverman since last month, we are confident that she can be effective in helping us meet our goals expeditiously. We respectfully request that the Committee allow us this opportunity since she was just recently assigned to work with Gurnick.

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The NCLEX-PN pass rate and projection for Quarter 2 of 2020 demonstrates an upward trend of increased pass rates for the San Mateo campus. All efforts from faculty, staff, and administration have been focused on the implementation of changes and improvement to deliver the highest possible standard of resources and support for the students' success on the state board. It is important to note that the San Mateo VN Program had five (5) graduates whose NCLEX test dates were cancelled due to COVID-19 and were rescheduled for July and August 2020. With the BVNPT's support and maintaining the VN Program at the San Mateo Campus on progress monitoring under the guidance of Ms. Silverman, this will provide us a new opportunity to have consistent oversight of the progress that we have critically needed for the past several years.

Gurnick's San Mateo VN Program has implemented the following 13 initiatives to improve NCLEX passage rates:

1. Computer Based Access and Exams

- Shifted from paper-based to computer-based entrance examinations, increasing the rigors of our admission criteria. Computerized testing (Pre-HESI exams with mandatory remediation) continues to be required for the current classes at the completion of the Fundamentals, Medical Surgical Nursing and Pharmacology courses, and at the completion of the program. Students also have access to NCLEX review CDs with a capacity of 3,000+ questions to practice and study for the NCLEX exam. These questions are available on the school laptops in the computer lab on an ongoing basis. The NCLEX review CDs are not only utilized in preparation for the NCLEX exams, but the HESI exit exam as well.

2. Specialty HESI Exams

- Requiring students to remediate their specialty HESI exams for a minimum of nine hours in the second and fourth modules during the program utilizing the Evolve Elsevier website.

3. Attendance Policy

- Reinforced a stricter attendance policy including the following:
 - There is no make up for quizzes or tests unless approved by administration and recommended by instructor in advance for an excused absence only and must take an alternate exam within seven days of absence. Note: No study guide will be available for make-up exams.
 - All homework and/or assignments for an excused absence must be turned in within three days after the absence to receive full credit.
 - Homework and/or assignments for an unexcused absence will not be accepted.
 - All homework assignments must be turned in within the first 15 minutes of class. No points will be awarded for any assignments turned in after that time.

4. Faculty

- Gurnick’s San Mateo VN Program hired additional faculty with more experience and background in education, matching the courses they are teaching with their area of expertise. Weekly faculty meetings have been implemented to enhance oversight of curriculum delivery.

5. Weekly Exit Exam and NCLEX-PN Performance Monitoring

- Initiated weekly phone conferences with the Director of Quality Education, the Campus Director, the Dean of Nursing, the NCLEX Retention Coordinator and the VN Program Coordinator regarding the status and progress of every student.

6. Student Performance Tracking

- Initiated early recognition and monitoring of challenged learners, scheduling mandatory tutoring and providing all students with additional instructional support.

7. NCLEX Resources

- Added ATI NCLEX review integration to the VN 440 (NCLEX Prep) course, and the addition of Comprehensive Live ATI Review which began in January 2019.
- Implemented a progressive testing program by utilizing Elsevier Adaptive Quizzing (EAQ’s), Case Studies, and Specialty Exams to ensure students are ready for the NCLEX exam.

8. PASS Program

- Improved our Post-Academic Student Success (PASS) Program by inviting and utilizing NCLEX and content experts from other Gurnick campuses. The Post Academic Student Success (PASS) Program is a structured licensure review series that has been designed specifically for graduates of the Vocational Nurse and Psychiatric Technician program as a means to improve the licensure pass rates and increase contact with our graduates. The program is free of charge and graduates must attend the PASS Program in full to receive financial incentives. Participants are required to meet with the Career Services Coordinator to sign up for the PASS Program. Graduates are expected to receive their approval to test letter approximately six weeks after they graduate from the Academy and their application has been successfully sent and accepted by the BVNPT.

9. Simulation: Clinical Reasoning and Clinical Judgment

- In November 2019, Gurnick Academy officially established the Department of Nursing. The process of providing a consistent implementation of evidence-based simulation learning experience was streamlined under the guidance of the department’s Nursing Simulation Manager, Ms. Shelvia Salvano. The clinical simulations are integrated into the nursing curriculum. The simulation learning experience provides nursing students a controlled environment for practice-based learning. The goal is to provide an interactive learning experience with repeated

opportunities to practice and learn. High-fidelity simulators imitate real signs and symptoms and allow the change of physiological parameters to respond to the nursing and medical interventions. The implementation of high-fidelity simulation enables the nursing students in the development, synthesis, and application of their knowledge to replicate real clinical experience. This assists the learners in the development of clinical reasoning by incorporating concepts of the Clinical Judgment Model to close the gap between what is taught in clinical nursing education. The San Mateo clinical laboratory utilizes the following high-fidelity simulators: Victoria ® and Birthing baby S2200.L, Super Tory S2220, Noelle S550.250, Adult Hal S3201.125, Pediatric Hal S3005.L, Pediatric Hal S2225.

10. NCLEX Integration

- Implemented an NCLEX Integration Program, a multidimensional preparation tool designed to improve student weaknesses and build upon their strengths. There are three main parts to the Module I Integration Review. The first component is intended to develop skills such as test-taking strategies, HESI testing, etc. necessary to become a self-directed learner. The second portion requires a weekly self-reflective journal as well as a final component which is a response submission to a weekly scenario related question.

11. Five-Week NCSBN NCLEX Prep Course for VN Programs

- Capturing our students at the end of their program has been a challenge for some programs more than others. Providing the students with a National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) provided review after they exit our school allows for us to continue to connect with them regarding the resources that have been provided for them. We recently revamped our NCLEX Pass and are still currently working on it. Using our Saunders book during our course allows for us to get through a large portion of content, leaving time for graduates to use another resource after they exit the program, forcing them to stay the course and increase our pass rates.
- The five-week plan can help the students who are waiting for their ATT due to shelter-in-place orders prepare for the NCLEX. The goal is to have the students pass on their first attempt so that they may join the front lines of the COVID-19 crisis.

12. Faculty Development – Test Development and Item Writing NSCBN

- Gurnick Academy is providing a training course for faculty from the NCSBN. This course provides a step-by-step process for development of test items, writing multiple-choice questions, and building proficiency through learning how to write alternate question items with multiple responses, true or false items, and questions that take advantage of computer technology. It is important to empower educators to be proactive in the development of test writing items and to be educated on what NCLEX questions look like. Also, this prevents academic dishonesty. If the instructors write their questions, mixed with other resources, the

likelihood of cheating diminishes. The focuses on the practical aspects of continuing education and professional development for nurse educators encourage autonomy for the educator and provides a level of academic freedom when the tools are given and utilized.

13. Educational Health Record

- Beginning in January 2020, a third component, SimChart, was added to the curriculum which will enhance development of critical thinking skills as well as increase the students’ exposure to electronic charting. This system is loaded with pre-built unfolding case studies and is integrated with clinical decision support tools.

14. Student Retention

- In collaboration with the NCLEX Integration Program, developed a retention program with the addition of a NCLEX & Student Retention Manager. The NCLEX & Student Retention Manager collaborates with the NCLEX Coordinator and program heads in preparing the students for each test or examination and provides necessary supporting classroom materials as well as integration of current technologies and strategies. Student management also includes ensuring satisfactory academic progress is being maintained (as well as the assignment of appropriate tutoring support) and that student grades, attendance, and remediation documentation, are all recorded in a timely manner.

2. Issue a notice of change in Approval Status to the program identifying specific areas of non-compliance and requirements for correction as referenced in Section 2526.1 and Section 2530(l) of the California Code of Regulations.

Response:

For the reasons set forth above in response to Number 1, Gurnick requests that a change in approval status not be made at this time. Gurnick acknowledges that its graduates’ NCLEX scores need improvement. However, this is the only area of non-compliance identified thus far. We ask that the Committee take a holistic approach in evaluating Gurnick’s program and recognize that it meets all of the other requirements of Section 2530. We further ask that the committee allow us a chance to work with Ms. Silverman toward improving passage rates.

We also ask the Board to recognize the severe impact that COVID-19 has had and continues to have on Gurnick and other institutions, as a whole. In response to this crisis, Gurnick has purchased hundreds of thousands of dollars of personal protective equipment for students, faculty and staff, is conducting monthly COVID-19 tests for students, and implements a quarantine protocol for two weeks if there is possible exposure to COVID-19 among our ranks. This requires daily focus and reevaluation. We ask the Board to defer implementing any rollbacks or freezes on our enrollment during this unprecedented public healthcare crisis when nurses are needed now more than ever and provide us another opportunity to improve our graduates’ NCLEX scores.

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3. Require the program to submit an action plan to correct their NCLEX-PN® first time testers pass rate by October 1, 2020.

Response:

Gurnick Academy agrees to the NEC recommendation to require Gurnick to submit an action plan to improve its NCLEX-PN first time testers' scores by the above due date of October 1, 2020. Please see the above 13 steps Gurnick has taken to improve exam scores. The program leadership will work collaboratively with the assigned NEC. We look forward to a professional and supportive working relationship with Ms. Silverman and will fully cooperate with all required documentation and data requests.

4. Require the program to admit no additional classes without prior approval by the Board.

Response:

The regulations as they relate to provisional approval do not permit the Board to require that a program request permission for each new class. The regulations provide that when a program is placed on provisional approval, it may continue enrolling students so long as the enrollment is within the established pattern of admission previously approved by the Board. (See 16 CCR § 2526.1 (d)). Gurnick's San Mateo VN Program has an established and Board-approved pattern of four full-time classes per year of up to 36 students per class, two classes in January (morning and evening) and two classes in July (morning and evening). Thus, if Gurnick's San Mateo program is placed on provisional approval, it should be able to continue enrolling classes at that same level without requiring permission of the Board. Gurnick requests that the committee review its governing regulations and reject this proposal as it is not permitted by law.

5. Require the program to submit a report to the Board in six months, no later than March 15, 2021, and fifteen months, no later than June 15, 2022. The report must include a comprehensive analysis of the program, timeline for implementation, and the effect of employed interventions. The following elements must be addressed in the analysis. (omitted)

Response:

Gurnick agrees with this recommendation and will submit a report to the Board by March 15, 2021 and June 15, 2022 with the required elements as outlined in the agenda item.

6. Require the program to provide no less than one instructor for every ten students in clinical experiences.

Response:

Section 2534(d) of the Vocational Nursing Practice Act provides, “For supervision of clinical experience, there shall be a maximum of 15 students for each instructor.” There is simply no basis or authority under the law for the Board to arbitrarily require Gurnick to ensure a smaller class size of no more than (1) instructor for every ten (10) students for supervision of clinical experience.

7. Require the program to comply with all approval standards in Article 4 of the Vocational Nursing Practice Act, commencing at Business and Professions Code, section 2880, and Article 5 of the Board’s Regulations, commencing at California Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 2526.

Response:

Gurnick will continue to comply with all BVNPT regulations.

8. Require the program to demonstrate incremental progress in correcting the violations. If the program fails to satisfactorily demonstrate incremental progress, the full Board may revoke the program’s approval.

Response:


Gurnick’s San Mateo VN Program fully intends to demonstrate incremental progress. The program has demonstrated an upward trend in its graduates’ quarterly results on the NCLEX-PN and will make every effort to continue that trend. Gurnick requests that the committee give it the opportunity to remain on progress monitoring status (not provisional approval) and improve its test results in the near future.

9. Place the program on the Board’s August 2022 agenda for reconsideration of provisional approval.

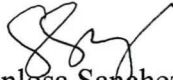
Response:

For the reasons set forth above, Gurnick requests the opportunity to improve its test results while on progress monitoring status and not provisional approval. The language of 16 CCR § 2530(I)(1) provides that “Failure to maintain the required yearly average minimum pass rate for two years or eight consecutive quarters *may* be cause to place a program on provisional approval.” (emphasis added). Gurnick requests that the Board take into consideration the efforts Gurnick has made and will continue to make to improve pass rates and use its discretion to not place Gurnick on provisional approval at this time.

Sincerely,



Larisa Revzina, EdD, RN, FNP
Chief Academic Officer
Vocational Nursing Program Director



Samantha Manlosa Sanchez, MSN/Ed, BSN, RN
Dean of Nursing