

**Southeast Tech**  
Registered Nurse Program  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Purpose:**

To provide the School Board an overview of Southeast Tech's Registered Nurse Program and a progress report on Southeast Tech's Registered Nurse Program Accreditation.

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Healthcare continues to be a leading economic driver in Sioux Falls and the Southeast area of South Dakota. Southeast Tech has offered a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Program since 2001. In response to strong demand for Registered Nurses Southeast Tech started the Registered Nurse Program as a career advancement for LPN's in January, 2012 after approval by the South Dakota Board of Education and the South Dakota Board of Nursing. Southeast Tech is in the process of pursuing ACEN (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing) Accreditation for the Registered Nurse Program.

Southeast Tech's Registered Nurse Program provides a pathway for LPN's to advance their education and careers while working to become RN's. Curriculum is delivered in a hybrid format which includes traditional and on-line instruction and provides students with flexibility in meeting their educational goals while balancing work and family commitments.

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**Administrative Recommendation to School Board:**

Acknowledge the Registered Nurse Program Report and the Progress Report on the Registered Nurse Program Accreditation.

## Southeast Tech Registered Nurse Program Report

**Goal:** To obtain ACEN (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing) Accreditation for Southeast Tech's Registered Nurse Program.

**Explanation:** Southeast Tech started an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Nursing: Registered Nurse in January, 2012. This program provides LPN's the opportunity to advance their education and careers by becoming Registered Nurses. The additional coursework in the AAS Nursing Degree expands their knowledge and expertise as nurses. These skills will complement the technical skills that are the foundation of their program area.

The primary objective for the RN Program is to build on the foundation nursing skills of Licensed Practical Nurses, allowing them to advance to the role of Registered Nurse. This objective is met by providing didactic and clinical nursing education utilizing curriculum approved by the South Dakota Board of Nursing.

The program is offered in a Hybrid format which combines traditional and on-line instruction. Entrance requirements include:

- Current licensure as a LPN in South Dakota or license from a nursing compact state
- Iowa and Nebraska are both compact states, Minnesota is not.
- Documented work experience of at least 750 hours as an LPN within the last three years.
- Letter of reference from work supervisor.
- GPA of 2.5 or higher in post-secondary education.
- Applicants must successfully complete five bridge classes which include:
  - Chemistry, Sociology, Speech, Physiology and Microbiology
- Other entrance requirements including background check, drug screen, etc.

Based upon input from Industry and our Nursing Programs Advisory Council, Southeast Tech is pursuing National Accreditation through the ACEN (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing). We hired a national consultant in Spring, 2013 to provide guidance as we pursued accreditation.

There are several advantages to obtaining National Accreditation:

- Employment for Graduates.  
 \*Many healthcare organizations require graduation from an accredited program in order to be considered for employment. Some healthcare organizations such as the VA also reimburse new hires for the cost of obtaining their RN Degree.
- Meeting National Standards
- Transfer of credits for those graduates who wish to pursue their BSN.

Key milestones in the process include:

- March, 2014: Candidacy presentation submitted
- Summer, 2014: Notified by ACEN that we were awarded Candidacy Status (Candidacy allows us to apply for a site visit)
- Fall, 2014: Applied and approved for site visit
- December, 2014: Submitted self-study and systematic plan of evaluation to ACEN
- Site visit has been scheduled for February 11-13, 2015.

The site visit will include interviews with key stakeholders including students, industry, faculty, staff and administration. Visitors will also evaluate compliance with ACEN National Standards, curriculum, program outcomes data, and facilities and equipment.

Graduates must pass their NCLEX-RN National Boards in order to work as a Registered Nurse.

<b>Southeast Tech RN Program NCLEX-RN National Boards Pass Rates Compared to State and National NCLEX-RN Pass Rates</b>			
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Southeast Tech RN program Annual Pass Rate</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>92.5%</b>	<b>TBD</b>
<b>South Dakota Pass Rate</b>	<b>90.18%</b>	<b>83.86%</b>	<b>TBD</b>
<b>National Pass Rate</b>	<b>89.32%</b>	<b>81.43%</b>	<b>TBD</b>

\*Please note that between 2012 and 2013 the NCLEX-RN Test was rewritten and the minimum score required to pass was increased. The new test has had an impact on our program as well as the State and National level.

**Summary:** The development and implementation of an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Nursing: Registered Nurse has increased access for students who wish to remain employed as RN's while continuing their education. The program has built upon the strengths of Southeast Tech's LPN Program and has provided additional RN Graduates in the region to help meet the needs of many healthcare organizations. Obtaining National Accreditation will strengthen the program and provide graduates with additional employment opportunities.