

VIA EMAIL

MAILED June 23, 2026
June 23, 2026

Emily Aycock, MSN, RN
Department Chair, Nursing
Sandhills Community College
3395 Airport Road
Pinehurst, NC 28374

Dear Emily Aycock:

This letter serves to acknowledge that the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (NLN CNEA) Board of Commissioners reviewed the Focused Site Visit Report and supporting documentation submitted for the Associate Degree in Nursing Program at Sandhills Community College during the **June 9-11, 2026** meeting.

Your Report regarding Quality Indicator III-A has been accepted and the following quality improvement concern has been removed. The Quality Indicator states:

Standard III, Quality Indicator III-A. The program's faculty are qualified, diverse, and adequate in number to meet program goals.

However, the Board noted ongoing concerns with Quality Indicator I-A. This letter will serve as formal notification of actions taken by the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (NLN CNEA) at the **June 9-11, 2026** Board of Commissioners' meeting. After Board review of the Mid-cycle Report, Mid-cycle Follow-up Report, and Focused Site Visit Report, the Board of Commissioners identified substantial and ongoing noncompliance concerns with the following Standards and Quality Indicators: **I-A**. The Standard and Quality Indicator states:

Standard I, Quality Indicator I-A. "Faculty and staff assess and evaluate achievement of identified program outcomes by engaging in an ongoing, systematic, evidence-based process" (2021, p. 9).

Regarding Standard I, Quality Indicator I-A, the Board noted the systematic evaluation plan (SEP) does not meet all NLN CNEA requirements. For example, the SEP is missing data and the benchmarks are unclear.

Accordingly, the NLN CNEA Board of Commissioners has changed the accreditation status for the Associate Degree in Nursing Program at Sandhills Community College to Probationary Status for a period of 36 months effective immediately (June 11, 2026 to June 30, 2029).

The Board may act to grant a good cause extension if the Program has demonstrated substantial progress in addressing the identified deficiencies and requires only a limited period of time to finish resolving the deficiency. The Board will consider a good cause extension if the Program has provided documented evidence of substantial progress toward resolution of the deficiency, definitive plans to achieve resolution within a specified timeline subject to approval by the Board, and the Program demonstrates that student outcomes are not compromised.

If the Program is not able to resolve the identified deficiencies and demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards within the allotted time frame, the Board must act to withdraw accreditation from the Program.

The Program has an on-site program evaluation visit scheduled for Fall 2026 and the Probationary Status will be re-evaluated with the February 2027 Board decision regarding continuing accreditation.

In accordance with U.S. Department of Education regulations and in accordance with Section 6-I. A of the NLN CNEA Policy Handbook, the NLN CNEA will make this decision public via the NLN CNEA website and through the dissemination of this notice to relevant stakeholders, including the U.S. Department of Education, Secretary of Education, state regulatory agencies of the Program (the state board of nursing), and the institutional accreditation agency (Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools).

According to Section 3-VII of the NLN CNEA Accreditation Handbook: Policies and Procedures, the Program is required to develop and submit to NLN CNEA a teach-out plan that provides for the equitable treatment of students if the Program ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their Program of study. Submit this plan by **July 23, 2026**, via the accreditation electronic portal at <https://cneaaccreditation.nln.org/>.

In addition, in accordance with the U.S. Department of Education requirements, the NLN CNEA requires the Program to inform all currently enrolled and prospective students the decision to place the Program on probationary status within seven (7) business days of receipt of this letter. **We ask that you provide the specific notification sent to current and prospective students as well as how the information was sent to us via email at cneaaccreditation@nln.org no later than July 2, 2026 that such notice has been timely made.** The Program must also accurately reflect their accreditation status (Probation) on their website and other publications. Please update the accreditation status on your Program's website or other publications by **July 2, 2026** and notify us via email at cneaaccreditation@nln.org once done.

Finally, the Program may provide comments regarding this decision and submit them via email to cneaaccreditation@nln.org. These comments will be placed on the NLN CNEA website. The Program does not have to comment.

Failure to submit the requested documentation may affect the Program's accreditation status with the NLN CNEA. If there are any questions about this request, please contact Dr. Teresa Shellenbarger at tshellenbarger@nln.org.

We thank you and your colleagues for your commitment to quality nursing education. Please contact me if you have any questions or if the NLN CNEA can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Teresa Shellenbarger, PhD, RN, CNE, CNEcI, ANEF, FAAN
Executive Director, NLN CNEA



NLN Commission for Nursing
Education Accreditation

CC:

Alexander "Sandy" Stewart, PhD, President, Sandhills Community College
Crystal Tillman, DNP, RN, CNP, PMHNP-BC, FRE, Chief Executive Officer,
North Carolina State Board of Nursing
Stephen L. Pruitt, PhD, President, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
Elizabeth Daggett, Director Accreditation Group, U.S. Department of Education
Brooke McAtee, Ph.D., MSN, RN, Chair, Board of Commissioners, NLN CNEA