

**BEFORE THE MINNESOTA
BOARD OF NURSING**

In the Matter of
Ridgewater College
Associate Degree Nursing Program

**REPORT TO THE BOARD WITH CONSENT
OF PROGRAM REVIEW PANEL
RECOMMENDATION OF REPRIMAND**

The Ridgewater College Associate Degree Nursing Program (“Program”) and the Minnesota Board of Nursing Review Panel (“Review Panel”) agree that the above-referenced matter may be resolved without trial of any issue or fact as follows:

I.

JURISDICTION

1 The Minnesota Board of Nursing (“Board”) is authorized pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 148.251 to approve nursing programs, survey approved programs to determine compliance with Board Rules and continue or revoke approval based on the determination of compliance or non-compliance.

2 The Program is currently approved by the Board and is subject to the jurisdiction of the Board with respect to the matter referred to in this Recommendation of Reprimand.

II.

BACKGROUND

3 On March 27, 2026, Mary Leyk, Dean of Nursing and Allied Health; Mike Kutzke, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Deann Ober, Nursing Faculty, Department Chairperson, Program Coordination-Hutchinson Campus; Ann Benson, Nursing Faculty- Hutchinson Campus; Brianna McCleary, Nursing Faculty, Department Chairperson-Willmar Campus; and Kala Rudningen, Nursing Faculty, Program Coordination-Willmar Campus, appeared on behalf of the Program at a conference with a Board Review Panel. The Review Panel was composed of Board Members Jessica Miehe and Tracy Sonterre-Rieger. JaCinda Downs, Nursing Education Specialist; Deborah Schuhmacher, Director of Nursing Education; and Melissa Wolfe, Education Program Assistant, were present for the conference. The Program met with the Review Panel to

discuss allegations contained in a Notice of Conference dated February 18, 2026. Erin Farmer, Assistant Attorney General, represented the Review Panel. Joseph Weiner, Assistant Attorney General, represented the Program.

III.

FACTS

4. On October 10, 2025, Board Education staff reviewed the Program's annual compliance submission. The survey indicated that the Program employed a faculty member with an encumbered registered nurse ("RN") license.

5. On October 10, 2025, Board staff discussed with the Program Director that a faculty member with an encumbered RN license does not meet Minnesota Rule 6301.2340, subpart 3.A(9)(e). The Program Director responded that the faculty member with an encumbered license was immediately removed from her teaching assignment.

6. By letter dated November 25, 2025, the Board notified the Program of a survey scheduled for December 29, 2025, related to alleged non-compliance with Board rules. In preparation for the survey, the Program was asked to submit its fall 2025 associate degree nursing faculty assignments for all theory and clinical courses and Ridgewater College's faculty hiring policy and procedure.

7. On December 29, 2025, a Board member and Board staff conducted a survey of the Program and confirmed that during the spring and fall 2025 semesters, one nursing faculty member had an encumbered nursing license in Minnesota. The results of the December 29, 2025, survey indicated that Minnesota Rule 6301.2340, subpart 3.A(9)(e) was not met.

a. At the conference on March 27, 2026, the Program admitted that it did not comply with Minnesota Rule 6301.2340, subpart 3.A(9)(e), during the spring and fall 2025 terms. The Program provided additional information satisfactory to the Panel that as of the time of the conference, the Program was compliant with Minnesota Rule 6301.2340, subpart 3.A(9)(e).

IV.

LAWS

8. The Program acknowledges that it did not comply with Minnesota Rule 6301.2340, subpart 3.A(9)(e) as it pertained to a faculty member with an encumbered (“RN”) license who was hired to teach in the nursing program during the spring and fall semesters of 2025 and justifies the action described in Section V. below.

V.

BOARD ACTION

9. The Review Panel and the Program agree the Board may take the following action: The Board **REPRIMANDS** the Program for its failure to comply with Minnesota Rules 6301.2340, subpart 3.A(9)(e). This action does not change the Program’s approval status, and the Program remains on the list of approved programs.

VI.

OTHER INFORMATION

10. By agreeing to this report and recommendation to the Board, the Program waives the contested case hearing before an Administrative Law Judge of the Office of Administrative Hearings, and all other procedures to which the Program may be entitled under the Minnesota and United States constitutions, statutes, or rules.

11. The Program waives any claims against the Board, the Minnesota Attorney General, the State of Minnesota, and their agents, employees, and representatives related to the investigation of the conduct herein, or the negotiation or execution of this Order of Reprimand to the Board.

12. This Review Panel Recommendation of Reprimand, the files, records, and proceedings associated with this matter shall constitute the entire record and may be reviewed by the Board in its consideration of this matter.

13. Representatives of the Program have read, understand, and agree to this Recommendation of Reprimand, and have voluntarily signed it.

14. This Recommendation of Reprimand shall not limit the Board's authority to proceed against the Program by initiating a contested case hearing or by other appropriate means on the basis of any act, conduct, or admission not directly related to the specific facts and circumstances set forth herein.

VII.

NOTICE PURSUANT TO THE MINNESOTA GOVERNMENT DATA PRACTICES ACT

15. Under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13, information given to the Board following a compliance survey of a nursing education program is classified as public. This information will be used by the Board in evaluating the allegations of lack of compliance with one or more rules made against the program. This Reprimand Order, and any subsequent Board action on this matter, are also classified as public data.

16. This Recommendation of Reprimand contains the entire agreement between the parties, there being no other agreement of any kind, verbal or otherwise, which varies the terms of this Recommendation of Reprimand.

CONSENT:

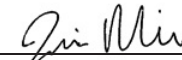
RIDGEWATER COLLEGE ASSOCIATE DEGREE
NURSING PROGRAM

BOARD OF NURSING
REVIEW PANEL



May 26, 2026

MARY LEYK
Director of the Program



JESSICA MIEHE
Board Member

Mike Kutzke

Digitally signed by Mike Kutzke
Date: 2026.05.26 14:15:26 -05'00'

MIKE KUTZKE
Vice President of Academic Affairs

Representatives of the Program

Dated: _____, 2026

Dated: _____, 2026

ORDER

Upon consideration of this order, the Board issues the Program a **REPRIMAND** and adopts all of the terms described above on this 5th day of June, 2026.

MINNESOTA BOARD
OF NURSING



CAREN GAVTKO
Executive Director