FEASIBILITY STUDY
TO MONTANA STATE BOARD OF NURSING

“Nííhaanúísííʔh?c?c?nínʔ· Grow Our Own”
“Įųgicaǧabi: Growing Our Own”

SUBMITTED BY:
DR. CAROLE FALCON-CHANDLER, PRESIDENT
AANIIH NAKODA COLLEGE
FORT BELKNAP INDIAN RESERVATION

MARCH 2015
(1) The first phase of establishing a new nursing education program is **Phase 1, NOTICE OF INTENT**. The applicant shall notify the board of the intent to establish a new or expanded nursing education program by providing the following information:

The contents of this document contain the feasibility study. The required information is found in steps (a) through (k), and supported by the Appendices. A Table of Contents lists the pages where the (a-k) relevant information can be found.
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<td>(i) Description of how the proposed program may affect existing nursing programs that share the proposed clinical sites, and indicate that plans and the needs assessment regarding the proposed program have been shared with directors of existing affected programs in the state;</td>
</tr>
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<td>27</td>
<td>(j) Letter of commitment from the governing institution that outlines financial, physical, personnel, and other resources that will be devoted to the proposed nursing education program; and</td>
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<td>(k) Letters of support for proposed program from communities of interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Map of Montana, Location of Aaniiih Nakoda College

APPENDIX 2: Minutes of Fort Belknap Community Meeting

APPENDIX 3: Survey data with community comments

APPENDIX 4: Newspaper articles concerning nursing education program

APPENDIX 5: Job Descriptions for Director of Nursing and Nursing Instructor

APPENDIX 6: Aaniiih Nakoda College Board of Directors Resolution
   a. Nursing Education Program
   b. ANA SEEDS Grant

   Fort Belknap Community Tribal Council
   a. Tribal Resolution (No. 28-2015 Nursing Education Program)
   b. Tribal Resolution (No. 29-2015 ANA SEEDS Grant)
(1) (a) results of an assessment of the need for the proposed nursing education program, including identification of potential employment opportunities for program graduates;

History and background

- Aaniiih Nakoda College (ANC) is one of 37 Tribal Colleges in the United States and Canada. It is fully accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and the accreditation was recently reaffirmed in 2014. It was chartered in 1983 by the Fort Belknap Indian Community Council (FBICC), which serves as the governing body of the Aaninen (White Clay People or Gros Ventre) and Nakoda (Assiniboine) tribes of the Fort Belknap reservation. The college is located right off Highway 2 along the Hi-Line where the Fort Belknap Agency and main Tribal buildings are located. (Appendix 1: Map). The northern edge of the reservation is the Milk River while the southern boundary is the Little Rocky Mountains (Fur Cap Mountains, Island Mountains to the people). Here gold was discovered in 1895 and the Little Rocky Mountains were once the site of the largest cyanide heap leach mine in the world; the mines are now defunct, but the water must be treated into perpetuity. The contaminated heavy metal water with low pH exceeds clean water standards and has created a plethora of health problems for the residents. It is one of the driving forces for the creation of the nursing education program which could address environmental public health issues for this placed-based problem.

- The reservation is extremely rural, with a population density of 2.5 persons per square mile, compared to a national average of 87.4 persons per square mile. Most residents live in the communities of the Fort Belknap Agency, or Hays (35 miles south of the Agency) and Lodgepole (40 miles south from the Agency). Tribal members also live off the reservation in nearby communities of Harlem (3 miles northwest), Chinook (25 miles west), Dodson (30 miles east) and Havre (50 miles west).

- The following mission statement serves to guide the planning, development and implementation of all college programs: “The mission of Aaniiih Nakoda College is to provide quality post-secondary education for residents of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation and surrounding communities. The college will help individuals improve their lives by offering them the opportunity to maintain the cultural integrity of the Aaniiih (Gros Ventre) and Nakoda (Assiniboine) Tribes as well as succeed in an American technological society”. In accordance with this mission, the college offers twelve associate degree
Nursing Education Program Feasibility Study

- programs, five one-year certificate programs, and a number of short-term (less than one year) career and technical training programs.

- Eighty-four percent of ANC students are American Indian and among those 91% are enrolled members of the Aaniinen and Nakoda nations. Ninety-one percent are first generation college students with the majority being low income; more than 90% of incoming students qualifying for some form of federal financial aid.

- Chronic poverty, high unemployment, and the acute shortage of technically and culturally competent health care professionals, specifically nurses, has galvanized the college to “Grow Our Own” in an attempt to uplift the health of the community. For the past two decades the college has had a strong science program and to this day Allied Health always has the largest number of students. Some students would transfer to a mainstream institution and into a nursing education program. A few students were successful in this transition, but many experienced difficulties in finding housing and daycare for their children, accumulating debt burdens beyond their scholarships, losing their network and support systems, and missing the cultural immersion experienced at ANC and the reservation. Although empowered and academically successful these difficulties became roadblocks and impacted the completion of their studies. Montana State University-Northern reported 9% of their nursing students were American Indian but only 3% graduated in 2014. (Dr. Cynthia Gustafson, Executive Director of BON). Nursing degree programs offered at ‘mainstream’ institutions do very little to prepare students to meet the unique social and cultural needs of their Indian patients.

National workforce nursing needs

- Data gathered at the national, state and local levels demonstrate a great demand for well-trained nurses. The shortage of qualified nurses has become a national health care crisis and the shortage of American Indian nurses is especially acute.

- According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the shortage is expected to intensify as Baby Boomers age and the need for health care services expands. (“Nursing Shortage,” http://www.aacn.nche.edu 15 March 2013) Among occupations requiring at least an associate’s degree, registered nursing is ranked as the occupation with both the largest number of workers employed and the largest number of vacancies. (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections http://www.bls.gov/emp, 8 April 2011) Bureau of Labor Statistics employment projections rank registered nursing as the top occupation in terms of job growth through 2022 representing a 19.4% increase, with more

Montana workforce nursing needs

- Data for the state of Montana indicate a similar trend. Currently 15% of Montana’s workforce is employed in health care. With Montana’s aging population and growing numbers of newcomers into the state the health care service needs are expected to grow. The population demographic data for Blaine, Hill and Phillips Counties by percentage are found in Figure 1 and Figure 2. These are the counties close to Aaniiih Nakoda College who would benefit by a nursing education program that “Grow Our Own” for the Hi-Line. The Montana Department of Labor and Industry projects that the state will add 1,300 health care jobs per year through 2022. Registered nurses are number five of the top ten detailed occupations with the most job openings and having the highest average annual wage of $60,698. (Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, “Montana Employment Projections 2013: Job Growth to 2015 and 2022”. June 2014) FOR OCCUPATIONS REQUIRING AN ASSOCIATE’S DEGREE, REGISTERED NURSING IS RANKED FIRST IN CURRENT EMPLOYMENT AND IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY 20.40% BY 2022 WITH ALMOST 350 ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS DURING THAT TIME. (Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, “Montana Job Projections: 2012-2022)

Figure 1: Aging population for counties surrounding Aaniiih Nakoda College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2030</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 65</td>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>Percent Over 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>5,621</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaine</td>
<td>14,120</td>
<td>2,041</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Montana.gov Census & Economic Information Center
Figure 2: Demographic population data for the three counties close to Aaniiih Nakoda College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population: Blaine County Montana, by Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 and Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,401</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population: Hill County Montana, by Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 and Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.7%</td>
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<td>65 and Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population: Phillips County Montana, by Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 and Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Montana.gov Census & Economic Information Center

American Indian workforce nursing needs for the state of Montana

- There are significant employment opportunities which will increase with each passing year for qualified nurses in Montana. However, American Indians are sorely underrepresented in the workforce data. The population of Montana is 6.5% American Indian with only 2.3% of the registered nurses in Montana being American Indian. (Dr. Cynthia Gustafson, Executive Director, Montana Board of Nursing, personal communication, 11 February 2015) Despite recent statewide efforts to increase the number of American Indians enrolled in nursing education programs, only 4% of all nursing students enrolled in nursing programs across Montana in 2014 were American Indians, and only 3% of those who graduated in 2013 were American Indian. While the underrepresentation of American Indians among nurses in Montana diminishes the overall quality and diversity of care across the state, it is especially troubling in communities on or near Montana’s Indian reservations, including Fort Belknap. Health care providers in these communities serve large numbers of American Indian patients who would greatly benefit from the care provided by nurses who are both technically and culturally competent.
Aaniiih Nakoda College
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- Locally, the Fort Belknap Indian Community has a great demand for well-trained nurses. The Indian Health Service (IHS) operates a critical access facility at the Agency (6 beds) and a clinic in Hays. The Tribal Health Department administers a 638 contract for providing more than a dozen health service programs on the reservation, including Chemical Dependency, Health Education, Family Planning and Public Health Nursing. The local labor force has difficulty providing qualified nurses to fill those positions for which a registered nurse is required. Tribal Health and IHS collectively employ 25 registered nurses and only 52% are American Indian. There are 5 RN positions currently vacant. According to the IHS Director of Personnel, the situation is not unusual as the IHS service unit operates with at least 25% vacancy for RN staff at all times. So with only 52% of all existing positions filled with Tribal members a solution was sought to “Grow Our Own”. However, the lack of locally available training opportunities, combined with Fort Belknap’s remote local and extreme geographic isolation, has presented a challenge not only on the reservation but for neighboring communities that would hire qualified nurses. The offsite reservation hospitals and clinics also struggle to hire and retain nurses, especially those who possess the experience needed to provide quality care for American Indian patients. For Havre, Chinook and Malta current vacancy rates range from 12-to 23%. There are 40 positions currently open in Havre for either CNA’s or nurses for their long care facility or for the hospital! (Ms. Christin Obresly, Director of Personnel, Northern Montana Care Center, personal communication)

- At the 14 service units within the Billings Area Office’s jurisdiction in Montana and Wyoming, they have 223 positions that require RN licensures. At the same time, they have 50 current vacancies for RNs, for an extremely high vacancy rate of 22%. Virtually all patients at these sites are American Indians and would greatly benefit from the culturally and technically competent care provided by qualified American Indian nurses. (Jackie Black, Human Resource Specialist, IHS Billings Area Office, personal communication, 13 March 2015)

Fort Belknap Community Need

- In order to determine if the community wanted a nursing education program at Aaniiih Nakoda College a meeting was held for all members living on the reservation or in the surrounding areas. They voiced overwhelming support for establishing such a program (Appendix 2: Minutes of the community meeting). The ANC Public Relations Specialist wrote articles for the Havre Daily News and The Blaine County Journal, News and Opinion which appeared on the front page of these Hi-Line newspapers. (Appendix 4). Our ANC students taking Public Speaking discussed the issue
and went on our college radio station KGVA 88.1 to educate the Fort Belknap Indian Community, other Hi-Line residents and listeners throughout Indian Country to the need and steps to go through in establishing a nursing education program.

- Survey questions were then drawn up (approved by our IRB chair, Dr. Sean Chandler) and placed on the ANC Web page where community and Hi-Line residents could access the survey at www.ancollege.edu. Within less than 48 hours 63 people had filled out the survey and answered the relevant questions. At the end of nearly a month 141 responses were recorded (Appendix 3: Complete Survey data with extensive comments)

- Seventy-six percent were strongly interested or interested in the program; 71% had family or friends interested in a nursing program. The following are two examples of the responses to questions on the survey.

**Figure 3:** When asked if a cultural emphasis would be important for the nursing education program 89% said yes!
Figure 4: When asked if a nursing program would impact the health of the community 94% said yes!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>132 (93.62%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9 (6.38%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- There were 13 questions in the survey and participants were asked about the kind of nursing program they envisioned at ANC. Respondents’ answers to open-ended questions reflect the priorities and values of the community, and these comments will inform the development of the program curriculum. Please refer to Appendix 3 for a detailed transcription of survey comments.
(1)(b) type of educational program and proposed timetable for initiating the program;

- The Associate of Science (AS) degree in Allied Health at Aaniiih Nakoda College has been the most popular at the college, averaging between 40 and 50 declared majors per year (approximately 25% of the full-time student body). Currently, students in the Allied Health program can complete up to 31 semester credits that can be directly applied to the State of Montana Model Nursing Curriculum, including all 24 credits required during the first year of an ASN degree program (see pages 9-10 for Model Nursing Curriculum). With the overwhelming community support and workforce need the next step would be for ANC to have this highly successful program evolve into one offering the ASN degree as the pool of talent is already on board.

- To have a nursing education program at Aaniiih Nakoda College would not only increase the number of American Indian nurses in the workforce but ensure their success. Comments from students attending the Aaniiih Nakoda College Community Forum on Nursing Education on December 3rd 2014 (Appendix 2) repeatedly emphasized the importance of providing locally available training opportunities for careers in nursing:

  - “I would be interested in taking the Nursing Program here at ANC. I won’t have to worry about driving hundreds of miles, finding a babysitter, and finding a place to live...One of the greatest benefits this program would provide is eliminating the financial burden of relocating and starting whole new way of life in another location. This will also keep our local population of native students from dropping out and abandoning their dreams of obtaining a nursing degree...I think it would be beneficial to offer a nursing program at ANC because year after year enrollment in Allied Health is constant, and students choose to go into pre-nursing. The students then transfer to other colleges trying to pursue their dream in nursing and have to drop out due to financial difficulties. Fort Belknap believes in "growing our own": and if the program was offered at ANC, it would allow us to meet the future needs of our community’s health.”

- The educational program would follow the state of Montana curricula currently in place and incorporate any changes that are being implemented by the curriculum committee currently deciding these issues. The following table outlines the course requirements and sequencing of the Montana State Model Nursing Curriculum.
Model Nursing Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One – Fall Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Didactic/Clinical/Lab</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anatomy &amp; Physiology I</td>
<td>3/0/1=4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman English</td>
<td>3/0/0=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Algebra</td>
<td>3/0/0=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>2/0/0=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakoda/Aaniiih Language I (AIS 150/155)*</td>
<td>3/0/0=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>14/0/1=15</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*Aaniiih Nakoda College requirement, not part of Model Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One – Spring Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Didactic/Clinical/Lab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anatomy &amp; Physiology II</td>
<td>3/0/1=4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inorganic Chemistry with Lab</td>
<td>3/0/1=4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Nursing</td>
<td>1/0/1=1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Psychology</td>
<td>3/0/0=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to American Indian Studies (AIS 100)*</td>
<td>3/0/0=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>13/0/2=15</td>
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*Aaniiih Nakoda College requirement, not part of Model Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Two – Fall Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Didactic/Clinical/Lab</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacology</td>
<td>3/0/0=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamentals of Nursing</td>
<td>4/0/3=7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerontology</td>
<td>1/1/0=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8/1/3=12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Two – Spring Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Didactic/Clinical/Lab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Concepts of Adult Nursing</td>
<td>4/3/0=7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Concepts of Maternal/Child Nursing</td>
<td>2/1/0=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Concepts of Mental Health Nursing</td>
<td>2/0/0=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8/4/0=12</td>
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Continuation of Nursing Curriculum

### Year Three – Fall Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complex Care Needs – Maternal/Child Client</td>
<td>2/1/0=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex Care Needs – Mental Health Client</td>
<td>1/1/0=2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathophysiology</td>
<td>3/0/0=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microbiology</td>
<td>3/0/1=4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9/2/1=12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Year Three – Spring Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Sociology</td>
<td>3/0/0=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex Care Needs – Adult Client</td>
<td>2/2/0=4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Clinical Skills</td>
<td>0/0/1=1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Client Care</td>
<td>2/2/0=4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7/4/1=12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROGRAM TOTAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>59/11/8=78</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*72 credits required for Model Nursing Curriculum; 78 credits required for ANC’s ASN Degree*
• The instruction offered in the nursing education program will be embedded in a teaching/learning context that reflects and affirms the lifeways and values of the Aaniinen and Nakoda tribes. Elders will visit classes on a regular basis to talk with students about traditional notions of health care, healing and wellness. Real-life case studies will provide the basis for discussion and reflection on contemporary health care issues facing American Indians. All nursing students will take six credits of American Indian Studies courses as part of their program requirements.

• The following 'Word Cloud' depicts the community's responses.
A question in the survey asked “What qualities should a nurse have in order to serve the Fort Belknap community and the broader Hi-Line residents in treating children, youth, seniors and Elders?” The answers given are best displayed in the following ‘word cloud’. These are the soft skills that would be enhanced in discussions on the values and lifeways taught and practiced within the traditional Aaniiih and Nakoda culture.
### (1)(b) Continuation, time table for initiating the program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel to various schools of nursing for information and show intent</td>
<td>September 2014</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire nursing consultant who had successfully educated American Indian students from the Fort Belknap Reservation in a nursing program Helps with development of program (University of Great Falls)</td>
<td>September 2014</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather documents and data for feasibility study</td>
<td>October/November 2014</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet health care providers along the Hi-Line for potential clinical sites for student education</td>
<td>January/February 2015</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANC submits ANA SEEDS Grant for funding Nursing Education Program</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate data and write feasibility study</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Phase I Feasibility Study to Board of Nursing</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertise for Director of Nursing and Nurse Instructor</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Nursing Meeting outcome</td>
<td>April 15(^{th}) – 16(^{th})</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire Director and Nurse Instructor if Phase I approved</td>
<td>April-May 2015</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin all facets of Curriculum Development</td>
<td>May-July 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form Advisory Board-meet</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulate student handbook</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create syllabi for RN program</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare and submit Phase II report to BON</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize and sign MOAs with clinical sites having previously committed verbally to training students</td>
<td>June-July 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Phase II Report to BON</td>
<td>July 22(^{rd}) .-23(^{rd}), 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BON site visit if Phase II Report accepted</td>
<td>July 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit 15 applicants for the RN program (post on ANC web site)</td>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum reviewed by ANC Curriculum Committee</td>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved curriculum sent to Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities</td>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admit 15 students after strict selection process</td>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1) (c) total student enrollment;

Aaniiih Nakoda College will recruit and select 15 applicants per year for the RN training program. Stringent selection criteria will ensure that only the most qualified applicants are chosen to participate in the training program. The director will chair an applicant selection committee comprised of the nursing instructor, ANC Allied Health Department faculty and representative from a local health care provider. The selection committee will select qualified applicants based on pre-established criteria, including American Indian preference. Selections will be based on the evaluation of completed applications packages that include the following materials:

- Completed application for admission to Aaniiih Nakoda College
- High school and college transcripts (if applicable)
- GED/HiSET credential (if applicable)
- Medical work experience
- Statement of health care philosophy and career goals
- Two letters of recommendation
- Background check clearance
(1) (d) list of proposed faculty positions and faculty qualifications;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>FULL TIME</th>
<th>COURSES TO BE TAUGHT</th>
<th>CLINICAL</th>
<th>PART TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director (MSN-Nursing)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Instructor (MSN)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Nursing education courses offered as part of the State of Montana Model Nursing Curriculum (see pp. 9-10)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Instructor (MSN)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Nursing education courses offered as part of the State of Montana Model Nursing Curriculum (see pp. 9-10)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Instructor (MSN)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nursing education courses offered as part of the State of Montana Model Nursing Curriculum (see pp. 9-10)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURRENT ANC FACULTY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (MS)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Anatomy and Physiology (1&amp;2) with lab, Nutrition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (PhD)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>General and Inorganic Chemistry with Lab, Nursing Pharmacology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (MS)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Microbiology with Lab</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (MS)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>College Algebra (Statistics also)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (MS)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Psychology, Sociology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (PhD)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>College Writing I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (EdD)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Introduction to American Indian Studies, Aaniiih Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Nakoda Language (Elder)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The full-time Director of the Nursing Education Program and the full-time Nursing Instructor positions have been advertised and the job descriptions are found in the Appendix 5.

- The Aaniiih Nakoda College full time faculty that would teach in the nursing education program include the following instructors.

- Ms. Erica McKeon-Hanson is chairwoman of the college's Allied Health Department. She earned her BS degree in Biology from the University of Mary (Bismarck, ND) and her MSE in Learning Development from Montana State University-Northern. She is currently completing a Master's in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University. Ms. McKeon-Hanson has been a member of the college's Allied Health faculty since 2008 and possesses prior teaching experience at the high school (Havre, MT) and college (MSU-Northern and Stone Child College) levels. Her research interests include early onset tooth decay (childhood caries), and she is actively engaged in community-based participatory research investigating the incidence of childhood caries in Head Start children at Fort Belknap. She will teach Anatomy & Physiology (I and II) in the nursing program.

- Dr. Susan King is Aaniiih Nakoda College's chemistry and environmental science instructor. Dr. King earned her BS in Chemistry and PhD in Water Chemistry from the University of Wisconsin. She joined the ANC faculty in 2012, and her professional experience includes seven years as an assistant research professor at Montana State University. Her area of research expertise is methylmercury contamination, and she is currently conducting research on mercury cycling within prairie pothole wetlands of the Northern Great Plains. She is a certified Haz WOPER and HazMat instructor, and, among numerous publications and professional reports, her articles have appeared in journals such as Applied Geochemistry, Environmental Microbiology, and Ecological Applications.

- Mr. Dan Kinsey is chairman of the college's Environmental Science Department. An enrolled member of the Aaniinen tribe, Mr. Kinsey earned his AS degree in Natural Resources from Aaniiih Nakoda College, his BS degree in General Science from MSU-Northern, and his MSSE (Master of Science in Science Education) from Montana State University. He has been teaching natural resources and environmental science at ANC since 2004 and is the current director of the college's USDA Land Grant Office. Prior to teaching at ANC, Mr. Kinsey worked as the sanitarian for the Fort Belknap Tribal Health Department and Wetlands Coordinator for the Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Office. He maintains active research projects in the fields of water quality and insect-borne diseases, specifically the West Nile Virus. He will teach microbiology in the nursing program.
Mr. Janardan Pokharel is a mathematics and physics instructor as ANC. A native of Nepal, Mr. Pokharel earned his BS in Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics from Trichandra College (Nepal), MS in Physics from Tribhuvan University (Nepal), and MS in Physics from the University of North Dakota. His area of specialization is theoretical astrophysics, and he has been teaching at Aaniiih Nakoda College since 2011. He will serve as the College Algebra instructor for the nursing program.

Mr. John “Frenchy” Dillon is ANC's Human Services and Psychology Instructor. An enrolled member of the Crow Tribe, Mr. Dillon has spent more than three decades working with tribal colleges as an instructor, counselor and governing board member. As a member of Crow Central Education Committee he helped charter Little Big Horn College in 1980. He earned his BS degree in Rehabilitation and Related Services and MS degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Montana State University-Billings. In addition to his academic career, Mr. Dillon also has worked as a professional social worker, treatment manager, and counselor. He will teach the Psychology and Sociology courses required as part of the Montana State Model Nursing Curriculum.

Dr. Donna L. Miller teaches English and education courses at Aaniiih Nakoda College and also serves as project director for the college’s Nee-tha-hatsa-nak/Wa’-Uspe-Wicakiya (Teacher) Preparation Program. Dr. Miller earned her PhD in Curriculum and Instruction with an English Education emphasis from Arizona State University. She has more than 30 years of teaching experience at both the secondary and postsecondary levels, has co-directed the Montana Writing Project since 2002, and twice has served as the president of Montana’s affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). In 2005, she was named an NCTE Secondary Section National Teacher of Excellence. A frequent contributor to professional journals like English Journal, The ALAN Review, and Phi Delta Kappan and a regular presenter at state educator conferences, she will teach the Freshman English course in the nursing program.

Dr. Sean Chandler is chairman of Aaniiih Nakoda College’s American Indian Studies Department. An enrolled member of the Aaniinen tribe, Dr. Chandler also is director of the Fort Belknap Tribal Archives. He is co-editor of From Our Ancestors: Art of the White Clay People (Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2013) and an outstanding artist, whose works have been featured in museums and galleries throughout the United States. Mr. Chandler earned his B.A. in Art (1997) and M.A. in Native American Studies (2003) from Montana State University and received his Ed.D. in Educational Leadership (2014) from the University of Montana. He will teach Introduction to
American Indian Studies (AIS 100) and Aaniiih language to students enrolled in the nursing program.

- Ms. Minerva Allen serves on the Aaniiih Nakoda College Board of Directors and is an adjunct instructor teaching Nakoda history, culture and language at the college. Ms. Allen is a respected Nakoda elder and first-language speaker of the Nakoda language, as well as a lifelong educator and renowned poet. During her career as an educator, she served as Fort Belknap Head Start Director and Bilingual Director and Federal Programs Director for the Hays Lodgepole School District. She has published numerous books of stories, history and poetry, most recently *Nakoda Sky People* (Many Voices Press, 2012). Her work has appeared in dozens of anthologies, including the definitive *Last Best Place: A Montana Anthology*, edited by William Kittredge and Annick Smith (University of Washington Press, 1990). She is the mother of eight children (and raised six more) and grandmother to many. Ms. Allen will teach Nakoda language to students enrolled in the nursing program.

- Aaniiih Nakoda College has qualified faculty that can teach in the nursing education program for the pre-nursing courses. Hiring a Director of Nursing and nurse instructor begins the nursing program with focused curriculum for the RN degree. Dr. Jan Starr, Director of Nursing at MSU-Northern, has offered her support and assistance in this process. There are nurses on the Fort Belknap reservation and in the surrounding environs who have offered to teach in specialized areas. For the clinical portions of the nursing education program, which will take place in regional hospitals, clinics, prisons, home health care, public health, senior centers and a host of other health care environments, we envision working with disparate locations on the Fort Belknap reservation and up and down the Hi-Line in unique and innovative ways.
(1)(e) Description of proposed clinical opportunities that will meet expected outcomes for student training needs in each course with a clinical component; (red stars are locations of clinical sites)

Each circle spans a 50 mile radius.

The following chart lists the locations of the clinical sites for student training needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>SITE NAME</th>
<th>CLINICAL ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>I.H.S. Fort Belknap Service Unit</td>
<td>Critical access site (6 beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>Fort Belknap Tribal Health Department</td>
<td>Outreach-Home Health Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>Senior Center – Agency</td>
<td>Geriatrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>Fort Belknap Head Start</td>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>Sweet Medical Center Harlem</td>
<td>Vitals work up before doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>Senior Center Satellite Office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>Harlem Schools</td>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>Harlem Seed Show</td>
<td>Conducting screenings-vitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hays</td>
<td>I.H.S. Fort Belknap Service Unit-Clinic</td>
<td>Screening, admit, vitals, history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>Hi-Line Retirement Center</td>
<td>Geriatrics (52 beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>Phillips County Hospital and Family Health Clinic</td>
<td>Acute Care (28 beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>OB, Acute Care (25 beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinook</td>
<td>Sweet Memorial Nursing Home</td>
<td>Geriatrics (42 beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinook</td>
<td>Sweet Medical Center</td>
<td>Vitals work up before doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinook</td>
<td>Blaine County Public Health Nurse</td>
<td>Vaccination, public health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havre</td>
<td>Public Schools</td>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havre</td>
<td>Northern Montana Hospital</td>
<td>OB, Acute Care (49 beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>Service/Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havre</td>
<td>Northern Montana Care Center</td>
<td>Geriatrics (136 beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havre</td>
<td>Northern Montana Family Medical Center</td>
<td>Family practice, admit, history, vitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havre</td>
<td>Veterans Health Clinic</td>
<td>Home visits under nurse supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havre</td>
<td>Bull Hook Community Health Center</td>
<td>Vitals work up before doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm Springs</td>
<td>Montana State Hospital</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelby</td>
<td>Crossroads Correctional Center</td>
<td>Education, Health Care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1) (f) identification of financial, physical, personnel, and other resources necessary for the planning, implementation and continuation of the program;

Financial

- Aaniiih Nakoda College has recently (March 4th 2015) submitted an ANA (Administration for Native Americans) SEEDS (Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Strategies) 5 year grant application for the development and continuation of the nursing education program. The current progress that has resulted in the Phase 1 document to be presented to the BON has been funded through an ongoing DEMAND grant funded by the Department of Labor.

- Aaniiih Nakoda College’s Board has voted unanimously to support both the nursing education program, “Nííhaaniisíiʔohʔooníʔo: Grow Our Own” and the “Caring for Our Own” ANA SEEDS grant proposal (APPENDIX 6).

- The Fort Belknap Indian Community Council has passed Resolution No. 28 – 2015 in support of Aaniiih Nakoda College’s plan to implement a Nursing Education Program (APPENDIX 6).

- The Fort Belknap Indian Community Council has passed Resolution No. 29 - 2015 in support of the ANA SEEDS grant (APPENDIX 6).

- Aaniiih Nakoda College agrees to contribute all indirect costs associated with the nursing education program as its required match!

Facilities

- Institutional resources that will directly support the nursing education program are found throughout the campus. The nursing education program will be located in Tatanga Kni (“Returning Buffalo”), the college’s new Workforce Training Center. In addition to staff offices, Tatanga Kni also will house two classrooms used to teach nursing courses, the state of the art simulation laboratory, one 25-station student computer laboratory, and a student lounge.

- Classroom and laboratory instruction for non-nursing cognate classes will occur in a number of campus facilities, including Wakpa Juk’an Wasnokya Tibi (Little River Learning Lodge), Wiyukja Wicoti (Technology Center), and Ekib-Tsah-ah-Tsik (Sitting High) Cultural Center. Wakpa Juk’an Wasnokya Tibi is a 14,710 square foot facility that contains faculty and staff offices,
student commons area, bookstore, two full service kitchens, two classrooms, one computer laboratory, and four science laboratories. The main biology/chemistry laboratory (Suk Pe) is set up for 16 students, and the two smaller teaching laboratories can accommodate eight students apiece. A small research laboratory has capacity for up to four students.

- The computer laboratory in Wakpa Juk’an Wasnokya Tibi contains work stations for 20 students. Wiyukja Wicoti was constructed in 2008 and serves as the campus technology center and library. The 8,900 square foot facility houses the college’s Information Technology Department, four faculty offices, two classrooms, two computer laboratories, and college library.

- Classes in American Indian Studies will be taught in the 7,148 square foot Ekib-Tsah-ah-Tsik (Sitting High) Cultural Center, which houses two classrooms, ceremonial round room, American Indian Studies Department offices, tribal archives, White Clay Language Immersion School and community meeting facilities. All of the classrooms, computer laboratories, science laboratories, and instructional support facilities listed above will be used to teach courses offered as part of the nursing program.

**Equipment and Technology**

- The full range of ANC’s equipment holdings will be available to support the project’s course offerings. Classrooms are equipped with a variety of computer-based teaching/learning tools, including two-way, interactive distance learning equipment, Smart Boards, LCD projectors, multimedia instructor podiums, mobile laptop and/or tablet carts, and InFocus projectors.

- Computer laboratories contain approximately 84 work stations that are available for student use, all of which are linked to the college’s network and offer access to the internet. The college follows a computer maintenance plan that calls for replacing and upgrading computer systems every three years. As a result, students, faculty and staff are assured access to the most up-to-date hardware and software. The campus information technology system provides project participants with a fast, reliable and secure computer environment for gathering, managing and sharing information.

- Science laboratories are equipped with a wide array of instrumentation needed to teach courses in Anatomy & Physiology, Chemistry, Microbiology and Pathophysiology. Some of these equipment items include: microscopes, spectrophotometer, water baths, hot plates, centrifuge, fume hood, autoclave, incubator, drying oven, analytical balances, sonicator, bench top pH meters, environmental chamber, electrophoresis system, PCR analyzer, atomic absorption spectrophotometer, ion chromatograph/flow injection analyzer,
Science laboratories also contain digital laboratory systems that RN students will use to measure basic physiological functions such as blood pressure, heart rate, ECG, EMG, EOG, EFG.

- The state-of-the-art simulation laboratory located in Tatanga Knii contains two high-fidelity mannequins, simulators, monitors, and associated equipment that create a simulated hospital environment where nursing students will gain valuable hands-on experience practicing procedures, responding to a variety of clinical scenarios, and participating in a wide range of patient care situations. A full-time technician will be hired.

**Other Resources**

- Other resources that will support the effective delivery of program services and facilitate student success include the college library and Student Success Center. The 3,500-square foot library has seating for up to 28 patrons and contains over 10,000 volumes covering a wide spectrum of subject areas. Library holdings also include a variety of materials in other formats, including periodicals, newspapers, microform, video, and computer software. Patrons have access to information resources not physically housed at the library through interlibrary loan, computers with internet access, and online subscription services for reference materials, periodical literature, and databases. The library also contains twelve computer work stations and a multipurpose room for meetings and library instruction. All library records are maintained in a computerized catalog and circulation system that is accessible through the library’s computers and college website.

- ANC’s Student Services Department operates the Student’s Success Center, which is located in Nakoda Hall. The Success Center offers ANC students a quiet place to study, access computers, and/or receive tutoring assistance. The Success Center is staffed by one full-time employee and several part-time peer tutors. The Success Center also provides HiSET (formerly GED) instruction, tutoring and testing services to pre-college students seeking to obtain their high school equivalency credential.

- Project staff and students will have full access to the instructional services, campus facilities, equipment holdings, and information resources described in the previous paragraphs. Aaniiih Nakoda College has agreed to provide all of these assets as part of its significant in-kind contribution to the program. Provided at no cost, these resources greatly enhance the overall cost-effectiveness of the program.
(1)(g) Proposed procedure for marketing program to potential students and eligibility requirements for student admission to the program;

Marketing and Recruitment

- In order to recruit a pool of highly qualified, highly motivated applicants ANC will make a concerted effort to ensure that all members of the Fort Belknap community are aware of the nursing education program. Community wide recruiting will occur through the posting and distribution of flyers and announcements at tribal offices, IHS clinics, local businesses and community events. ANC’s radio station on the college campus (KGVA 88.1), which students have used to talk about the development of the program, will be further employed for alerting applicants. ANC students currently enrolled in, or recently graduated from, the college’s Allied Health AS degree program and Health Science certificate program will be prime candidates for selection into the nursing education program.

- Stringent selection criteria will ensure that only the most qualified applicants are chosen (Refer to (1)(c)) for evaluation and selection as already mentioned.

- As so many of the Allied Health AS degree students, after graduation, remain in the community in jobs related to health care, but not nursing, ‘word of mouth’ is one of the best marketing tools there is! One can’t go to the local market, Pow wow, or basketball game without being asked about ‘when ANC will get a nursing program’. There are many community members, graduates of the college, who are just waiting for such an event.
(1)(h) Proposed transition plan for students who may transfer to the program;

- If students other than community members, and graduates from the Allied Health AS degree program wish to transfer into the program an evaluation process will be conducted. A committee composed of the Director of Nursing, Nursing Instructor, ANC Allied Health Department faculty, representative from a local health care provider and community elder will vet the transfer student applications. If there is either curriculum or course transfer issues these will be taken up with the ANC registrar. However, the requirements for the cultural components of the program must be met. A transfer student accepted into the nursing education program will then have to ensure that the cultural immersion component of the course is completed before graduation. The American Indian courses and the indigenous language classes, either the Aaniinen or Nakoda, will become part the student’s nursing curriculum.
(1)(i) description of how the proposed program may affect existing nursing programs that share the proposed clinical sites, and indicate that plans and the needs assessment regarding the proposed program have been shared with directors of existing affected programs in the state;

- Northern Montana Hospital in Havre where MSUN nursing students do various clinical rotations would be a shared clinical site. The Vice President for Patient Care Services, Ms. Brenda L. Strum, has assured us that ANC nursing student would be welcome on the premises and is looking forward to having our students in the hospital. This verbal assurance will be followed by a MOA if the Phase 1 report is accepted by the BON.

- Northern Montana Long Term Care Center would also be a shared clinical site. However, ANC has a long and positive relationship with the care center in Havre and Ms. Christin Obresley (personnel) is looking forward to having ANC nursing students on board.

- On the Hi-Line there are no other sites where there would be shared clinical sites with other nursing programs.

- The Phase 1 document when completed will be sent to each College of Nursing in the state.
(1)(j) Letter of commitment from the governing institution that outlines financial, physical, personnel, and other resources that will be devoted to the proposed nursing education program;
March 18, 2015

Montana State Board of Nursing
P.O. Box 200513
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Board Members:

On behalf of Aaniiih Nakoda College (ANC), I am pleased to provide this letter of commitment for the college’s proposed Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) degree. The establishment of a nursing education program directly aligns with our institutional mission and addresses key strategic planning priorities. As documented in our feasibility study, the proposed program has tremendous support from our local community and has been developed in close cooperation with numerous community partners, local health care providers, and tribal leaders.

Despite strong interest in pursuing careers in nursing, Fort Belknap residents face significant barriers due to our reservation’s extreme geographic isolation and significant costs associated with travel and/or relocation to the site of existing nursing education programs around the state. At the same time, this geographic isolation also makes it difficult for local health care providers to recruit and retain qualified nurses, as documented by high vacancy rates at many of these facilities. By offering an ASN-RN program, ANC will provide local training opportunities for reservation residents to pursue careers in nursing, while, at the same time, developing a local workforce that can meet the staffing needs of local health care providers. By “growing our own” nurses, the college will ensure that area residents receive the highest quality care from nurses who are both technically and culturally competent to meet their unique health care needs.

Given the importance of this program to our community, Aaniiih Nakoda College is prepared to commit significant institutional resources to ensure the success of the ASN-RN degree program and its students. Specifically, the college will make financial resources available to operate the program and hire qualified program staff, including the director, primary nursing instructor, adjunct faculty, and clinical preceptors. Current members of ANC’s faculty will, as appropriate, also provide classroom and laboratory instruction for cognate courses such as Anatomy & Physiology, Chemistry, and Psychology. In addition to instructional staff, students in the program will have full access to a broad range of support services available at the college, including tutoring, advising, counseling, financial aid and career placement.
ANC also will commit the full extent of its physical, technological and information resources to make the ASN-RN program a success. Program offices and teaching classrooms will be located in Tataga Kni (“Returning Buffalo”), the college’s new workforce training center. In addition to these facilities, program students and faculty will use science and computer laboratories located across campus, as well as the college’s state-of-the-art simulation laboratory, which contains high-fidelity mannequins, simulators, monitors and other equipment needed to run realistic patient care simulations. Our Information Technology (IT) Department will ensure that students and faculty have access to all necessary technological resources available at the institution (including computer hardware, software, instructional technologies, and access to online resources), and enhanced library collections and services will be available to support teaching and learning for our nursing faculty and students.

Our board of directors and administrators are committed to providing the resources needed to develop and implement a successful and sustainable ASN-RN degree program at Aaniiih Nakoda College. As such, we are willing to invest significant financial, human, physical, technological and information resources in order to deliver a high-quality nursing education program that will provide area residents with the skills, knowledge and credentials needed for successful careers as registered nurses.

We look forward to working with the Montana State Board of Nursing as we continue the development of our ASN-RN program. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr. Carole Falcon-Chandler,
President
(1)(k) Letters of support for proposed program from communities of interest.
March 2, 2015

Dr. Carole Falcon-Chandler, President
Aaniih Nakoda College
269 Blackfeet Ave, Fort Belknap Agency
Harlem, MT 59526

Re: "Caring for Our Own" Grant Submission Letter of Commitment

Dear Dr. Falcon-Chandler,

On behalf of the Fort Belknap Service Unit (FBSU), Indian Health Service (IHS), I am pleased to provide this Letter of Commitment and Support regarding efforts to obtain grant funding to enable the project titled "Caring for Our Own: Aaniih Nakoda College Health Careers Training and Employment Program." Indeed, I believe the critical foundation from which we will reach our mutual goals to improve access to and the quality of healthcare for the Fort Belknap community lies within the alignment of our partnership efforts---and in this case, within the joining of our clinical and administrative expertise to uplift and nurture our community resources to recruit, educate and train, and ultimately employ our own local pool of skilled and knowledgeable nursing professionals.

As the established healthcare delivery system for the Fort Belknap Agency and given we frequently encounter issues in overcoming industry-wide shortages of healthcare providers (we currently employ 15 RNs (FT), 5 clinical assistants (FT), and face an 25% average vacancy rate in these positions) as well as challenges relating to our rural location, we take special interest in this project as a partner in need of ongoing staffing solutions. Indeed, we are anxious to provide clinical rotations in our primary, inpatient, and emergency care environments; training on our EHR systems and clinical policies; guidance on navigating scholarship awards and loan repayment options for federal employment; and preferred consideration within our facilities for fully-qualified nurse graduates. Consequently, combined with Aaniih Nakoda College’s proposed structure for a community nurse education program, I believe our partnership will yield positive results for generations to come.

In closing, I affirm this project as a unique and worthwhile endeavor that is essential to overcoming professional nurse shortages in our facilities that have long compromised the growth and security of our community. I confidently endorse your program for any and all funding opportunities you may pursue, and I pledge the full support of FBSU in achieving our mutual goal to "care for our own."

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Alan K. Barlow, MS, MSHR, SPHR
Chief Executive Officer
Fort Belknap Service Unit, Indian Health Service
February 24, 2015

Montana State Board of Nursing
P O Box 200513
Helena, Montana  59620

Dear Board Members:

I am writing to give my strong support of Aaniiih Nakoda College's proposal for establishing an Associate of Science in Nursing/Registered Nurse education program on their campus here on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

The current national shortage of health care professionals, in combination with the geographic isolation of rural communities such as ours, results in inadequate numbers of health care professionals to fill current and projected vacancies in the health care profession. The need for registered nurses is especially critical in rural Montana where access to higher education is often severely restricted due to students having to travel great distances to attend mainstream campuses where nursing education programs are located. To encourage local graduate retention, nursing education must become available within the same communities that need nurses. We want to "Grow Our Own".

The Tribal Health Department is often in need of Registered Nurses, for a variety of positions. It would be great to have local students fill these positions here on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

Thank you, I hope you have a positive response to Aaniiih Nakoda College.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Signature]
February 27, 2015

Montana State Board of Nursing
PO Box 200513
Helena, MT 59620-1513

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of Aaniiih Nakoda College’s proposal for establishing an Associate of Science in Nursing/Registered Nurse education program on their campus.

The current national shortage of health care professionals, in combination with the geographic isolation of rural/frontier communities such as ours, results in inadequate numbers of health care professionals to fill current and projected vacancies in the health care profession. The need for registered nurses is especially critical in rural Montana where access to higher education is often severely restricted due to students having to travel great distances to attend mainstream campuses where nursing education programs are located. To encourage local graduate retention, nursing education must become available within the same communities that need nurses. We would be excited about the possibility of being a partner and collaborator in ensuring that we “Grow Our Own” nursing students right here in our local/regional communities and being a healthcare facility we would not only support in the education of those students, but would also be a potential employment opportunity upon completion.

Thank you for your consideration of our support for a nursing education program at Aaniiih Nakoda College. If you have any questions, comments or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at (406) 654-1100 ext. 5116 or wvanwichen@pchospital.us

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Ward C. VanWichen, MHA, LNHA, BSN, RN
Chief Executive Officer
Phillips County Hospital & Family Clinic
and Hi-Line Retirement Center
RSVP for Community gathering r/t Nursing program

Ward VanWichen <WVanWichen@pchospital.us>

Tue 11/25/2014 6:44 PM
Inbox

To: Carmen <ctaylor@ancollege.edu>
Cc: Lonna Crowder <LCrowder@pchospital.us>

Dear Ms. Taylor,

I unfortunately have to report that I cannot attend the community meeting at Aainiih Nakota College to help in the discussions and share solution finding associated with the potential of establishing a nursing program at the college. I will pass the invite on to Lonna Crowder, RN, DON here at Phillips County Hospital and see if possibly she can attend.

Here are some of my initial/quick comments related to the questions posed on your letter sent out

- Advantages of training our local students locally is that we would be “growing our own” and who understands our own unique opportunities and challenges that we face as well as our rural/frontier communities. I feel this may create a better individual ownership not only in their profession but the organizations in which they would choose to work.
- Having a more local program to train folks would take away some of the barriers and/or challenges (family duties/responsibilities, financial) that might be holding some folks back from seeking further education and professional development. We may be able to recruit and retain more people.
- I/we have no preference here at our hospital/clinic and nursing home at which level of a nursing program would be developed as we would utilize those quality candidates that match up with our culture and needs as well as us with them. My only comment would be maybe to take a smaller initial step (which level of program that may be) to get things off the ground and progressing forward rather than taking on too big of a task/challenge that then might not show any success at all.
- As mentioned above we certainly would/could use RN and/or LPN professionals. We currently have about 2-3 nursing positions open in our Nursing home and probably 1 in the hospital/clinic.
- Not sure what the next steps are in progressing into a full nursing program from the pre-nursing program, but I can only imagine there would be quite a bit of rules/regulations and processes to follow and do to get that going.
- OTHER questions/comments to maybe ponder.
  - How does the Board of Nursing play into this? As I am uncertain myself.
  - What about faculty to not only run the program but do the actual class room as well as clinical training? Would there be enough clinical experience capacity locally/regionally?
  - Funding – now and into the future?
  - Sustainability?

Anyways those are my off-the-cuff comments that I thought I would at least share with you. Please let me know if you have any questions and at any time please feel free to contact me.

Thanks and have a great day.
PS – what an exciting conversation and I/we will be very interested to see where this may go.

Ward C. VanWichen, CEO
Phillips County Hospital & Family Health Clinic
and Hi-Line Retirement Center
Work - (406) 654-1100 ext. 5116
Cell - (406) 390-4171

“choosing to make a difference in health care”
February 11, 2014

Board Of Nursing  
Aaniiih Nakoda College  
269 Blackfeet Ave.  
Harlem, MT 59526

To whom it may concern;

Hello, my name is Diana Bigby and I am writing this letter in support of a nursing school at the Aaniiih Nakoda College. I did not hesitate to write this letter of support because I believe that a nursing school at our home is something that is really needed. Once upon a time, I wanted to be a nurse, and maybe still do, but different obstacles held me from fulfilling that dream.

I graduated from what is formerly known as Fort Belknap College, now Aaniiih Nakoda College, with an associate's degree in Allied Health in 2006. I applied for Nursing school at MSU-Northern since it is close to home, and enrolled the following fall semester. I was excited to attend because I felt like it was something that I was meant to be doing. Once we were a few weeks into the semester, reality set in. I had to travel 90 miles roundtrip every day. I would then have to come home to take care of 3 children ages 5, 2 and 1 while trying to find time to do other things such: as housework, cooking, cleaning and then homework. Before anything, I am a mother and that meant putting my schooling aside until the kids were in bed for the night. A friend and I went into the program together. We carpooled and had all of our classes together. It was somewhat of a culture
shock for us to have to attend school in a town as some would consider somewhat racist. I was used
to going to schools and being in environments where the majority was Native American. The
struggles of juggling everything in my personal life along with the feeling of being out of place led to
my eventual dropping out of the program. You could say that a professor or two weren't exactly
helpful or nice, but I wouldn't let something like that get in the way of my goals.

I had so much going on and didn't have anyone there to tell me that it would be ok. I had that
at Aaniiih Nakoda College. There was always someone there to push you and believe in you and tell
you that everything is going to be ok. When you are on campus at Aaniiih Nakoda College, it feels
like home. I eventually went on to graduate with a bachelor's degree from the University of Montana,
but it took me 3 years to build myself back up and believe in myself, after my exit from MSU-
Northern. I always tell people that attend Aaniiih Nakoda College that they are very spoiled. But
when I think about it, it's not being spoiled. They are cared about, made feel important, encouraged,
given second chances, and so on.

With that, I hope my words are of some sort of help. I do believe that having a nursing
program at Fort Belknap would be one of the greatest things that you can do for our community. The
health and wellness of our community is in great need of a nursing program.

Sincerely,

Diana Bigby, Manager
Ft Belknap Tobacco Use Prevention Program

(406) 353-2525
March 3rd, 2015

Montana State Board of Nursing
PO Box 200513
Helena, MT 59620-1513

Dear Board Members,

As an educator and former student of Aaniiih Nakoda College, I feel it pertinent to support the establishment of a nursing program on campus. I am an enrolled member of the Aaniiih (Gros Ventre) tribe and a second generation college graduate in my family; which unfortunately is rare amongst Native Americans. I contribute a large part of my success professionally to the administration, instructors, and staff at Aaniiih Nakoda College. Without their support, I do not know if I would have obtained a college degree and be in the position I am in today; this is why I am so supportive of the potential to have a nursing program on the campus of Aaniiih Nakoda College.

In rural America, specifically in Blaine County, it often hard to educate, recruit, and retain trained professionals in many fields and nursing is one such profession. This is due to a variety of factors including long distances to educational institutions with nursing programs, isolation, and economic limitations of the student populous. Often we find shortages of trained health care professionals within our local clinics, hospitals, and long term care facilities. By granting the establishment of a nursing program on the campus of Aaniiih Nakoda College, it will provide pool of highly trained professionals that are locally educated, meet the demands of local health care facilities, and are culturally attuned to the local communities.

The educational as well as, economic benefits for Fort Belknap Indian Reservation and surrounding communities by implementing a nursing program will be far reaching. Statistically speaking, in 2010, the median household income of Blaine County was $37,034. According to the current Montana Department of Labor and Industry’s Informational Wage Rate by Occupation publication the statewide median income of a registered nurse is $58,840, an increase from the median of $21,806. A Licensed Practical Nurse’s statewide median is $37,530; an increase of $496 from the median income Blaine County. If you compound that with 2013
statistics of the median income of residents Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, which is roughly $26,500, an individual who obtains a degree from Aaniiih Nakoda College’s Nursing Program could, essentially over time, double that of the median income of Fort Belknap Indian Reservation.

To give you an example of Aaniiih Nakoda College’s educational success’s; I cite their Teacher Training Program. Over the years, the college has partnered with various higher educational institutions based on the needs of local schools and student interests in the educational field. In my cohort group that graduated in 2012, I, along with nine other students from this area obtained bachelor’s degrees in education. Currently, of that class, two teach at Aaniiih Nakoda College, two in the White Clay Immersion School; promoting our tribal language, one as the Blaine County Superintendent of Schools, and all the remaining graduates currently teaching at public schools serving the local communities surrounding Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. That is just one example to the success of the educational commitment of Aaniiih Nakoda College and the local students they serve. Through programs such as the potential nursing program and current teacher training program, the benefits to the local community can be far reaching. By “growing our own,” we contribute to the vitality that makes North-Central Montana a great place to raise a family.

I would appreciate your support for a nursing education program at Aaniiih Nakoda College. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Terry Brockie
Blaine County Superintendent of Schools
February 27, 2015

Carole Falcon-Chandler, President
Aaniiih Nakoda College
P.O. Box 159
Harlem, Montana 59526

Dear President Falcon-Chandler,

As a community member and a Manager of the Fort Belknap Indian Community’s Environmental Department, I am pleased to write this letter of support for the Aaniiih Nakoda College in your pursuit of a Nursing Education Program.

I see a vital need for a Nursing Education Program offered locally. There are many individuals with illnesses that require various types of nursing services along the Montana Hiline who have to travel long distances for appointments, procedures, dialysis or treatment. Although the local Indian Health Service is located here at Fort Belknap Agency and Northern Montana Hospital in Havre and Sweet Medical Center in Chinook, there is a continuing need to hire qualified nursing staff that live in this area. Many students from the Hiline pursue their nursing degrees from colleges and universities in other parts of Montana and across the Country. If a Nursing Education Program was offered locally, many of these students would not have to pack up their families and move to other towns or cities to attend nursing school. In addition, it would be a big boost for the local economy by keeping our young people and their families here in our communities.

Based on personal experience, I feel there is an immediate need to establish a Nursing Education Program locally. In 2005 my younger sister and in 2008 my husband both developed the same type of cancer and ultimately succumbed to it. My sister had to travel from Havre to Great Falls roundtrip for cancer treatments, and my husband traveled from Fort Belknap Agency to Havre roundtrip for cancer and radiation treatments. During their illnesses and near the time of their passing, there were many instances when we could have used the services of a nurse to dress wounds, treat side effects of cancer/radiation treatment, provide information and services on pain management and ways to make the patient’s life more comfortable, and to speak with us about the next steps in recovery or the death process. It would have been helpful to have nursing staff available to help us deal with these issues and concerns. When a cancer patient has had treatment and/or radiation and they have to face the ultimate dreadful truth about their future, that treatment or radiation no longer works, they are left out in the world without hope and no avenue to turn to for help dealing with the inevitable, the death process. There is no longer a connection with the cancer centers because there is nothing more they can do, so this network of hope is gone.
Because most patients living at Fort Belknap receive IHS health care, there is no “one specific physician” they can turn to to fill the void left by the cancer centers abandoning them. The physicians either lack experience dealing with these patients or diseases, or the patients do not have the strength and are unable to “wait in line” to see a physician on duty. It is a dilemma for patients and caregivers.

How does one deal with these issues without the proper medical assistance, such as a nurse, to get through this process? It can be devastating... and it is devastating for the patient and caregivers! In my opinion, there is a need for a facility on the Hiline that addresses these types of issues of palliative care. This type of care could be provided by nurses, with a visiting on-call physician.

I realize this is looking into the future, but with the “baby boomers” becoming the elders, we need to look into the future and find new solutions to health care. I believe that if the Nursing Education Program is established at the Aaniiih Nakoda College, it could become a reality in the very near future, and I look forward to that day.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (406) 353-8429 during the day or 353-7013.

Sincerely,

Ina L. Nez Perce
Gros Ventre Tribal Member
Fort Belknap Indian Community
March 4, 2015

Montana State Board of Nursing
P. O. Box 200513
Helena, MT 59620-1513

RE: Aaniiih Nakoda College Nursing Program Application

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of the Aaniiih Nakoda College’s (ANC) application to be approved to establish an Associate of Science in Nursing, i.e., Registered Nurse Education Program. As a member of the Nakoda Nation and a former ANC Dean of Academic Affairs, I know how great the need for health care is in this community from both a personal and professional perspective.

At the personal level, I have family members suffering from diabetes, high blood pressure, autoimmune diseases and the complications resulting from them. There is a dramatic shortage of health care workers in the Fort Belknap community to provide basic care and education to prevent or minimize these and other common diseases. The need for good health education must begin in the homes, in pre-schools, classrooms from K-14, and through community education forums.

The Fort Belknap community is faced with several challenges in securing the much needed medical support that could be provided by the proposed Associate of Science degree. Located in a very rural area with a high poverty index, it is difficult to attract health care workers from other parts of the country to this area. Severe weather conditions and a shortage housing compounds the challenge in attracting outsiders to this area. It is also important to note that those who come from outside this community are not familiar with the culture, norms, mores, and general lifeway of the Aaniiih and Nakoda people which can cause miscommunication and misinterpretations creating additional challenges.

ANC has had a very successful Applied Health Program which provides essential background for students but it is not recognized as a nursing program. The college can certainly detail the need for a nursing program that will build upon the success of its Allied Health Program. A recent community survey illustrates the extremely high interest in the proposed nursing program with 141 responses within a four week time frame. All five of the communities on and near the Fort Belknap Reservation was represented in the survey responses. An impressive 16% of the respondents were under the age of 18 years with 35% from the typical college age group (19
years to 30 years). Seventy six percent of those surveyed expressed interest in a nursing program with over 60% indicating that they had family members who would also be interested in this program. Eighty nine percent of the respondents also believe that an American Indian cultural emphasis is necessary for a nursing program whose graduates will serve the Fort Belknap community. A remarkable 94% believe that a nursing program at ANC will impact the overall health of the Fort Belknap community.

Clearly, there is strong interest by the constituents served by ANC for a nursing program. ANC has the ability and knowledge to assure a culturally appropriate nursing curriculum to fully prepare health care workers. ANC also has a history of success in meeting the higher education needs of the people on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. And, the final consideration is the great need for an increased in the health care providers in this community.

I strongly urge the Montana State Board of Nursing to approve this proposal to allow Aaniiih Nakoda College to offer this Associate of Science Degree program.

Sincerely,

Deborah His Horse is Thunder, Ed.D., CEO
Wiya & Associates, LLC

Wiya & Associates, LLC is a private, higher education, consulting firm dedicated to the service of educational excellence.
March 20, 2015

Montana State Board of Nursing
PO Box 200513
Helena, MT 59620-1513

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Blaine County Commission, we are writing this letter in support of Aaniih Nakoda College’s proposal for establishing an Associate of Science in Nursing/Registered Nurse education program on their campus.

The current national shortage of health care professionals, in combination with the geographic isolation of rural communities such as ours, results in inadequate numbers of health care professionals to fill current and projected vacancies in the health care profession. The need for registered nurses is especially critical in rural Montana where access to higher education is often severely restricted due to students having to travel great distances to attend mainstream campuses where nursing education programs are located. To encourage local graduate retention, nursing education must become available within the same communities that need nurses. We would like to “Grow Our Own” in regards to providing educational opportunities and occupations within our community.

Thank you for your consideration of our support for a nursing education program at Aaniih Nakoda College.

Sincerely,

Frank DePriest, Chair

Charles Kulbeck, Commissioner

Dolores Plumage, Commissioner

Attest:

Sandra L. Boardman, Clerk & Recorder
To: Dr. Liz McClain, ANEEC Co-Director  
Aaniiih Nakoda College  

From: Dr. Jan Starr, Director  
Department of Nursing Montana State University Northern (MSU-N)  

Date: March 14, 2015  

Regarding: Letter of Support for the proposed ASN program at Aaniiih Nakoda College (ANC)  

Dear Dr. Liz McClain,  

Montana State University Northern Department of Nursing understands that the proposed ASN program for Native Americans requires a supportive network of nursing educators to help create a systematic change in education, improve quality of nursing care, and serve as a role model of effective practices of nursing. On behalf of Montana State University Northern, we are in support of this academic proposal. We believe that the proposed ASN program: 1) will increase the number of Native American prepared RNs who hopefully will increase the pool of rural nurses in Montana; 2) will increase the number of ASN prepared clinical preceptors for nursing clinical sites, and 3) provide higher quality of nursing care in Montana especially among the Native American population.

It has been voiced that the proposed ASN program being offered at ANC will follow the State-Wide Nursing Curriculum. Therefore, any initial concerns have been negated because we are anticipating that the pre-licensure students who attend the proposed ASN program will be able to transfer core courses seamlessly from Aaniiih Nakoda College to Montana State University Northern without duplication of courses. We anticipate that finding Nursing Faculty may be a hardship and therefore, recommend establishing an articulation agreement to share Nursing Faculty who would be employed by both ANC and MSU-N. We also anticipate that we would need to collaborate closely together to assure that there will be enough quality clinical time for current nursing programs as well as this new proposed ASN program.

We are confident that any ASN student/graduate will be able to seamlessly transition into the RN-BSN program, such as at Montana State University Northern. The ASN program solely for Native Americans is critical to facilitate a nursing workforce for the Native American population and therefore, we offer Aaniiih Nakoda College our support.

Respectfully,  

Dr. Starr and Faculty
March 18, 2015

Carmen Taylor, Dean of Academics
Aaniiih Nakoda College
P.O. Box 159
Harlem, MT 59526

Dear Committee:

Please accept this letter in support of Aaniiih Nakoda College’s proposal for establishing an Associate of Science in Nursing/Registered Nurse education program on their campus.

The current national shortage of health care professionals, specifically in the area of nursing, and in combination with the extreme isolation of rural communities such as FPCC and ANC, results in problems filling current health care professional positions, as well as making it challenging to project filling future local and continuous vacancies in the healthcare profession. The need for registered nurses in rural Montana is especially significant, where access to higher education is restricted due to distance, funding, etc. Institutions of Higher Education that offer training in this field are located great distances from our communities. To fill the overwhelming need for nurses in our locale, the Fort Peck Reservation and specifically Poplar and Wolf Point have become a community of transient health care providers. This type of service is not healthy for our community’s future, we need stable, well trained and invested “home grown” healthcare providers.

FPCC would support this endeavor and would provide whatever assistance, guidance or space to see this proposal happen. FPCC’s Pre-Nursing program is one of the most popular programs of study on campus. FPCC students would love the opportunity this proposal could provide.

Thank you for your consideration of FPCC’s support for a nursing education program at Aaniiih Nakoda College

Pidamiya,

Haven Gourneau
President
Fort Peck Community College
February 18, 2015

Montana State Board of Nursing
P.O. Box 200513
Helena, Mt. 59620-1513

Dear State Board of Nursing,

I am writing in support of Aaniiih Nakoda College’s proposal for establishing an Associate of Science in Nursing/Registered Nurse education program on their campus.

The current national shortage of health care professionals, in combination with the geographic isolation of rural communities such as ours, results in inadequate numbers of health care professionals to fill current and projected vacancies in the health care profession. The need for registered nurses is especially critical in rural Montana where access to higher education is often severely restricted due to students having to travel great distances to attend mainstream campuses where nursing education programs are located. To encourage local graduate retention, nursing education must become available within the same communities that need nurses. We would like to “Grow Our Own”.

Thank you for your consideration of our support for a nursing program at Aaniiih Nakoda College.

Sincerely,

Alma Young
February 16, 2015

Carole Falcon-Chandler, President
Aaniiih Nakoda College
P.O. Box 159
Harlem, Montana 59526

Dear Dr. Falcon-Chandler,

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of your application for funding under the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Strategies (SEEDS) grant program. Your proposed training and employment activities will help our community members obtain the skills and knowledge they need to find jobs in nursing and other health care fields.

The primary goal of the 477 Employment & Training Program is to assist in reducing joblessness and to further the economic and social development of our communities. These goals closely parallel the objectives of your proposed project, and our department looks forward to working with you to achieve our shared goals. Specifically, we look forward to assisting you in your efforts to recruit project participants, sharing project information with our clients, encouraging our clients to pursue training in health care fields and serving on your project advisory board.

If we can be of any further assistance at this time, please do not hesitate to contact me. Once again, we wish you success in your efforts to secure the funding necessary to implement this important project. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

477 Director
February 23, 2015

Carole Falcon-Chandler, President
Aaniiih Nakoda College
P.O. Box 159
Harlem, Montana 59526

Dear Dr. Falcon-Chandler,

On behalf of the Harlem Public School District #12, it gives me great pleasure to provide this letter of support on behalf of your application for funding under the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Strategies (SEEDS) grant program. Harlem Public Schools have enjoyed working with Aaniiih Nakoda College on numerous projects over the years, and we look forward to continuing our positive relationship.

The “Caring for Our Own” project will provide local students with valuable training and employment opportunities in health careers, especially nursing. Many of our high school graduates would greatly benefit from such opportunities, and we will do everything possible to encourage them to participate. Specifically, our administrators, teachers, and counselors look forward to assisting you in your recruiting efforts, sharing project information with our students, and urging our students to explore the training and employment opportunities your project has to offer. Personally, I would be happy to serve on your project’s advisory board.

Once again, we wish you the best with your application and look forward to working with you on this project. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 406.353.2289.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Baker
Superintendent
February 25, 2015

Dear Dr. Falcon-Chandler:

On behalf of the Dodson Public School District, it gives me great pleasure to provide this letter of support on behalf of your application for funding under the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Strategies (SEEDS) grant program. The Dodson Public Schools have enjoyed working with Aaniiih Nakoda College on numerous projects over the years, and we look forward to continuing our positive relationship with this important project.

The “Caring for Our Own” project will provide local students with valuable training and employment opportunities in health careers, especially nursing. Many of our graduates would greatly benefit from these opportunities, and we will do everything possible to encourage them to participate. Specifically, our administrators, teachers, and counselors look forward to assisting you in your recruiting efforts, sharing project information with our students, and urging our students to explore the training and employment opportunities your project has to offer. Personally, I would be happy to serve on your project’s advisory board.

Once again, we wish you good luck with your application and look forward to working with you on this important project. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Debra A. Combs
Superintendent

Cc: file
February 18, 2015

Carole Falcon-Chandler, President
Aaniiih Nakoda College
P.O. Box 159
Harlem, Montana 59526

Dear Dr. Falcon-Chandler:

Over the years I have watched the positive impact of Aaniiih Nakoda College on our community and the surrounding towns. By expanding course offerings, more of our young people are taking advantage of the programs. With "Caring for Our Own: Aaniiih Nakoda College Health Careers Training and Employment Program," you are making a strong commitment to address the critical shortage of American Indian health care workers who are needed to care for our people.

The North Central Montana Talent Search Program supports your efforts to obtain and implement a grant from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Strategies (SEEDS) program. We look forward to sharing information about this exciting new program with our students and assisting the college in their recruiting efforts.

Please keep us informed about the status of your proposal. If you need any additional information, contact me.

Sincerely,

Marcia Hammett
Director
February 26, 2015

To whom this may concern:

As the Director of Nursing at Phillips County Hospital, I am very supportive of and encouraged by Aaniih Nakoda College developing a nursing program. Both Phillips County Hospital and the Hi-Line Retirement Center are continually in need of licensed practical nurses and registered nurses as we both currently utilize travel nurses to cover many shifts. So the prospect of having a Nursing program so close to us to work with us to develop local/regional human capital capacity to fill those needs is most wanted, needed and greatly appreciated.

Even though we are a small rural/frontier healthcare facility and community I believe we have a lot to offer. We hire and encourage UAPs to come and work with us every summer and so far that experience has been very beneficial for the student and our facility. We have members of our community who have attended your college for pre-nursing classes and have had nothing but praise for your college and the classes offered. While being so close to home affords many folks a more feasible opportunity to follow their dreams of furthering their education the smaller classes and more individualized instruction makes it even that much more appealing and possible. In the past we have worked with the Blackfeet College in Browning to help one student complete her requirements as well as having had students from Havre, Butte and Billings who worked as UAPs in the summers and look forward to having nursing students from Aaniih Nakoda College here in the near future.

Let me know if there is anything more we can do to support your ideas to make this program a reality.

Sincerely,

Lonna Crowder, RN Director of Nursing
Phillips County Hospital
Blaine County Health Department

420A Ohio Courthouse Annex
Post Office Box 516
Chinook, MT 59523
Ph: 406-357-2345
Fax: 406-357-3891
http://www.blainecountyhealth.com

Montana Board of Nursing
301 South Park, 4th Floor
P.O. Box 200513
Helena, MT 59620-0513

Dear Montana Board of Nursing:

This letter is written to pledge full support and a commitment for partnership with the development of the Associates of Nursing degree and corresponding curriculum at Aaniiih Nakoda College (ANC).

As the local health jurisdiction, Blaine County Health Department recognizes a need for nursing professionals in Blaine County, specifically in the Fort Belknap Indian Community. The development of the ANC nursing program and the subsequent licensure of nurses will allow our people to be cared for by their own. This is the expressed wish of the Elders in Blaine County and Fort Belknap.

Currently, ANC Allied Health students assist our department in community events, but the assistance is limited to activities that are non-clinical or not requiring a licensed professional. Our organic partnership would be mutually benefited by having nursing students who could learn while providing support to our public health nursing interventions.

Aaniiih Nakoda College has very strong science, social science, communication and allied health departments, which naturally leads to engaged students with adept skills in the foundation and prerequisites of a nursing program.

Finally, the cultural competency and “whole person” approaches that are so valued by the Nursing Profession will be cornerstones of Aaniiih Nakoda College’s nursing program. The Blaine County Health Department offers support in every way possible, and is honored to partner with the efforts of ANC.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to speak more of our support for ANC, please contact me if I can be of more assistance.

[Signature]

Jana McPherson-Hauer, RN, BSN
Blaine County Nurse, Health Department Co-Director
March 24, 2015

Montana State Board of Nursing
PO Box 200513
Helen, MT 59620-1513

Dear State Board of Nursing,

I am writing in support of Aaniiih Nakoda Community College’s proposal for establishing an Associate of Science in Nursing/Registered Nurse education programs on their campus.

The current national shortage of health care professionals, in combination with the geographic isolation of rural communities such as ours, results in inadequate numbers of health care professionals to fill current and projected vacancies in the health care profession. The need for registered nurses is especially critical in rural Montana where access to higher education is often severely restricted due to students having to travel great distances to attend mainstream campuses where nursing education programs are located. To encourage local graduate retention, nursing education must become available within the same communities that need nurses. We would like to “Grow Our Own”.

Thank you for your consideration of our support for a nursing education program at Aaniiih Nakoda Community College.

Sincerely,

Billie Jo Kipp, Ph.D.
President of Blackfeet Community College
DOCUMENT PREPARED BY THE FOLLOWING ANC MEMBERS:

Michele Brockie (Assistant to the President), Sean Chandler (Chairman, American Indian Studies Department), Eva English (Library Director), Scott Friskics (Director of Sponsored Programs), Eugene Garcia (Data Administrator), Harold Heppner (Manager of Information Systems), Erica McKeon Hanson (Chairwoman, Allied Health Department), Danielle Jackson (Institutional Research Assistant), Liz McClain (Nursing Education Program Planning Coordinator), Carmen Taylor (Dean of Academic Affairs), and Annette Vander Ven (Math/Computer Instructor).