ACTION ITEM: Request for approval of the UNCG Health and Human Sciences Early Middle College to begin Fall 2011.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

• A planning team from UNCG has worked with the team from the Guilford County Schools to propose an early middle college for fall, 2011, beginning with 50 ninth graders in year 1.
• This was endorsed by Deans Council and the Chancellor and approved by the Guilford County Board of Education on January 27, 2011. The project has received a donation from Businesses for Excellence in Education ($200,000 for year 3) and support from the Moses Cone and High Point Regional health systems.
• If approved by the Board of Trustees, the planning team for GCS and UNCG will begin immediately for a fall, 2011 start date.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the Board of Trustees of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro approve the UNCG Health and Human Sciences Early Middle College beginning 2011-12.

David H. Perrin
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
UNCG Health and Human Sciences Careers Early Middle College* Proposal

Prepared by Tom Martinek, Professor, Kinesiology and Celia Hooper, Dean HHP
in consultation with Beth Folger, Chief Academic Officer, Guilford Co. Schools

Faculty in the School of Health and Human Performance, many of whom have a focus and interest in health and human sciences disciplines, support the establishment of a UNCG Health and Human Sciences Early College.* * Much research in the area of early colleges, some done by our own SERVE Center (http://newschoolsproject.org/uploads/resources/external-report-a-better-9th-grade-early-results-from-an-experimental-study-of-the-early-college-high-school-model.pdf) indicates that early college high schools are successful at in having positive impacts on student performance, keeping more students on-on track for college, and having better student experiences for retention and success. They are even more positive for first generation college-goers, low income students, minority students, as well as middle class students. These early colleges work best when they have a focus (such as health careers), are small, and have a plan for some students to achieve college credit acquisition. NC is a leader in this effort and has been supported by the NC New Schools Project, http://newschoolsproject.org/, launched in 2003 by the Office of the Governor and the NC Education Cabinet with initial support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The Early Middle College* will be supported by the combined resources of the Guilford County Schools, School of Health and Human Performance, and (year three) by the New Schools Project and the Businesses for Excellence in Education fund of the Greensboro Partnership ($200,000). The Guilford County Schools Board of Education voted on January 27, 2011 to support this school to begin fall, 2011. Superintendent Mo Green and Chancellor Linda Brady announced their support of the school and their pledge to include this project in their future development plans, if approved by our BOT.

In addition, the school has support from the Moses Cone and High Point Regional health systems. The middle college will provide educational experiences that focus on the innate academic and leadership qualities of young people who need the stimulation and setting of a college academic environment.

An important feature of the school’s educational agenda is the self-actualizing of young people to become contributors to their community—especially in the health and human sciences professions, “the helping professions.” Bringing high school students into the academic and social mainstream requires support from the Greensboro community. This is why community partners will become part of the school’s curriculum by providing proposed work-study opportunities for all students. The community sector, including the UNCG health care community, becomes an integral part of the school’s curriculum and mission and the student becomes a resource for the community.
In addition to the benefits for these high school students, there are also benefits to our own UNCG students. There are also benefits of mentoring and educational collaborations with on-campus college students and faculty who participate with early college activities. The possibility of earning college credit while still in high school can be the catalyst for continuing on to higher education for many of these middle college students. Our proposal is for a UNCG Health and Human Sciences Careers Early Middle College at UNCG (HCEC) and the timing of the restructured health school/college here at UNCG is outstanding. In addition, faculty within HHP and in other units have proposed a Health Careers Living and Learning Community for main campus and a future one for the new Glenwood community housing. This project fits in well with many UNCG plans and with several parts of the Strategic Plan, particularly 2.4, Health and Wellness.

An important feature of the school, in addition to the involvement of the faculty and students of health and human sciences disciplines will be the involvement of faculty and students in the School of Education. The new dean of the School of Education, Karen Wixson, has pledged her enthusiastic support to the project. At the presentation to the Guilford County Schools in December, many faculty from the SOE were present and they will be an integral part of the planning. They consider this a wonderful “laboratory school,” to benefit our UNCG students and the high school students in attendance.

School Structure/Goals

The HCEC curriculum will be aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. HCEC students will also participate in a proposed work study experience (one day per week) for the entire year. Students are assigned to a community (or university) partner who is in a health or human service related field. The experiences of the students would be internships and work study, with any employer support going to a school fund to support operational cost of the internship expenses.

The HCEC will initially serve a cohort of 45 to 50 freshman students who have: a) a sincere desire to begin and finish their high school education at HCEC and b) an interest in exploring health careers, including those on campus and those in the nearby community. An additional 45 to 50 students will be enrolled each subsequent year. This will result in an enrollment of approximately 200 students by the fourth year. All students apply to the school for admission by the GCS and are carefully interviewed for final selection. A major aim of the interview process is to insure that the applicant clearly understands the purpose and goals of the school. The goals of the school are to:

- Provide a four year high school experience aimed at nurturing the academic, social, and leadership qualities of underserved adolescent youth.
• Prepare students for post-secondary education health career pursuits at either a two-year or four-year college/university. Small class size, flexible class scheduling, and career enrichment opportunities are critical. The school’s educational plan will embrace the state’s standard course of study.

• Help students gain a clearer vision of health career possibilities and learn effective worksite and leadership skills. Community corporate professionals become part of the school’s curriculum by providing work study opportunities for students. UNCG faculty and students, especially those in health related disciplines, will also be part of this partnership and serve as mentors.

**Classroom/Scheduling**

The HCEC will require 6 to 7 classrooms (plus a space for office staff) on UNCG’s campus. Following a series of meetings with UNCG staff and GCS staff classroom spaces have been identified in HHP. A team from the GCS has been visiting UNCG to make sure the space is appropriate. Future meetings with UNCG Office of Space Management and Dean Wixson, School of Education, will be needed as the school increases by one class each year.

**Special note:** Some of the early college students would also be eligible to take “college prep” classes their junior year (three years from now). This would mean that additional classroom space would already be available to accommodate these students’ schedules. Some very prepared students would be able to take online courses at UNCG, although these students would be selected very carefully.

**School Staff**

The school will be staffed based upon the local staffing formula for early colleges in the district. Teachers and a principal are paid by Guilford County Schools and recruited specifically for the school. The projected hiring date for all staff will be late spring 2011 if the proposed opening date is fall, 2011.

Additional staffing may also be provided by the School of HHP. HHP will be a part of the development and delivery of the educational plan for every student. Other schools/colleges within the university will certainly be invited to participate in the success of the school. All members of the School of HHP are supportive of this initiative—many have indicated a strong interest in contributing to the school’s mission. Tom Martinek, a faculty member in Kinesiology, will be the campus liaison and funded by a grant from the New Schools project after year one. Tom is the director of UNCG Project Effort, [http://www.uncg.edu/kin/effort/](http://www.uncg.edu/kin/effort/) and has many years experience in using a personal and social responsibility model in youth development. He will work with the UNCG faculty, the newly assigned principal and community internship partners to launch the program.
School Transportation/Lunch

GCS will provide transportation for students who attend the HCEC. The school day will operate similar to other early colleges within the district. GCS Child Nutrition Services or UNCG food services (whichever contractor is chosen) will provide lunch to students who attend the school and paid for by the GCS.

School Funding

The school funding will come from state and local dollars. The Guilford County Schools will fund the principal and teachers. After year one, the GCS will participate with the North Carolina New Schools Project. In January, 2011, the Businesses for Excellence in Education fund of the Greensboro Partnership pledged to support the program when certain dropout funds from GCS were reduced. They have pledged $200,000 in year three. Supplemental funding is also expected through the work study program and from donors when the program becomes active.

Related Benefits/Factors

- The program focuses on a small cohort group of incoming freshman (45-50) instead of a four-year enrollment the first year.

- Eighth-grade students are recruited from the middle school (instead of high schools), as early intervention is key.

- Space requirements are significantly diminished allowing a more deliberate and concentrated focus for the students and curriculum.

- The small size will allow a smaller academic unit to be responsible for this initiative, thus relieving other units of any immediate burden.

- Funding is provided by the Guilford County Schools.

- GCS will collaborate with the tech-prep schools in the system and share resources (some teachers and medically related certification experiences).

- Plans would be for students to spend one day in an off-campus work-study site during the junior and/or senior years. The sites will be connected to health and human sciences-related professions and could also be in places like the UNCG Speech and Hearing Center or the Counseling Center as well as local off campus community partners.

- The current School of HHP, and the post-realignment school yet to be named are natural resources for health and human sciences career opportunities.
The school will be an excellent venue for research and professional development in all related departments. SERVE has already begun a template for evaluating early colleges.

Having this school established will help with good relations between UNCG and Guilford County Schools, benefitting many parts of campus.

**Conclusion**

This document represents an initial description. Planning by a transition team of GCS and UNCG will begin immediately. The GCS, in anticipation of approval, have begin planning with a very detailed timeline for all details and we are preparing the same on our campus. As soon as this can be public, we would partner with the schools for community forums so that all can be informed. We would invite faculty and student input and discourse along the way so that everyone has some ownership in the project and an opportunity to collaborate.

*The term Early Middle College is used for this proposal, as requested by the GCS, to differentiate it from earlier Early Colleges established in NC. The term Middle College, coined by Dr. Grier of GCS, reflects another model of a high school. This proposal for UNCG is a blend of both models, thus Dr. Folger suggested we use this term for the report. Dr. Hooper will discuss during the meeting.*

**The original name of the early middle college was “health careers” only. The Guilford County Schools and UNCG team agreed to expand the term “health and human sciences” to better reflect the many careers on the UNCG campus that would be part of the school and to reflect health and wellness in keeping with our strategic plan. This term will also fit well with the planned realignment. Although HHP agrees to be the organizing faculty for this endeavor, the courses and internships of these students is open to any health or human sciences discipline.