

Date: December 4, 2017

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

For Board Brief  X

**FROM:** Sherri Chapman, Career and Technical Education Program Coordinator

**THROUGH:** Lois Berlin, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent  
Terri H. Mazingo, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer

**TO:** The Honorable Ramee A. Gentry, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** Board Brief on Status of T.C. Williams/George Washington University Health Science  
Academy

#### **SUMMARY**

The proposed Health Science Academy will be a collaborative effort between Alexandria City Public Schools and the George Washington University. The Academy will be located at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Virginia. There are a total of seven proposed pathways for the Academy:

- Nursing
- Surgical Medical Sciences
- Biomedical Informatics
- Sports Medicine
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Pharmacy
- Medical Laboratory Services (MLS)

These proposed pathways were selected with consideration to existing high school resources, national workforce growth trends, regional workforce shortages, and the need to address non-traditional student populations in the health sciences. Each of the five Virginia Department of Education health science career clusters—Therapeutic Services, Diagnostic Services, Health Informatics, Support Services, and Biotechnology Research and Development—will be addressed through these pathways. The resources are available to begin four of the proposed pathways by the 2018-2019 school year: Biomedical Informatics, Sports Medicine, Surgical Medical Sciences, and Nursing. The remaining proposed pathways (EMS, Pharmacy, and MLS) will be implemented within the following three years. EMS would be implemented during the second year of the cohort, followed by Pharmacy and Medical Laboratory Sciences during the third year.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Through our collaboration with the George Washington University, students will have the unique ability to receive up to 22 college credits from the GWU School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Proposed

pathways lead to industry certifications and transfer pathways to Associate's and/or Bachelor's Degrees. One of the significant goals of this partnership is to create a scenario in which graduating high school students completing the Academy would have a minimum of one year of college coursework completed.

Earning college credits in the field of health and medical sciences during high school will enable students to graduate college and enter the regional workforce sooner. It will also help to reduce the student's overall costs for attending college. While other Health Sciences Academies exist in the Commonwealth of Virginia, this proposed Academy would be the first public-private model of its kind offering specialized health and medical sciences career pathways.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- **Location:**  
The proposed Health Academy will be housed at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Virginia. T.C. Williams is the largest high school in Virginia with nearly 4,000 students enrolled in grades 9-12 across two campuses. In addition, T.C. is the only comprehensive high school in Northern Virginia offering all academic and Career and Technical courses in one location. The academy will expand on existing offerings in the Health and Medical Science area.
- **Students:**  
The academy will admit up to 150 students during their 9th grade year using an application process which will include a student information page, three recommendation letters (from a science teacher, a mathematics teacher, and a teacher or counselor of the student's choosing), and a personal statement. Enrollment in advanced level courses will be based on student choice and seat availability. Students who move into the district after 9th grade will be admitted on a case-by-case basis depending on availability.
- **Grade Levels:**  
The academy will serve students in grades 9-12.
- **Curriculum Design:**  
All students will have the opportunity to dual enroll their health academy course with the George Washington University (for up to 22 college credits). In addition to college credits earned through academy courses, students will be able to earn college credits by taking existing dual enrollment and AP classes. All the academy courses, as well as the Economics and Personal Finance course, will teach workplace readiness skills to help prepare students for entry into the workforce.
- **Benefits to Participating Students:**  
Upon completion of a pathway, students will have the opportunity to take related industry certifications and enter the workforce upon graduation. Students may also choose to attend a community college to pursue a certificate or an Associate's Degree. Program completers will be offered guaranteed admission to the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences to pursue the related Bachelor's Degree with all dual enrollment and AP credits earned applying toward the degree. Students will also be eligible for academy related scholarships to help reduce the cost of college attendance. Some students may choose to work in a related field while attending college.

- **Parent, Student, and Community Involvement:**

Parents, students, and the community will be actively involved in Academy program planning. Student and parent informational meetings and business partnerships will be among the resources used to encourage student, parent, and community involvement with Academy initiatives. In October 2017, ACPS and GW issued a joint press release announcing this new partnership. This was followed up with an official Academy Roll Out on *November 9, 2017*, where local business and community partners were invited to learn more about the program and sign on as partners. The ACPS Department of Communication has linked information about the academy to the existing CTE webpage, they also created a video that can be used to promote the academy, it can be found here (<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/Page/2100>).

Committee members are working with the middle and high school counselors and the Family and Community Engagement Center (FACE) to educate, and inform them about the new academy, as well as working together to ensure all students and families are informed about this opportunity. A parent information session was held on *November 28* with additional events planned for *January and February 2018*. Confirmed dates for additional recruiting events targeting middle school students are:

1. *January 24, 2018*: Transition to High School, TC Williams Minnie Howard Campus-This is being done with the FACE center.
2. *February 6, 2018*: Academic Advising Night, TC Williams Main Campus

Students will complete career assessments and an Individual Academic and Career Plan (ICAP) in middle school through a Career Investigations course offered during their advisory period. The student ICAP will be reviewed annually prior to course registration and adjusted to meet the needs and interests of the student. Postsecondary pathways and academic assessments will also be reviewed and discussed. College admission requirements, industry certifications, college degrees, and advanced college degree programs will also be reviewed with students and parents.

Local businesses and educational institutions will be instrumental in providing resources and opportunities for students enrolled in the Academy, while providing data that will be essential to ensuring that Academy program options are aligned with postsecondary education and industry needs.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Orientation Power Point
2. Promotional Brochure

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