

SCHOOLWIDE CLUSTER GROUPING MODEL

Fact Sheet

WHY CLUSTER GROUPING?

- All students in a grade level are grouped according to their ability and achievement levels.
- Cluster grouping enables gifted students, as well as all other children make meaningful academic progress by raising the rigor and challenge in the Tier 1 classroom.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF CLUSTER GROUPING?

- Gifted students need to spend time learning with others of like ability to experience challenge and make academic progress.
- Gifted students better understand their learning differences when they are with learning peers.
- Gifted students feel more comfortable when there are other students just like them in the class.
- Teachers no longer have to deal with the strain of trying to meet the needs of just one precocious student in a class.
- Teachers are also much more likely to provide appropriate learning opportunities if more than one student will benefit. The school is able to provide a full-time, cost-effective program for gifted students, since their learning needs are being met every day.

Cluster grouping is when identified gifted students at a grade level are assigned to one classroom with a teacher who has special training in how to teach gifted students. The other students in their assigned class are of mixed ability. Differentiated instructional opportunities allow gifted students to interact with their intellectual as well as their age peers. Through cluster grouping the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of the gifted students can be addressed.

WHAT IS THE SCHOOLWIDE CLUSTER GROUPING MODEL (SCGM)?

SCGM is a method for providing full-time gifted education services without major budget implications, and with potential to raise achievement for all students.

HOW DOES CLUSTERING LOOK?

A group of three to six identified gifted students, usually those in the top 5-8% of ability in the grade level population, are clustered in a mixed-ability classroom. The teacher has had training in how to teach exceptionally capable students. If there are more than six gifted students, two or more clusters could be formed.

SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Class roster development is dependent on identifying 5 levels of students and developing a spread of no more than four levels within each classroom.
2. Gifted students should be placed in classrooms with a teacher who has gone through the Illinois recommended "Gifted Education Seminar."
3. Training and support of gifted instruction should be ongoing and provided to the classroom teacher by building enrichment specialists.

CLUSTER GROUPING RESOURCES:

- District 68 Teaching and Learning Website
- Clustered For Success article from ASCD Magazine
 - Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model PowerPoint
- National Association for Gifted Children
- <http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=162>
- Hoagies Gifted Education Page
- <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/grouping.htm>