THE SCHOOLWIDE CLUSTER GROUPING MODEL

Source: The Cluster Grouping Handbook by Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles

The attached chart describes the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM). It restores gifted education services to gifted students in a full-time model with very low budget implications.

It re-enfranchises gifted students who have typically not been served in traditional gifted education programs, including non-productive gifted students who are highly capable but who often do not complete their work. The SCGM also serves gifted children from "minority" groups: children of color, children in poverty, children who are not fluent in English, and children who are culturally diverse.

The SCGM groups all students at a grade level in the following ways to reduce the range of achievement levels in all classes **without tracking.**

Group 1: Identified gifted students, including all types of gifted students described above, are clustered in the classroom(s) of teachers who have had gifted education training and who agree to provide consistent compacting and differentiation opportunities in their class, opening those options to all students.

Group 2: High achieving students are clustered in the classrooms without gifted clusters. This provides academic leadership in all classes and gives the students in Group 2 multiple opportunities to become newly emerging academic leaders in their classes.

Group 3: Students performing in the average ranges are placed in all classes

Group 4: Below average students are placed in all classes

Group 5: Students performing significantly below average are placed ONLY in the classes that do not have a gifted cluster.

Referring to the SCGM Chart, Teacher A has the gifted cluster, no students from Group 2, and no students from Group 5. All teachers who do not have a gifted cluster have students from Groups 2-5, but none from Group 1. All teachers have a smaller range of achievement levels and students who can demonstrate academic leadership in their classes. **All classes are still totally heterogeneous.**

The benefits of the SCGM include:

- Gifted students who are motivated, productive, and likely to be willing to work hard
- Parents of gifted students choose to leave their children in their home schools
- Newly emerging academic leadership from students in the non-gifted cluster classes
- A general rise in achievement scores on state tests across the grade level
- A way for a school to offer essential gifted education services without major budget implications

Winebrenner, S and Brulles, B. (2008) The Cluster Grouping Handbook: How to Challenge Gifted Students and Improve Achievement for All. Minneapolis: Free Spirit, www.freespirit.com