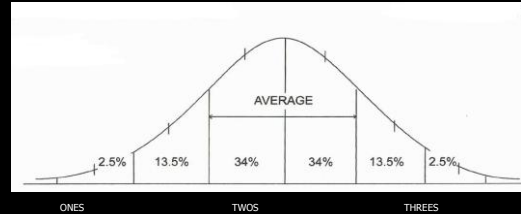


THE SCGM: EVERYONE AT TULPEHOCKEN BENEFITS!

*Using the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM)  
For a Program that Benefits Both Gifted and Special Education Students*

Presented by Lisa Kiss, Director of Special Education  
With Susan Winebrenner, author and consultant

- Pace
- Method/Learning Style
- Amount
- Peer Interaction
- Teacher Interaction
- Content
- Product Type
- Choice/Menu
- Project Work
- Creativity
- Link to interests
- Movement



*What SCGM is and why Tulpehocken is using it.*



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

With the SCGM, *all* students are purposely placed into classrooms based on their abilities, potential, or achievement, without returning to tracking.

*WHAT DO CLUSTER GROUPS LOOK LIKE AT TULPEHOCKEN?*

- A group of gifted identified students is clustered into a mixed ability classroom with a teacher who is trained to differentiate for gifted students.
- All other students at a grade level are clustered into all classes in a manner that maximizes achievement for all.



*SUGGESTED CLASSROOM COMPOSITION FOR THE SCGM*

30 students in 3 classes	Gifted	High Average	Average	Low Average	Far Below Average
<b>A</b>	6	0	12	12	0
<b>B</b>	0	6	12	6	6
<b>C</b>	0	6	12	6	6

*THE SCGM ALLOWS TULPEHOCKEN TO EMPLOY...*

The critical elements of effective gifted programs:

- ✓ flexible grouping
- ✓ differentiation
- ✓ continuous progress
- ✓ intellectual peer interaction
- ✓ continuity
- ✓ teachers with specialized education

*Program elements identified by Barbara Clark*

### SCGM is the perfect fit for RtII.

RtII Intervention blocks provide differentiated instruction to the gifted students as well as the struggling learners. The gifted and advanced students work with Mrs. Roberts, the Gifted Support Teacher, on advanced projects and activities, advanced literature circle groups, and math challenge sheets instead of math boxes

## IMPLEMENTING SCGM PROMPTED MANY QUESTIONS AT TULPEHOCKEN...

### WHY SHOULD GIFTED STUDENTS AT TULPEHOCKEN BE PLACED IN A CLUSTER GROUP INSTEAD OF BEING ASSIGNED TO ALL CLASSES?

Gifted students...

- need to spend time learning with others of like ability to experience challenge and make academic progress.
- better understand their learning differences when they are learning with learning peers.

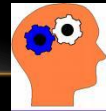


✓ *Teachers are more likely to differentiate curriculum when there is a noticeable group of gifted students.*

### WHAT ARE THE LEARNING NEEDS OF TULPEHOCKEN'S GIFTED STUDENTS?

*All students deserve consistent opportunities to learn new material.*

With gifted students, this means having opportunities to engage in intellectually stimulating endeavors that go beyond grade-level curriculum.



### WON'T THE CREATION OF A CLUSTER GROUP ROB THE OTHER CLASSES OF ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP?

- With either gifted or high achieving students in every class, all classes have academic leaders.
- Gifted students do not make the best learning role models because they make intuitive leaps which allows them to 'get' the material without doing a lot of work.
- In classes where gifted students have not been placed, high average and other students have new opportunities to become academic leaders.



### AREN'T GIFTED STUDENTS NEEDED IN ALL CLASSES SO THEY CAN HELP OTHERS LEARN?

- Helping other students learn is not the responsibility of gifted students, and they are too impatient to be good at it!
- Expecting them to help others may prevent them from making forward progress on their own behalf.



### WILL THE PRESENCE OF GIFTED STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM INHIBIT LEARNING FOR OTHERS?

- Not when the gifted cluster is kept to a manageable size.

*Recommended gifted cluster is 4-9 students or around 20% of the total class enrollment*



- By offering learning extension opportunities to all students in the class, expectations rise for all, and students rise to the expectations.

### ARE GIFTED CLUSTER GROUPS "VISIBLE" IN THE CLASSROOM AT TULPEHOCKEN?

**No.** Gifted cluster groups are rarely distinguishable from other groups of students in the classroom.

All students move in and out of flexible groupings according to interest, ability, and performance regarding different topics.



### WHAT ARE SOME ADVANTAGES OF CLUSTER GROUPING THAT WE HAVE SEEN AT TULPEHOCKEN?

- Grouping all gifted children in a regular classroom provides social, emotional, and academic advantages to students.
- Teachers can focus instruction to better meet all students' academic needs because the range of achievement levels is smaller.
- Schools provide full-time gifted services with no additional costs.
- Achievement results increase for most students.

### WHAT WERE OUR CHALLENGES WHEN WE STARTED CLUSTER GROUPING?

- Placing students who enroll during the school year.
- Placing students into cluster groups due to the small size of our district.
- Making sure that compacting and differentiation are consistently occurring in the gifted cluster classes.
- Providing ongoing support for the gifted cluster teachers.

### Why the SCGM is good for Tulpehocken...

- ✓ Challenges gifted students every day to learn the benefits of effort and hard work.
- ✓ Follows the intervention formats for special education students.
- ✓ Empowers all teachers through effective professional development opportunities.
- ✓ Continuously assesses students' strengths and needs.
- ✓ Provides extended learning options for all students.

### THE SCGM: WHY ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL RISES

- Narrowed range of abilities allows for more focused instruction.
- Teachers learn strategies for advanced ability learners they can use for all students, not just the gifted students.
- On-going assessment of students' strengths and needs ensures continual progress.
- Gifted ELL students are more likely to receive advanced instruction and extended learning opportunities.
- All students work at their challenge level more consistently.
  - ✓ *Higher expectations for all students!*



### *PARENT INFORMATION*

- Provided parents of students in the Gifted Cluster classrooms with letters explaining the model at the beginning of the school year.
- Developed a Gifted Education link through our Special Education page on our district website.
- Prepared a brochure with FAQ's about cluster grouping.
- Held informational events for parents of gifted students.

### POTENTIAL CHALLENGES WITH THE SCGM

- ◆ Enrolling new students during the school year
- ◆ Need for supervision and support from principals and/or teachers with gifted education training.
- ◆ Some grade levels have less than 3 sections, so fitting the grouping guidelines in the model is challenging.
- ◆ Pressure from parents to have their children placed in the same classroom as the gifted students.
- ◆ Your concerns???

### *SHOWING GROWTH IN THE SCGM*

Tulpehocken tracks ongoing growth by measuring:

- Academic achievement.
- Gifted population identified and served each year.
- RtII data meetings.
- Teachers participating in gifted education training.

### *THE SCGM IN TIMES OF LEAN BUDGETS*

Full-time gifted education services are provided with:

- No initial outlay of funds.
- No additional staffing.
- No extra materials required.
- Desirable staff development that improves differentiation efforts and benefits all students.
- Satisfied parents who do not take their gifted children out of their neighborhood schools thus keeping tax dollars in the district.

**Just a  
Snapshot  
of our  
data!**

HOW ARE WE DOING?

- **READING**
- **Reports comparing the beginning of the year assessments with the end of the year assessment results for the 2011-2012 school year.**
- **Green=9/7/2011**
- **Yellow=3/27/2012**

## GRADE 3 READING

4 Sight Assessments	Beginning of School Year	End of School Year
Advanced	2	6
Proficient	12	13
Basic	3	
Below Basic	3	1

## GRADE 4 READING

	Beginning of School Year	End of School Year
Advanced	3	12
Proficient	9	4
Basic	5	2
Below Basic	1	

## GRADE 5 READING

	Beginning of School Year	End of School Year
Advanced	3	2
Proficient	12	16
Basic	3	
Below Basic		1 (Move in)

## GRADE 6 READING

	Beginning of the School Year	End of the School Year
Advanced	8	9
Proficient	9	10
Basic	1	
Below Basic		

*IN SUMMARY: SCGM GOALS*

- To benefit *all* students in the grade level by reducing the range of instructional levels in all classes so curriculum differentiation can be more manageable.
- To ensure continuous progress for high ability students with a rigorous, faster paced curriculum and instruction in a group of their intellectual peers.
- To include gifted students in RTI and PLC efforts by understanding they have similar needs as struggling learners and benefit from the same type of teaching: assess entry level, choose and apply a strategy that moves the student forward, assess its effectiveness, choose the next level of content, and

**REPEAT THE PROCESS!**

*REFERENCES AND RESOURCES*

*The Cluster Grouping Handbook: How to Challenge Gifted Students and Improve Achievement for All*, 2010 Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles. Free Spirit Publishing, [www.freespirit.com](http://www.freespirit.com)

*Teaching Gifted Kids in Today's Classroom*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles 2012 Free Spirit Publishing, [www.freespirit.com](http://www.freespirit.com)

*Teaching Kids with Learning Difficulties in the Regular Classroom* (2006) by Susan Winebrenner. [www.freespirit.com](http://www.freespirit.com)

A Web Course for Distance Learning for *The Cluster Grouping Handbook* from

Knowledge Delivery Systems, NYC, [www.kdsi.org](http://www.kdsi.org)