

Frequently Asked Questions About the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM) and Gifted Testing

The Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM) provides a comprehensive way to serve gifted students on a full-time basis while enhancing achievement opportunities for *all* students. The information on this form answers common questions about SCGM.

What does it mean to place students in “cluster” groups?

A group of gifted-identified students is placed (“clustered”) into a mixed-ability classroom with a teacher who receives professional learning to differentiate curriculum and instruction for gifted students.

Is cluster grouping the same as tracking?

To answer this, it’s important to know the definition of “tracking”. Tracking is a practice of sorting students in groups AND keeping them in the group without movement. It gained popularity in the mid-twentieth century when schools were sorting students for vocational, general or academic tracks to prepare for the working class jobs, skilled careers or university attendance. Curriculum was based on the ability of average students in the class. Schoolwide Cluster Grouping will attend to the needs of the gifted student AND all others, allowing students to move in and out of classroom groups based on readiness, interest, and need. With the precision of grouping students, following Susan Winebrenner’s work, all classes will have a balanced range of abilities, assuring for high expectations for every student.

Will the creation of a gifted-cluster group rob the other classes of academic leadership?

All classes will have a group of gifted students or a group of high-achieving students, so every class has academic leaders. High-achieving students have new opportunities to become academic leaders.

What is the process for having my child tested?

Parents and teachers may nominate students for gifted testing. FHPS offers testing in the spring. For the 2015-16 school year, students in grades 1-5 may be nominated. Beginning in the spring of 2017, kindergarten students may also be nominated.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM) and Gifted Testing

What scores are needed to qualify for gifted-education services?

To qualify for gifted-education services in FHPS, students must score in the 96th percentile or in the 9th stanine on the district's abilities test or on an approved full-scale IQ test.

My child scored in the 60th percentile. Does that mean he/she failed the test?

Students do not "pass" nor "fail" an ability test. The percentile rank means that a student did as well or better than 60 percent of the students at *the same age*.

If my child does not qualify for gifted-education services, can he/she retest at another time?

Test administration guidelines require that 12 months pass before the *same* test is administered again. It is generally recommended to wait two years before retesting. If a student scores in the 85th - 95th percentile, parents and teachers may consider retesting in the future. In FHPS, students may test twice in their K-5 experience. Retesting a child more than twice usually does not provide drastically different results.

Who provides the testing? How will I receive the results?

The Gifted Coordinator for FHPS administers testing in all the schools. There is a team of testing technicians who help to proctor each testing session.

The Gifted Education Service department oversees the evaluation and reporting process. They will notify parents/guardians through a letter sent via US Mail. The students' home schools receive the same information so they can make appropriate educational placements.

May I request that my child be given a specific ability test?

Students have the opportunity to take a nonverbal abilities test. When families ask to test their child for the second time, the district's Gifted Coordinator might recommend a different abilities test **based on the results of the nonverbal test**. This recommendation might be appropriate if the student scores in the 85th-95th percentile on the first test.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM) and Gifted Testing

What are the learning needs of gifted students?

All students deserve consistent opportunities to learn new material at high levels. With gifted students, this means having opportunities to engage in intellectually stimulating endeavors that may go beyond grade-level curriculum.

What is our definition of “gifted”?

Our definition relates to gifted individuals’ processes, how they interact with the learning environment, how they perceive information and how they manipulate ideas. Our gifted services focus on global thought processes while emphasizing enriched and accelerated content. When we identify students with our assessments, it provides evidence of the student’s advanced ability to learn. General ability allows people to solve problems, reason, find patterns, make inferences, and analyze simple and complex ideas.