

Taft Intermediate Gifted Services

Purposes of Grouping

The purposes of grouping are fourfold: (1) to deliver appropriate differentiated curriculum to learners with similar educational needs; (2) to facilitate the use of appropriately differentiated instructional strategies to learners with similar educational needs; (3) to facilitate addressing the differential affective needs of these children in the most conducive manner; and (4) to allow for learners of similar abilities or performance levels to learn from each other. In general, grouping gifted learners tends to be the “least restrictive environment” in which their learning can take place, and the most effective and efficient means for schools to provide more challenging coursework, thereby giving these children access to advanced content and providing them with a peer group (Brody, 2004).

Gifted cluster and combined cluster teachers plan appropriately challenging instruction for their gifted students. This may involve acceleration, enrichment, and various extended learning opportunities targeted to develop the following skills through learning in the content areas:

- Logical thinking
- Reasoning skills
- Critical and creative thinking
- Problem-solving

Gifted students receive instruction that is differentiated in content, process, product, learning environment and assessment:

1. **Content** — Complex, abstract ideas presented in a variety of disciplines, including interdisciplinary curriculum
2. **Process** — Higher-level thinking through Bloom’s Taxonomy and the Multiple Intelligences
3. **Products** — Alternative methods of demonstrating mastery with a range of complexity
4. **Learning environment** — Student-centered, flexible grouping based on readiness, interests, and abilities
5. **Assessments** — Pre-assessment and testing out-of-grade level curriculum.

Cluster Grouping

Cluster and combined cluster grouping – 4-8 gifted students at a grade level placed in a mixed ability classroom as a small group and are provided proportionate differentiated curriculum and instruction by a teacher with gifted training. Gifted identified students are clustered into gifted cluster classrooms with teachers who have had the *state required gifted professional development hours*. In this model, gifted students receive differentiated curriculum and instruction in identified content areas on a daily basis. A combined cluster grouping has multiple gifted clusters within the classroom.

Brody, L. E. (ed.). (2004). Grouping and acceleration practices in gifted education. In S. M. Reis

(Series Ed.), *Essential readings in gifted education*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.