

March 25, 2011

Challenging All Students at Lawton

Problem Statement: A majority of Lawton Staff want to create more balanced classrooms, leading to a learning environment with academic rigor for all students at Lawton. The Staff would like to change the way Spectrum students are placed in classrooms from a single cohort model to a cluster grouping model, as explained in *The Cluster Grouping Handbook* by Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles.

The CAS team, consisting of Lawton Staff and parents, met 6 times, reviewed ideas, engaged in a book study and developed solutions to address this lack of balance. The plan below is a culmination of this work. After an initial staff vote on March 2nd, the proposal was brought to the Building Leadership Team (BLT) for refinement on March 7, 2011. The staff wanted more information about Cluster Grouping and therefore, Dina Brulles, one of the co-authors was contracted to facilitate professional development with the Lawton staff on Friday March 18th. Dina Brulles also hosted an informational session open to all Lawton parents to learn more about Cluster Grouping on the evening of March 18th. The Lawton staff met again on March 23rd and reached consensus on the decision to move forward next year with cluster grouping at Lawton. This decision is fully supported by the Seattle Public Schools Advanced Learning Department.

PLAN-This plan proposes intentionally assigning students to classrooms based on ability and achievement level to ensure (1) a balance of abilities throughout the grade and (2) to reduce the learning range found in every classroom.

-Cluster Grouping places students in 1 of 5 possible groups according to their current ability/achievement level:

Group 1 – Spectrum identified

Group 2 – Non-Spectrum Highly Capable students

Group 3 - on grade-level average students

Group 4 – below grade-level students

Group 5 – Well below grade-level students

Classroom A	Classroom B	Classroom C
Groups 1,3,4	Groups 1,3,4	Groups 2,3,4,5

In the event that there are a disproportionate number of students in Group 5 or too few in Group 1 the class configurations may look like:

Classroom A	Classroom C	Classroom C
Groups 1,3,4	Groups 2,3,4,5	Groups 2,3,4,5

Lawton Staff Commitments:

- Students will walk to math and sometimes for reading to ensure that students who are ready for instruction one year in advance will have access. Groupings will be fluid based on MAP testing and teacher assessments
- Cluster groups will be no smaller than 6 students identified in Spectrum per classroom
- All teachers will participate in differentiation Professional Development and teaching gifted students Professional Development
- Spectrum cluster teachers will rotate regularly
- All teachers will utilize small group instruction and differentiated lessons
- Teachers will use aligned assessments across all classrooms including but not limited to: NWEA MAP, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), MSP, Writing Assessments, common spelling assessments, and common science assessments
- Monthly Professional Learning Community meetings, per grade level, will help teachers plan instruction based on student data
- We will continually measure outcomes and will adapt this plan accordingly

Expected Outcomes:

- More balanced classrooms
- Higher academic achievement for all students
- Improved school climate
- More and improved differentiated instruction