

## Utilizing the HOPE Scale in Distance Learning Settings

By C. Matthew Fugate, Ph.D.

Certainly 2020 has provided educators with unique challenges. One of those challenges has been ways to continue to identify students for gifted services in virtual learning environments. It is important to keep in mind that talent development cannot stop, even in these challenging times. The HOPE Scale (Gentry et al., 2015) was designed as a tool for teachers to use to equitably identify children from diverse populations for gifted and talented services (Peters & Gentry, 2010). Based upon the teacher's observation of their students' academic and social behaviors and when used alone or in conjunction with other instruments, the HOPE Scale provides a holistic view of student potential from the perspectives of their teachers.

One of the keys to using this instrument with fidelity is that teachers know their students and the environments and experiences that influence their achievement. That cannot be sacrificed because teachers are working with students in a virtual environment. Rather than relying on teachers' "beliefs" about their students, the HOPE Scale anchors teachers' ratings in the 11 items included, thereby limiting some implicit bias that may exist (Peters & Gentry, 2013). The use of local and group-specific norms helps to mitigate the potential for students who are in need of talent development to be overlooked; all students must continue to be given opportunities to reach their full potential. Equity in identification cannot be diminished simply because teachers and students are not occupying the same physical space.

Gentry, M., Pereira, N., Peters, S., McIntosh, J., & Fugate, C. M. (2015). *HOPE teacher rating scale: Involving teachers in equitable identification of gifted and talented students in K-12*. Technical Manual. Prufrock Press.

Peters, S. J., & Gentry, M. (2010). Multi-group construct validity evidence of the HOPE Scale: Instrumentation to identify low-income elementary students for gifted programs. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 54, pages 298-313.

Peters, S. J. & Gentry, M. (2013) Additional validity evidence and across-group equivalency of the HOPE teacher rating scale. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 57, pages 85-100.

Written by Dr. Fugate for the Minnesota Department of Education