Attachment 5: MS CCR FIRM Appendix – Additional Context

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Acronyms and Initialisms

LOI – Letter of Interest
MS – Middle School
CCR – College and Career Readiness
FIRM – Free Instructional Resources and Materials
TEA – Texas Education Agency
TEKS – Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
HB 18 – House Bill 18
GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
FOI – Fidelity of Implementation
LEA-Local Education Agency

Glossary of Terms

LEA – Local Education Agency-is defined as any of the following: Regional Education Service Centers, Districts, Open-Enrollment Charter Schools, and Public Schools

Machine Readable TEKS –is a method by which educational publishers utilize a common technical ‘language’ for their content. It allows for transparency and interoperability.

For more Information about Machine Readable TEKS see TEA’s Texas Gateway Machine Readable TEKS site: <https://teks.texasgateway.org/>

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Overview of GEAR UP

GEAR UP is a federal discretionary grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education. GEAR UP awards are granted to states to:

- Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of participating students;
- Increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education or participating students; and
- Increase the educational expectations for participating students and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing.

In 2017, the US Department of Education awarded the TEA with a grant (Texas GU) to advance the objectives listed above. TEA has awarded grants to LEAs and organizations that best meet GEAR UP objectives. The following grants have been awarded:

- Local Education Agency (LEA) Grant
  TEA selected feeder patterns (combinations of middle school and high school campuses) at 6 districts to receive Texas GU funding. These campuses serve approximately 9,600 students.
- Technical Assistance Providers:
  TEA selected grantees for professional development and data-driven performance management for the LEA grantees.

Local Education Agency Grant

LEA grantees will support students in achieving GEAR UP objectives through five primary strategies:

1) **Strategy 1: Increase Academic Rigor** - Facilitate an increase in access to, perceived value of, and student success in academically rigorous courses through extensive professional development for teachers, counselors, and administrators, and targeted tutoring for students.

2) **Strategy 2: Prepare Middle School Students** - Empower students with pathway information early on through individualized college and career advising in middle school and adoption of a high-quality, TEKS-aligned career exploration course.

3) **Strategy 3: Expand College and Career Advising and Resources for High School Students** - Mitigate the effects of high student-to-counselor ratios and provide robust, individualized college and career advising through the adoption of a Near Peer Advising model in GEAR UP high schools.

4) **Strategy 4: Leverage Technology** - Expand advisor capacity and amplify high-quality resources through the adoption of targeted, user-centered technology tools for advisors, counselors, administrators, students and parents.

5) **Strategy 5: Develop Local Alliances** – Establish or expand existing alliances with business, higher education, and community partners that support student achievement and offer opportunities for career exploration.

TEA has awarded 6 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with grants to launch these strategies at campuses or sets of campuses serving students in 7th through 12th grade. LEA Grant awardees were selected August of 2018.
Explanation of Student Groups

GU LEA grantees will serve students in two student groupings: the Cohort Model and the Priority Model.

The Cohort Model provides targeted services to a grade-specific cohort of students with services as they progress through middle school and high school and into postsecondary education. In this model, the primary cohort is composed of all students beginning in grade 7 in participating schools within a feeder pattern. Throughout the lifetime of the grant, Texas GEAR UP will continue to serve the original seventh grade primary cohort as they proceed to the first year of postsecondary education.

In addition, LEAs will implement a Priority Model. Priority students are defined as students in grades 9-12 who will receive basic GEAR UP services by virtue of attending a GEAR UP campus.

Technical Assistance Grant

The Technical Assistance grantee will build instructional and performance management competencies at LEA Grantee sites. The grantee supports GEAR UP campuses by providing:

- **Professional Development**
  The grantee trains and supports GEAR UP LEA grantees in the development of rigorous instructional methods and vertical instructional planning competencies.

- **Performance Management TA Grant**
  The grantee sets up and trains GEAR UP LEA grantees on tools and processes to collect information and apply data-driven program management and reporting.
House Bill 18
The 84th legislature passed House Bill 18 (HB 18) that details required instruction for high school, college, and career preparation for middle school students. An excerpt from HB 18 is written below:

Sec. 28.016. INSTRUCTION IN HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE, AND CAREER PREPARATION.

a) Each school district shall provide instruction to students in grade seven or eight in preparing for high school, college, and a career.

b) The instruction must include information regarding:
   1) the creation of a high school personal graduation plan under Section 28.02121;
   2) the distinguished level of achievement described by Section 28.025(b-15);
   3) each endorsement described by Section 28.025(c-1);
   4) college readiness standards; and
   5) potential career choices and the education needed to enter those careers.

c) A school district may:
   1) provide the instruction as part of an existing course in the required curriculum;
   2) provide the instruction as part of an existing career and technology course designated by the State Board of Education as appropriate for that purpose; or
   3) establish a new elective course through which to provide the instruction.

d) Each school district shall ensure that at least once in grade seven or eight each student receives the instruction under this section.

According to HB 18 Sec 28.016 c), the bill allows for LEAs to implement instruction within a variety of courses. LEAs across the state of Texas have chosen a variety of implementation models given these parameters. The grantee selected to develop the Middle School CCR FIRM will need to identify best implementation models and develop a highly flexible curriculum to use within those models.

A complete version of HB18 can be found at the following web address:
<https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/84R/billtext/html/HB00018F.htm>

Many districts choose to meet HB 18 requirements by offering two elective Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses in 7th and 8th grade suggested by the State Board of Education (SBOE):

- §127.2. Investigating Careers
- §127.3. College and Career Readiness

Access the TEKS for Investigating Careers and College and Career Readiness using the following link.
Content Types
a) **Resource** – an HTML page with one or more sub-content types

I. **HTML**

II. **HTML Sub-Content Types**
   1. **PDF** (scrollable window)
   2. **Video** hosted on our site or embedded link to another site – runs in our site
   3. **Audio**
   4. **Interactive**
      a. Interactive video
      b. Memory game
      c. Board game
      d. Multiple choice
      e. Accordion
      f. Quiz
      g. Presentation
      h. Single choice set
      i. Documentation tool
      j. Summary
      k. Drag the words
      l. Timeline
      m. Find the hotspot
      n. True/false question
      o. Collage
      p. Image hot spots
      q. Chart
      r. Drag and drop
      s. Image slider
      t. Flashcards
      u. Image juxtaposition
      v. Find multiple hotspots
      w. Fill I the blank
      x. Dialogue cards
      y. Mark the words
      z. Guess the answer
         1. Downloadable documents, videos and links to content at the bottom of the resource page
a. **Binder** – a grouping of resources
b. **Course Binder** – a collection of resources that progress through logical steps
   a. Some assessment tools, but no tracking of user completion or certificates

   c. **File Types** allowed that can be attached to/downloaded from HTML pages include:
      i. Image (.gif or .png)
      ii. Video
      iii. PDF (preferred)
      iv. Word
      v. Excel
      vi. PowerPoint

Scoring Rubric
Review Criteria

The following review criteria is used in scoring the application response form. Each application is reviewed to determine the capability of the applicant to meet project requirements. In reviewing the information submitted and in recommending applications for funding, reviewers consider the following ratings:

Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Fulfills Requirements, or Needs Improvement. When scoring each indicator, reviewers select a rating which has an appropriate point value assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Levels</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations (9-10 points)</th>
<th>Meets Expectations (8-6 points)</th>
<th>Fulfills Requirements (3-5 points)</th>
<th>Needs Improvement (0-2 points)</th>
<th>Total__/20</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Needs Assessment and Research</strong></td>
<td>The response clearly outlines a robust plan for establishing LEA needs through rigorous research activities. The proposed plan (1) states clear objectives aligned with the requirements of the project; (2) provides a detailed description of the target research participants and rationale for choosing that audience, and (3) offers a description and rationale for the tools needed to complete the assessment</td>
<td>The response outlines a clear plan for establishing LEA needs through research activities. The proposed plan (1) states clear objectives which are somewhat aligned with the requirements of the project; (2) provides a description of the target research participants and rationale for choosing that audience; and (3) offers a description for the tools needed to complete the assessment, perhaps without an associated rationale</td>
<td>The response presents a basic plan for establishing LEA needs through research activities. The proposed plan (1) states objectives which are somewhat aligned with the requirements of the project; (2) offers a loosely formulated description of the target research participants; and (3) a description for the tools needed to complete the assessment with or without an associated rationale</td>
<td>The plan provided in the response fails to clearly address how LEA needs will be established through research activities. The proposed plan may include the following: (1) states objectives that are not closely aligned with the requirements of the project; (2) provides a brief description of the target research participants, if any; and (3) offers a brief or vague description of the tools needed to complete the assessment without an associated rationale</td>
<td>Score__/10</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Data Driven Strategy Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>The response presents a clear and well-defined strategy for utilizing needs assessment data to inform implementation models. The proposed plan includes (1) methods used to analyze data with rationale; (2) a thorough, easily interpreted explanation for how needs assessment data will inform implementation models; and (3) a detailed description of methods to present research reports.</td>
<td>The response presents a clear strategy for utilizing needs assessment data to inform implementation models but may lack some definition of how the strategy will be executed. The proposed plan includes (1) methods used to analyze data with rationale; (2) a sufficiently thorough explanation for how needs assessment data will inform implementation models; and (3) a description of methods to present research reports.</td>
<td>The response presents a somewhat clear and defined strategy for utilizing needs assessment data to inform implementation models. The proposed plan includes (1) loosely defined methods used to analyze data; (2) a somewhat clear and thorough explanation for how needs assessment data will inform implementation models; and (3) a brief overview of methods used to present research reports.</td>
<td>The response fails to present a clear or actionable strategy for utilizing needs assessment data to inform implementation models. The proposed plan may not include (1) methods used to analyze data or any supporting rationale; (2) a coherent explanation for how needs assessment data will inform implementation models; and (3) a description or overview of methods to present research reports.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Curriculum Development (Total Possible Score: 50)</th>
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<th>2. Curriculum Development (Total Possible Score: 50)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Levels</td>
<td>Exceeds Expectations 19-25 points</td>
<td>Meets Expectations 13-18 points</td>
<td>Fulfills Requirements 7-12 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1 Curriculum Content Development</td>
<td>The plan is comprehensive and demonstrates strong understanding of curriculum development considerations. The proposed plan (1) addresses the full scope of work with a high level of detail; (2) includes evidenced high-quality examples of developed curriculum and implementation at a variety of LEAs; (3) describes strategies used to design curriculum effectively with lessons learned</td>
<td>The plan is comprehensive and demonstrates some understanding of curriculum development considerations. The proposed plan (1) addresses the full scope of work with detail; (2) includes evidenced high-quality examples of developed curriculum and implementation; and (3) describes strategies used to design curriculum effectively with lessons learned</td>
<td>The plan is relatively thorough, but may contain some gaps, and demonstrates some understanding of curriculum development considerations. The proposed plan (1) addresses the full scope of work; (2) includes evidenced quality examples of developed curriculum and implementation; and (3) describes strategies used to design curriculum effectively with lessons learned</td>
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### 2.2 Productization of Curriculum

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The plan is comprehensive and demonstrates strong understanding of curriculum development considerations. The proposed plan (1) details highly effective methods to determine educator needs for usability; (2) provides robust and informed examples of curriculum elements that impact usability; (3) detailed explanation for how to improve those elements; and (4) evidence of working with a variety of LEAS to iterate curriculum.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The plan is comprehensive and demonstrates some understanding of curriculum development considerations. The proposed plan (1) details some effective methods to determine educator needs for usability; (2) provides informed examples of curriculum elements that impact usability; (3) an explanation for how to improve those elements; and (4) some evidence of working with a variety of LEAS to iterate curriculum.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The plan is relatively thorough, but may contain some gaps, and demonstrates some understanding of curriculum development considerations. The proposed plan (1) details a few methods to determine educator needs for usability; (2) provides some examples of curriculum elements that impact usability; (3) a brief explanation for how to improve those elements; and (4) some evidence of working with a variety of LEAS to iterate curriculum.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The response fails to comprehensively address a plan for curriculum development and/or lacks an understanding of curriculum development considerations. The proposed plan may (1) provides some methods to determine educator needs for usability; (2) a few elements that impact usability; (3) a brief explanation for how to improve those elements; and (4) little evidence of working with variety of LEAS to iterate curriculum.</td>
<td>5</td>
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### 3. Implementation Tools (Total Possible Score: 40)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Levels</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations 9-10 points</th>
<th>Meets Expectations 8-6 points</th>
<th>Fulfills Requirements 3-5 points</th>
<th>Needs Improvement 0-2 points</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Scheduling Tool or Template</td>
<td>The response clearly provides a detailed and robust description of the methodology and approach for creating a scheduling tool or template to aid with the implementation of new curriculum. The response incudes (1) examples of specific software that could be used for the tool and the advantages and disadvantages for each example; (2) thorough description of additional resources and supports need; and (3) includes strong evidence of experience with developing scheduling tools or resources.</td>
<td>The response outlines a detailed description of the methodology and approach for creating a scheduling tool or template to aid with the implementation of new curriculum. The response incudes (1) specific software that could be used for the tool and rationale for the choice; (2) detailed description of additional resources and supports need; and (3) includes evidence of experience with developing scheduling tools or resources.</td>
<td>The response presents a basic description of the methodology and approach for creating a scheduling tool or template to aid with the implementation of new curriculum. The response incudes (1) software that could be used for the tool; (2) a list of additional resources and supports need; and (3) includes some evidence of experience with developing a resource similar to the scheduling tool requested.</td>
<td>The response fails to clearly describe a methodology and approach for creating a scheduling tool or template to aid with the implementation of new curriculum. The response may incude (1) software that could be used for the tool; (2) a brief description of additional resources and supports need; and (3) includes little evidence of experience with developing a resource similar to the scheduling tool requested.</td>
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<th>Score</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Performance Levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exceeds Expectations</td>
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<td>Meets Expectations</td>
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<td>Fulfills Requirements</td>
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<td>Needs Improvement</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2 Implementation Guide</td>
<td>The response is comprehensive and demonstrates a strong understanding of the essential components of an instructional materials implementation guide. The proposed design includes (1) detailed descriptions of considerations for multiple implementation models; and (2) strong evidenced experience with developing implementation guides for instructional materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Fidelity of Implementation Rubric</td>
<td>The response includes several strong measures and metrics for implementation fidelity. The proposed plan (1) demonstrates a high-level understanding of indicators for fidelity of implementation; (2) provides evidenced experience developing rubrics at quality; and (3) includes robust experience monitoring and improving fidelity of implementation of newly adopted curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.4 Fidelity of Implementation Evaluation and Feedback

The response presents a clear and well-defined strategy for monitoring and reporting on MS CCR FIRM implementation. The proposed plan (1) includes detailed evidenced examples of experience researching and monitoring implementation of new curriculum; (2) includes well-defined actionable strategies to improve implementation; and (3) provides strong methods for periodic reporting to TEA and other stake holders.

The response presents a clear strategy for monitoring and reporting on MS CCR FIRM implementation. The proposed plan (1) includes evidenced examples of experience researching and monitoring implementation of new curriculum; (2) includes actionable strategies to improve implementation; and (3) provides clear methods for periodic reporting to TEA and other stakeholders.

The response presents a somewhat clear and defined strategy for monitoring and reporting on MS CCR FIRM implementation. The proposed plan (1) includes basic examples of experience researching and monitoring implementation of new curriculum; (2) includes some actionable strategies to improve implementation; and (3) provides simple methods for periodic reporting to TEA and other stakeholders.

The response fails to present a clear or actionable strategy for monitoring and reporting on MS CCR FIRM implementation. The proposed plan may include (1) little evidence of experience researching and monitoring implementation of new curriculum; (3) a brief description of action taken to improve implementation; and (3) low quality methods for periodic reporting to TEA and other stakeholders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Levels</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations 9-10 points</th>
<th>Meets Expectations 8-6 points</th>
<th>Fulfills Requirements 3-5 points</th>
<th>Needs Improvement 0-2 points</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Training and Scaling (Total Possible Score: 20)</td>
<td>The response presents a clear and well-defined strategy for developing training at pilot GEAR UP schools. The proposed plan (1) details clear learning objectives with rationale; (2) includes a variety of training delivery methods to meet target audience needs; (3) provides a robust methodology for choosing content to include in the training that addresses best practice use for all aspects of the FIRM; (4) provides some considerations for scalability of the training across the state; and (5) includes several examples of providing professional development training at a variety LEAs</td>
<td>The response presents a clear strategy for developing training at pilot GEAR UP schools. The proposed plan (1) details learning objectives with rationale; (2) includes several different delivery methods to meet target audience needs; (3) provides a methodology for choosing content to include in the training that addresses best practice use for all aspects of the FIRM; (4) provides some considerations for scalability of the training across the state; and (5) includes some examples of providing professional development training at a variety LEAs</td>
<td>The response presents a somewhat clear strategy for developing training at pilot GEAR UP schools. The proposed plan (1) outlines learning objectives; (2) includes a description of a few delivery methods to meet target audience needs; (3) includes a description of training content that addresses best practice use for all aspects of the FIRM developed; (4) provides few considerations for scalability of the training across the state; and (5) includes a some examples of providing professional development training at LEAs with similar demographics and composition</td>
<td>The response fails to present a clear and well-defined strategy for developing training at pilot GEAR UP schools. The proposed plan may (1) include learning objectives that are not well defined; (2) proposes a delivery method that does not take target audience needs into consideration; (3) provides a brief description of training content that addresses use for some aspects of the FIRM developed; (4) does not describe well thought-out considerations for scalability of the training across the state; and (5) provides none or few examples of providing professional development to LEAs</td>
<td>Score __/20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Page 11
The response clearly outlines a robust plan for training and marketing the MS CCR FIRM. The proposed plan (1) includes highly detailed strategies for marketing the FIRM across the state of Texas; (2) shows evidence of a clear understating of key state levers for driving broad adoption; (3) provides several highly effective methods for delivering training to all LEAs in Texas; and (4) includes strong evidence of experience with successful marketing and training at scale.

The response presents a basic plan for training and marketing the MS CCR FIRM. The proposed plan (1) includes some basic strategies for marketing the FIRM across the state of Texas; (2) demonstrates some understating of a few key state levers for driving broad adoption; (3) provides some methods for delivering training to all LEAs in Texas; and (4) includes some evidence of experience with moderately successful marketing and training at scale.

The plan provided in the response fails to clearly address how to provide training and marketing for the MS CCR FIRM. The proposed plan may (1) include a strategy for marketing the FIRM that is not well defined; (2) demonstrates little understating of key state levers for driving broad adoption; (3) provides few methods for delivering training to LEAs; and (4) includes little evidence of experience with marketing and training at scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Levels</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations 9-10 points</th>
<th>Meets Expectations 8-6 points</th>
<th>Fulfills Requirements 3-5 points</th>
<th>Needs Improvement 0-2 points</th>
<th>Total__/40</th>
<th>Score__/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**5.1 Resources to Meet Objectives**

- The response is comprehensive, highly detailed, and addresses all project requirements. Additionally, (1) role descriptions and resumes demonstrate skills and knowledge that are exceptionally aligned to the work requirements, (2) if contractors are proposed to complete portions of the work, the number of contractors and their responsibilities are clearly established, and prospective contractors are listed.

- The response is comprehensive, detailed, and addresses all project requirements. Additionally, (1) role descriptions and resumes demonstrate skills and knowledge aligned to the work requirements, (2) if contractors are proposed to complete the work, the number of contractors and their responsibilities are clearly established.

- The response is relatively broad, with some detail, and addresses just core project requirements. Including (1) complete role descriptions and resumes of the staff who would be responsible for the work, (2) a statement establishing whether contractors will be used to complete any part of the work.

- The response is brief and fails to address core project requirements. The response may include (1) limited role descriptions and resumes of the staff who would be responsible for the work, (2) a statement that is not clearly defined establishing whether contractors will be used to complete the work.

Score__/10
### 5.2 Content Development and Accessibility Guidelines

The response clearly outlines a robust plan and includes (1) highly detailed methodology for addressing HTML 5 and WCAG 2.0, Level AA content development requirements; and (2) evidenced examples of developing high quality content using HTML 5 and meeting WCAG 2.0 Level AA accessibility requirements.

<table>
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### 5.3 MS CCR FIRM Customization and Licensing

The response presents a clear and well-defined plan for delivering content that is customizable and freely available. The proposed plan (1) provides informed methods for formatting materials to allow users to modify and edit; (2) includes considerations for meeting Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Public Licensing; (3) details opportunities and obstacles associated with creating highly customizable curriculum; and (3) provides specific and detailed variable cost structure information for add-on services with rationale, if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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### 5.4 Quality of Activity and Budget Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The proposed methodologies, plans, and budgets address all activities in this request for LOIs in detail; (2) describe a program that is highly likely to meet the required work products outlined in this request; and (3) are resource/cost-efficient</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed methodologies, plans, and budgets address all activities in this request for LOIs in detail, and describe a program that is highly likely to meet the required work products outlined in this request</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed methodologies, plans, and budgets address all activities in this request for LOIs, and they describe a program that is likely to meet the required work products outlined in this request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed methodologies, plans, and budgets do not address all activities in this request for LOIs, and/or they describe a program that is unlikely to meet the required work products outlined in this request</td>
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</table>

**TOTAL POINTS:** 170