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| Criteria | 4 - Excellent | 3 - Good | 2 - Satisfactory | 1 - Needs Improvement |
| Overcoming Obstacles and Mastering Challenges | Essay provides compelling examples of significant obstacles and challenges the nominee faced and clearly describes how they overcame them through perseverance, resourcefulness, and personal growth.  | Essay discusses obstacles and challenges and generally explains how the nominee overcame them, but could provide more specifics or compelling details. | Essay mentions some obstacles or challenges but does not provide sufficient detail on how they were overcome.  | Essay does not sufficiently address obstacles and challenges or how they were mastered. |
| Impact of Accomplishments | Essay persuasively conveys the profound and lasting positive impact the nominee's accomplishments have had on themselves and/or others, with specific compelling examples. | Essay describes some significant positive impacts of the accomplishments but could provide more details or examples to fully convey the extent of the impact. | Essay alludes to positive impacts but does not provide sufficient explanation or examples to demonstrate significance of impact. | Essay does not adequately address the impact of accomplishments. |
| Achievements in Category of Nomination and Setting | Essay compellingly presents the nominee's exceptional achievements in their specific category, thoroughly describing the settings and contexts in which they occurred. Exceptionalities and gifted education services are explained in detail as relevant. | Essay describes nominee's key achievements and provides some context, but more details on setting, exceptionalities, and/or gifted education services would improve the response. | Essay lists some achievements but does not sufficiently explain category, setting, exceptionalities and/or services. | Essay lacks description of relevant achievements and context. |
| Overall Persuasiveness | All criteria are addressed thoroughly and seamlessly in a cohesive, compelling narrative demonstrating why the nominee clearly deserves the award. Writing is engaging, specific, and powerful. | Criteria are generally addressed well in a mostly cohesive narrative, but integrating details more smoothly or providing more specifics in some areas would elevate persuasiveness. | Some criteria are addressed but not cohesively. More specifics and better integration needed to make a strong case for why the nominee deserves the award. | Criteria not sufficiently addressed. Significant details and persuasive elements are lacking. |