

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION #26-2015

# Science Assessment Systems



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY | ISAT

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# 1. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Request for Information (RFI) Title	Idaho Standards Achievement Test and/or Idaho Alternate Assessment
RFI Lead	Austin Ambrose <a href="mailto:aambrose@sde.idaho.gov">aambrose@sde.idaho.gov</a> 650 W State St, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Boise, Idaho 83702 208-332-6948
Deadline to receive questions:	Sunday, April 12, 2026, 11:59 PM MT Use this <a href="#">official form</a> to submit questions.
Submit Responses: <i>Proposals must be received in the electronic inbox before closing date and time.</i>	See “3. Instructions for Submission of Responses” for submission instructions.
RFI Closing Time and Date	Sunday, April 26, 2026, 11:59 pm MT

## 2. OVERVIEW

### 2.1 Purpose

In alignment with Idaho’s philosophy and purposes of assessment in public schools, as outlined in Idaho Code ([IDAPA 08.02.03.111](#)), and in accordance with federal requirements for a statewide summative science assessment, the Idaho Department of Education (Department) is seeking information from potential vendors regarding possible solutions for the following science assessment system components:

#### 1. Science Statewide Summative Assessment Package

- a. A science summative assessment meeting federal and state requirements, administered in grades 5, 8, and 11, and encompassing Idaho standards across grade bands 3-5, 6-8, and 9-11.
- b. Interim assessments designed to reflect the format, content, and rigor of the summative assessment.

#### 2. Science Formative Assessment System

- a. A curriculum agnostic formative assessment system compatible with any locally-selected curriculum.

The Department recognizes that potential vendors may be able to address one or more of the components listed above. Vendors are encouraged to respond to any or all components for which they can offer solutions.

### 2.2 RFI- For Information Only

Please note that this RFI is for informational purposes only and no contract will be awarded as a result. A vendor’s response to the RFI - or lack thereof - will not affect the evaluation of responses to any subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP) or Invitation to Bid (ITB) issued by the Department. **Responses will be used solely for information and planning purposes.**

### 2.3 Background on Idaho’s Science Standards and Assessment Philosophy

In 2018, Idaho adopted three-dimensional science standards based on *A Framework for K-12 Science Education: Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Core Ideas* (National Research Council, 2012)(hereafter *A Framework for K-12 Science Education*). These standards were subsequently revised and approved in 2022. This adoption required a fundamental shift in science instruction and assessment – moving away from content-recall approaches toward three-dimensional learning experiences embedded in phenomena and complex real-world scenarios. Measuring

student proficiency of these standards requires assessments to capture student reasoning and sense-making.

Idaho emphasizes the importance of a balanced assessment system for gathering information on students' proficiency in relation to the [Idaho Content Standards](#). A balanced assessment system is one in which multiple assessment types work together to support both accountability and student learning. Summative assessments evaluate student performance relative to grade-level standards; interim assessments serve as checkpoints during the school year to establish students' current understanding of grade-level standards and inform instructional decisions; and formative assessment tools support day-to-day teaching and learning through providing timely, actionable feedback. To be most effective, each component must reflect the rigor, three-dimensionality, and phenomenon-based nature of Idaho's science standards.

The components described in this RFI – a summative assessment and aligned interim package, and a formative assessment system – are intended to work together to give Idaho educators and students a coherent set of resources that reflect the same vision of science learning from the classroom to that state level.

## 2.4 Science ISAT Summative and Interim Assessment Package Basic Requirements

The Idaho Standards Achievement Test for Science (Science ISAT) serves as the required statewide summative assessment of Idaho's science content standards for all Idaho public school students. It fulfills the requirements of Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), as well as the guidelines outlined in Idaho Code (IDAPA 08.02.03.111). The following outlines which standards are assessed at each specified grade level:

- Standards from grades 3-5, tested in grade 5
- Standards from grades 6-8, tested in grade 8
- Standards from all high school grades, tested in grade 11

The Science ISAT must provide information regarding students' grade level proficiency, reported as Level 4 (Advanced), Level 3 (Proficient), Level 2 (Basic), and Level 1 (Below Basic), along with aggregate and comparative performance data at the roster, school, district, and state levels.

As part of the summative assessment package, vendors must also provide interim assessments designed to reflect the format, content, and rigor of the Science ISAT. These interim assessments should serve as meaningful instructional checkpoints – giving educators actionable

data between summative administrations and providing students structured opportunities to engage with the same three-dimensional, phenomenon-based tasks they will encounter on the summative. Interim assessments should be designed so that performance on them is interpretable in relation to summative performance expectations.

The Science ISAT and interim assessments must ensure comprehensive participation for all students, including diverse populations. This includes students with disabilities, English language learners, students who are deaf and/or hard of hearing or blind/low vision, and those who may require a paper/pencil assessment. Results from paper/pencil assessments will be comparable to those obtained through digital testing. All students, except for those eligible for the assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, enrolled in an Idaho public school must take the Science ISAT.

## 2.5 Science Formative Assessment Basic Requirements

An online formative assessment system should support three-dimensional science learning as defined by the *Framework for K-12 Science Education*. The system should allow teachers to seamlessly integrate assessment into daily instruction and be grounded in authentic, phenomena-based learning experiences. To ensure compatibility across Idaho's diverse schools, the system must be curriculum agnostic and designed to complement any locally-selected science curriculum.

The formative assessment system must primarily serve as a tool to inform instruction, providing educators with timely, actionable insights into students' understanding, misconceptions, and learning progressions. Feedback should be designed to inform instructional next steps, support differentiation, and promote student reflection and growth over time. Reporting and data visualizations should be teacher-friendly and focused on classroom-level use, enabling educators to monitor progress across instructional sequences without positioning the system as a high-stakes or summative accountability assessment.

Equity, accessibility, and usability must be integral to the system's design. It should support diverse learners, including students with disabilities, English learners, and students with varied language and literacy levels, through built-in scaffolds and flexible task design. Digital accessibility must align with applicable accessibility standards, and the system should be compatible with common classroom technologies and learning management systems.

## 2.6 Information Sought from Respondents

Vendors are asked to respond to the questions below as they apply to the component(s) included in their submission. Questions begin with a set of universal questions required of all respondents, followed by section-specific questions for each component outlined in this RFI.

While it is not required to answer every question, vendors should provide a brief explanation for any questions they choose not to answer. If the answer to one question applies to another, vendors may refer to the earlier response instead of repeating it. Bulleted lists are acceptable.

### 2.6.1 Universal Questions

1. Please provide a brief overview of your organization, including your mission, organizational history, and any recent mergers, acquisitions, or ownership changes that could affect product continuity or support. Include the approximate scale of your current user base in terms of states, districts, and students served.
2. Please list the state agencies with which you currently partner to offer the product(s) described in your submission. Briefly describe the services provided and the length of each partnership.
3. Please describe the component(s) of a balanced assessment system that you offer, including any combination of formative, interim, and summative assessments, along with any instructional support materials. If your organization offers solutions that address more than one component described in this RFI, describe how those components are designed to work together.
4. Please describe how your product(s) has been integrated with other systems or platforms not provided by your organization, including common learning management systems and state-level data infrastructure, and if this has not occurred before, what could this look like.
5. Describe how classroom educators are involved in the following aspects of your product(s):
  - a) Task and item design
  - b) Review and validation
  - c) Piloting
  - d) Continuous improvement
6. Please describe the types of assessment items and formative tasks your product(s) include (e.g., modeling, explanation, investigation analysis, argumentation, simulation), how they surface student thinking, and the extent to which they are anchored by phenomena or real-world scenarios.
7. Please describe how data is reported to users across your product(s). Include how, if at all, each dimension of three-dimensional standards — Disciplinary Core Ideas (DCIs),

Science and Engineering Practices (SEPs), and Crosscutting Concepts (CCCs) — is reflected in reporting.

8. What professional learning, onboarding, and ongoing support do you provide to educators and administrators? Please distinguish between what is included in the cost of the product and what is available at additional cost.
9. Please describe your organization's approach to data privacy, including relevant certifications, compliance with applicable federal and state privacy laws, and policies governing data ownership and use at the end of a contract.

### **2.6.2 Summative Science Assessment Package**

1. Please describe the design and underlying philosophy of your summative assessment, including what makes your assessment distinct from traditional science assessments, how it evaluates three-dimensional science proficiency, and how it has been validated for use with standards based on *A Framework for K-12 Science Education* (hereafter *the Framework*).
2. Please provide evidence of your assessment's alignment to three-dimensional science standards. Include whether independent alignment studies have been conducted and whether those studies are available for review.
3. Please describe the item bank(s) you offer, including the Test Delivery System(s) with which your bank is compatible. Provide an overview of your state-level item development process and clarify whether items can be shared with other states or vendors through a consortium or Memorandum of Understanding.
4. Please provide examples of states where you have successfully implemented your summative assessment at the state level. For each example, outline the implementation timeline, including item development, Achievement Level Descriptor development, blueprint development, and alignment and field testing. Please also describe any factors that caused delays or required timeline adjustments.
5. Please describe the scoring system used for your summative assessment. If the assessment includes constructed response items, explain how those items are reviewed and scored, including the role of automated versus human scoring.
6. Please describe the interim assessments included as part of your summative package. Include how they are designed to reflect the format, content, and rigor of the summative assessment, how frequently they are intended to be administered, and how performance on interim assessments is interpretable in relation to summative performance expectations.
7. To what extent can the summative assessment be customized to reflect Idaho-specific contexts, phenomena, or standards emphases? Please describe who owns

assessment items, student data, and reporting infrastructure during and after the contract period.

8. What is a realistic timeline for full implementation at the state level from contract execution to first operational administration, and what are the primary factors that influence that timeline?

### 2.6.3 Formative Science Assessment System

1. Please describe the design and underlying philosophy of your formative assessment system, including how it is grounded in three-dimensional science learning as defined by *the Framework* and what evidence exists that it supports student learning outcomes.
2. Please describe the assessment task bank available to teachers, including the variety of task types offered, how teachers can select and sequence tasks, and how the system supports use across different locally-selected curricula and instructional sequences.
3. Please describe how the formative assessment system supports learning progressions and how it provides feedback to both teachers and students. Include how the system helps educators identify student misconceptions and determine instructional next steps.
4. Please describe how the system supports diverse learners, including students with disabilities, English learners, and students with varied language and literacy levels. Include built-in scaffolds, accessibility features, and alignment with applicable digital accessibility standards.
5. Please describe the technical requirements of the formative assessment system, including device compatibility, LMS integrations, and interoperability with common state and district data systems.
6. Please describe the reporting and data visualization features of the system. Include the level at which data is aggregable — classroom, school, district, or state — and how reporting is designed to support teacher use without positioning the system as a summative or accountability tool.
7. How is the formative assessment system updated over time? Describe the role educators play in that process and how feedback from users is incorporated into product development.
8. Please provide a high-level overview of your cost model for the formative assessment system (e.g., per-student, per-district, state licensing). Formal pricing is not requested at this time.

## 2.7 Respondents' Inquiries

Questions or other correspondence must be submitted in writing using the [official form](#). If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFI, addenda will be posted on the Department's [Contracting Opportunities](#) website. It is the responsibility of parties interested in this RFI to

monitor the Department’s Contracting Opportunities website for any updates or amendments. All changes to this RFI will be in writing and must be posted to the Department’s Contracting Opportunities website to be valid.

**QUESTIONS MUST BE RECEIVED IN WRITING BY 11:59 PM MST, April 12, 2026**

Early inquiries are encouraged and will be answered as quickly as possible. Official answers to all questions will be posted on the [Department’s Contracting Opportunities website](#) as an amendment to this RFI by April 17, 2026.

### 3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

#### 3.1 Prepare the Submission

Use Appendix A of this document as a template for your submission. Responses are accepted in PDF format. Before submitting, please save the submission as:

“CompanyName\_RFI\_ScienceAssessmentSystems\_Form-1-of-1.pdf”

If you have additional information, save each document in a single, added file using the following naming convention.

“CompanyName\_RFI\_ScienceAssessmentSystems\_Form-1-of-3.pdf”

“CompanyName\_RFI\_ScienceAssessmentSystems\_Form-2-of-3.pdf”

“CompanyName\_RFI\_ScienceAssessmentSystems\_Form-3-of-3.pdf”

#### 3.2 Submit Responses Electronically

Send all documents to [aambrose@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:aambrose@sde.idaho.gov) by 11:59 pm MST on April 26, 2026.

Idaho Department of Education is not responsible for delays in electronic transmission that may occur between the sender and recipient.

**Submissions will be considered on time if they arrive at the email address above by 11:59 pm MST on April 26, 2026.**

No hard-copy documents will be accepted.

## 4. IDAHO PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

Pursuant to the Idaho Public Records Act, [Idaho Code Title 74, Chapter 1](#), records, including documents in all forms, received from Respondents may be open to public inspection and copying unless exempt from disclosure.

*Please do not submit confidential information or trade secrets in your response.*

# APPENDIX A- RFI RESPONSE FORM

## Respondent's Contact Information

Company/Organization Name:

Contact Name:

Contact Email Address:

Contact Phone Number:

## Information Sought from Respondents

### Universal Questions

1. Please provide a brief overview of your organization, including your mission, organizational history, and any recent mergers, acquisitions, or ownership changes that could affect product continuity or support. Include the approximate scale of your current user base in terms of states, districts, and students served.
2. Please list the state agencies with which you currently partner to offer the product(s) described in your submission. Briefly describe the services provided and the length of each partnership.
3. Please describe the component(s) of a balanced assessment system that you offer, including any combination of formative, interim, and summative assessments, along with any instructional support materials. If your organization offers solutions that address more than one component described in this RFI, describe how those components are designed to work together.
4. Please describe how your product(s) has been integrated with other systems or platforms not provided by your organization, including common learning management systems and state-level data infrastructure, and if this has not occurred before, what could this look like.
5. Describe how classroom educators are involved in the following aspects of your product(s):
  - a) Task and item design
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6. Please describe the types of assessment items and formative tasks your product(s) include (e.g., modeling, explanation, investigation analysis, argumentation, simulation), how they surface student thinking, and the extent to which they are anchored by phenomena or real-world scenarios.

7. Please describe how data is reported to users across your product(s). Include how, if at all, each dimension of three-dimensional standards — Disciplinary Core Ideas (DCIs), Science and Engineering Practices (SEPs), and Crosscutting Concepts (CCCs) — is reflected in reporting.
8. What professional learning, onboarding, and ongoing support do you provide to educators and administrators? Please distinguish between what is included in the cost of the product and what is available at additional cost.
9. Please describe your organization's approach to data privacy, including relevant certifications, compliance with applicable federal and state privacy laws, and policies governing data ownership and use at the end of a contract.

### **Summative Science Assessment Package**

10. Please describe the design and underlying philosophy of your summative assessment, including what makes your assessment distinct from traditional science assessments, how it evaluates three-dimensional science proficiency, and how it has been validated for use with standards based on *A Framework for K-12 Science Education* (hereafter *the Framework*).
11. Please provide evidence of your assessment's alignment to three-dimensional science standards. Include whether independent alignment studies have been conducted and whether those studies are available for review.
12. Please describe the item bank(s) you offer, including the Test Delivery System(s) with which your bank is compatible. Provide an overview of your state-level item development process and clarify whether items can be shared with other states or vendors through a consortium or Memorandum of Understanding.
13. Please provide examples of states where you have successfully implemented your summative assessment at the state level. For each example, outline the implementation timeline, including item development, Achievement Level Descriptor development, blueprint development, and alignment and field testing. Please also describe any factors that caused delays or required timeline adjustments.
14. Please describe the scoring system used for your summative assessment. If the assessment includes constructed response items, explain how those items are reviewed and scored, including the role of automated versus human scoring.
15. Please describe the interim assessments included as part of your summative package. Include how they are designed to reflect the format, content, and rigor of the summative assessment, how frequently they are intended to be administered, and how performance on interim assessments is interpretable in relation to summative performance expectations.

16. To what extent can the summative assessment be customized to reflect Idaho-specific contexts, phenomena, or standards emphases? Please describe who owns assessment items, student data, and reporting infrastructure during and after the contract period.
17. What is a realistic timeline for full implementation at the state level from contract execution to first operational administration, and what are the primary factors that influence that timeline?

### **Formative Science Assessment System**

18. Please describe the design and underlying philosophy of your formative assessment system, including how it is grounded in three-dimensional science learning as defined by *the Framework* and what evidence exists that it supports student learning outcomes.
19. Please describe the assessment task bank available to teachers, including the variety of task types offered, how teachers can select and sequence tasks, and how the system supports use across different locally-selected curricula and instructional sequences.
20. Please describe how the formative assessment system supports learning progressions and how it provides feedback to both teachers and students. Include how the system helps educators identify student misconceptions and determine instructional next steps.
21. Please describe how the system supports diverse learners, including students with disabilities, English learners, and students with varied language and literacy levels. Include built-in scaffolds, accessibility features, and alignment with applicable digital accessibility standards.
22. Please describe the technical requirements of the formative assessment system, including device compatibility, LMS integrations, and interoperability with common state and district data systems.
23. Please describe the reporting and data visualization features of the system. Include the level at which data is aggregable — classroom, school, district, or state — and how reporting is designed to support teacher use without positioning the system as a summative or accountability tool.
24. How is the formative assessment system updated over time? Describe the role educators play in that process and how feedback from users is incorporated into product development.
25. Please provide a high-level overview of your cost model for the formative assessment system (e.g., per-student, per-district, state licensing). Formal pricing is not requested at this time.

## APPENDIX B- AMENDMENTS, QUESTIONS, AND RESPONSES

This section will contain any amendments to the RFI, including all questions and responses.

Question	Answer