



# Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

## 2026-2027 Formative (Interim) Assessment Grant Program Evaluation Rubric

Assessment data provides valuable knowledge for student support and educational decision-making when that data is valid, reliable, and reflective of required content. Indiana requires vendors to submit evidence of validity prior to approving assessment programs for purchase with state funds.

This rubric is used to evaluate programs submitted for approval under Indiana's Formative (Interim) Assessment Grant for the 2026-2027 school year. Six criteria are considered:

1. **Interim/Benchmark Assessment Program:** Assesses English/language arts and/or mathematics.
2. **Construct Coherence:** Aligns to the breadth and depth of Indiana Academic Standards (IAS) as applicable and employs strong test development processes.
3. **Comparability and Reliability:** Provides a reliable measure across forms and administrations.
4. **Fairness and Accessibility:** Provides a fair and accessible measure for all students.
5. **Consequences and Uses:** Provides data to differentiate instruction for students and to inform educational decision-making.
6. **Predictive Measures:** Provides data to predict student performance on Indiana's statewide accountability assessment.

The vendor must follow the process outlined in the *Indiana Formative Assessment Grant Program Approval Process* to submit evidence for consideration. To receive approval, the vendor must pass all criteria labeled in the rubric as Pass/Fail. Strong responses receive "Adequate" determinations for all other criteria within the rubric. Programs may receive approval with one or two "Incomplete" or "Lacking" criteria based on the determination of the review committee.

The rubric is adapted from *Strengthening Claims-based Interpretations and Uses of Local and Large-scale Science Assessment Scores Project (SCILLSS)*. (2017). *Ensuring Rigor in Local Assessment Systems: A Self-Evaluation Protocol*. Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Department of Education.

**Assessment Program Name:** Click here to enter text.

**Assessment Program Vendor:** Click here to enter text.

**Assessment Program Content Areas:** Click here to enter text.

**Assessment Program Grade Levels Serviced:** Click here to enter text.

**Contact Name:** Click here to enter text. **Email:** Click here to enter text. **Phone:** Click here to enter text.

**Contact Name:** Click here to enter text. **Email:** Click here to enter text. **Phone:** Click here to enter text.

**IDOE Contact:** Click here to enter text. **Email:** Click here to enter text. **Phone:** Click here to enter text.

**Final Status:** ☐ **Approved** ☐ **Not Approved**

**Approval Notes:** Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 1: Interim/Benchmark Assessment Program**

The assessment program provides data to measure content knowledge and skills for English/language arts and/or mathematics.

Research Questions	Evidence Required
Is the submitted product an assessment program?	The vendor must provide evidence of the degree to which the program is an assessment. The program must consist of interim, benchmark, or similar assessments. Curricula (or “lesson-based” programs) will not be approved.
Does the program assess English/language arts and/or mathematics?	<p>The vendor must submit evidence of any proficiency or growth indicators provided as well as the content areas assessed.</p> <p>The program must measure student achievement and/or growth related to performance on Indiana Academic Standards (IAS) over the course of the school year.</p> <p>The assessment program must provide (at minimum) either a proficiency indicator or a growth indicator for content as delineated in Indiana Academic Standards.</p>
Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾	
Committee Comments:	

**Criterion 2: Construct Coherence (Alignment, Test Development, Scoring)**

The assessment aligns to the breadth and depth of Indiana Academic Standards (IAS) and employs strong test development processes that support valid scores. All assessment program vendors are required to submit a third-party alignment study using the [streamlined 2023 IAS](#).

**Alignment Requirement Instructions:** The assessment program vendor must select **one** of the two alignment options (labeled below and marked with an asterisk) and clearly label their submitted documentation with the alignment option selected. Only one option may be selected for each submission. If assessment program vendors wish to use different alignment options for different grade level bands, the vendor must submit the grade level bands separately for review and approval.

Alignment Option 1	
Research Questions	Evidence Required
<p><b><u>Alignment Option 1: Aligns to Indiana Academic Standards (Available for Grades K-10)</u></b></p> <p>Does the assessment measure the breadth and depth of <a href="#">2023 Indiana Academic Standards</a>?</p> <p>What evidence shows that the assessment is sufficiently rigorous?</p>	<p>The vendor must provide a formal alignment study verifying the degree of the assessment's alignment to Indiana Academic Standards. The alignment study must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a research-based process;</li> <li>• Be completed by a third party or completed internally but provided to IDOE's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review;</li> <li>• Provide evidence of the degree to which the assessments measure the breadth and depth of Indiana Academic Standards.</li> </ul> <p>The vendor should describe how rigor is addressed in the assessment. A variety of methods to describe rigor are acceptable, including (but not limited to) DOK studies, the inclusion of proficiency level descriptors that take cognitive complexity into consideration, and Hess' Matrix.</p> <p>A panel of experts is expected to review item alignment across grade levels/content areas. While current educators are not required for inclusion in the panel of experts, it is preferred. If the alignment study is completed internally by the vendor rather than through a third party, the vendor must provide IDOE with access to one sample test form with 2023 Indiana standard alignments for IDOE's technical advisory committee to review. The sample test form can be created using released (or sample) items. If the vendor wishes to provide an operational test form, the vendor may propose a secure method for specific IDOE reviewers to access the form, and non-disclosure agreements can be requested.</p> <p>The alignment study must show that a minimum of 85% of Indiana Academic Standards are assessed at each grade level for each content area. For example, grade four mathematics assessments must assess a minimum of 85% of all of the grade four mathematics standards. Sets of standards cannot be excluded, with the one exception of speaking and listening standards for English/language arts.</p>

	<p>For fixed-form assessments, alignment should be verified from test forms. Independent assignment of metadata must be completed and compared to internal metadata. Independent metadata assignments must confirm internal metadata at a reasonably high rate.</p> <p>For computer-adaptive tests (CATs), alignment should be verified from a representative sample of test events. Independent assignment of metadata must be completed and compared to internal metadata. Independent metadata assignments must confirm internal metadata at a reasonably high rate.</p> <p>For interim, benchmark, or similar assessments, measurement of 85% (or more) of Indiana Academic Standards (alignment) can be demonstrated by combining test events across administrations if students are intended to participate in multiple test events over the course of the school year. If this method is utilized, it must be stated within the submitted documentation, and details regarding the number of administrations required to reach alignment expectations must be included.</p> <p>A correlation guide or crosswalk does not provide the same level of information that an alignment study provides and therefore will not be accepted.</p> <p>Varying levels of rigor should be measured across each test form, in accordance with the requirements of Indiana Academic Standards. Assessments which do not measure beyond Depth of Knowledge (DoK) 2 (or similar indicator on a different rigor matrix) will not be accepted.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: <span style="background-color: #f0f0f0; border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">Not Scored ▾</span></p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>	

Alignment Option 2	
Research Questions	Evidence Required
<p><b><u>Alignment Option 2: Aligns to College Entrance Exam (Available for Grades 8-10)</u></b></p> <p>Does the assessment measure the breadth and depth of Indiana</p>	<p>The vendor must provide a formal alignment study verifying the degree of the assessment's alignment to Indiana's selected nationally recognized college entrance exam for high school accountability. The alignment study must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a research-based process;</li> <li>• Be completed by a third party or completed internally but provided to IDOE's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review;</li> <li>• Provide evidence of the degree to which the assessments measure the breadth and depth of standards measured on the college entrance exam are sufficiently measured.</li> </ul> <p>The third-party alignment study must include data revealing the levels of rigor assessed.</p>

<p>Academic Standards as assessed on Indiana's college entrance exam?</p> <p>What evidence shows that the assessment is sufficiently rigorous?</p>	<p>Indiana's selected college entrance exam test blueprints, excerpted from the full blueprints and specifications published by the test vendor <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Indiana does not administer the optional essay component; therefore, alignment studies are not required to include the optional essay within the results.</p> <p>A panel of experts is expected to review item alignment across grade levels/content areas. While current educators are not required for inclusion in the panel of experts, it is preferred. If the alignment study is completed internally by the vendor rather than through a third party, the vendor must provide IDOE with access to one sample test form with 2023 Indiana standard alignments for IDOE's technical advisory committee to review. The sample test form can be created using released (or sample) items. If the vendor wishes to provide an operational test form, the vendor may propose a secure method for specific IDOE reviewers to access the form, and non-disclosure agreements can be requested.</p> <p>The alignment study must show that a minimum of 85% of Indiana Academic Standards are assessed at each grade level for each content area. For example, grade four mathematics assessments must assess a minimum of 85% of all of the grade four mathematics standards. Sets of standards cannot be excluded, with the one exception of speaking and listening standards for English/language arts.</p> <p>For fixed-form assessments, alignment should be verified from test forms. Independent assignment of metadata must be completed and compared to internal metadata. Independent metadata assignments must confirm internal metadata at a reasonably high rate.</p> <p>For computer adaptive tests (CATs), alignment should be verified from a representative sample of test events. Independent assignment of metadata must be completed and compared to internal metadata. Independent metadata assignments must confirm internal metadata at a reasonably high rate.</p> <p>For interim, benchmark, or similar assessments, measurement of 85% (or more) of Indiana Academic Standards (alignment) can be demonstrated by combining test events across administrations if students are intended to participate in multiple test events over the course of the school year. If this method is utilized, it must be stated within the submitted documentation, and details regarding the number of administrations required to reach alignment expectations must be included.</p> <p>The vendor must also provide instructions for schools which support creation of test blueprints which measure the breadth and depth of standards measured on the college entrance exam to the required 85%. Independent assignment of metadata must be completed and compared to internal metadata. Independent metadata assignments must confirm internal metadata at a reasonably high rate.</p> <p>A correlation guide or crosswalk does not provide the same level of information that an alignment study provides and therefore will not be accepted.</p>
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	Varying levels of rigor should be measured across each test form, in accordance with the requirements of Indiana Academic Standards.
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾</p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>	

**(Criterion 2 Continued) Test Development Requirement Instructions:** All assessment programs must address the research questions related to test development regardless of their selected alignment type.

Test Development	
Research Questions	Evidence Required
What is the overall process used for test development?	The vendor must provide a technical report detailing the test development process. The assessment should be constructed using a research-based method that focuses on the measurement of the intended construct.
Who was involved in the test development process (e.g., roles, expertise, geographic location)?	<p>The vendor must provide evidence of stakeholder involvement in test development. Examples may include narrative briefs on the creation of test design documents (such as blueprints and item specifications) and inclusion of stakeholders in item development and/or item review.</p> <p>Appropriate stakeholders (including content experts, psychometricians, assessment experts, and educators) should be involved in the test development process.</p>
What criteria are used to create/accept items for use on the assessment, and what quality controls are in place to ensure only high-quality items are administered?	<p>The vendor must provide documentation detailing the item development process. Documentation should provide an overview of any steps related to item development, item review, and item field test/data review.</p> <p>The item development process must actively involve a representative group of stakeholders who bring a broad range of perspectives and expertise. Considerations for accessibility and linguistic complexity, aligned with principles of universal design, must be integrated throughout the development cycle.</p> <p>Criteria must be in place to ensure that only high-quality items are utilized on the assessment. Examples may include quality control checklists utilized during item development or item specifications.</p> <p>Processes (including content and fairness reviews for test items and field test/data review for all items) must be in place to ensure only high-quality items are administered on operational test forms.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: <span>Not Scored ▾</span></p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>	

**(Criterion 2 Continued) Scoring Requirement Instructions:** All assessment programs must address the research questions related to scoring regardless of their selected alignment type.

Scoring	
Research Questions	Evidence Required
How are scores for individual test items combined for a total score?	<p>The vendor must provide a technical report detailing the method for providing total test scores. The technical report should provide arguments related to the degree to which total scores are a valid reflection of content knowledge and skill.</p> <p>A research-based scoring method must be applied to the assessment to return a valid “total score.” This total score should be meaningfully connected to the content standards. Total scores provided should be scaled. Additional scores related to student proficiency may be provided in different ways. The total score must be a valid reflection of student knowledge and skills.</p>
Are quality controls in place to verify that scoring specifications are applied correctly to items and test events?	<p>The vendor must provide documentation showing any quality controls in place that ensure automated scoring of items and calculation of total scores are correct and reliable.</p> <p>Quality controls should exist to confirm that machine scoring occurs accurately and total scores are correctly calculated and reported. A variety of systems are acceptable. Examples may include system checks or internal replications of data sets.</p> <p>If the assessment includes items hand scored by the assessment vendor, scorers must be qualified and must receive training which supports accurate, reliable scoring. Quality-control measures must be in place to monitor reliability of hand scores (for example, validity papers embedded in hand scoring sets or percent of items which are second-scored).</p> <p>If the assessment includes items hand scored by classroom teachers, teachers must receive training which supports accurate, reliable scoring. Quality-control measures are recommended to monitor the reliability of handscores by educators (e.g., score audits).</p>
How were item rubrics created? What differences in student responses do the rubrics account for?	<p>Scoring rubrics must be used for the scoring of open-ended items to ensure objectivity. Training materials must accompany the rubrics (e.g., annotated examples of scored responses, practice responses, validity papers). An overview of the rubrics and training materials should be presented (specific examples are not required).</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: <span>Not Scored ▾</span></p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>	



**Criterion 3: Comparability and Reliability**

The assessment provides a reliable measure across forms and administrations.

Research Questions	Evidence Required
<p>Does the assessment support reliable scores over time and across forms?</p> <p>Is the assessment administered in a standardized format to ensure comparability across different testing sites?</p> <p>Does the assessment administration protect against various types of cheating to ensure scores accurately reflect student knowledge and skills?</p>	<p>The vendor must provide evidence showing the degree to which scoring is comparable and reliable across various forms and administrations as applicable.</p> <p>The vendor may submit documentation indicating that the assessment received a “convincing” or “partially convincing” rating on the <a href="#">NCII Academic Screening Tools Chart</a> for the following components at all applicable grade levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Standards: Reliability</li> <li>• Technical Standards: Validity</li> </ul> <p>The vendor must provide documentation showing the degree to which the assessment is secure and any protections in place to prevent cheating. If irregularities occur in test administration, vendors must provide</p> <p>Processes must be in place that ensure the consistency of score results across different forms and over time (if applicable). Examples include the use of stable test blueprints, computer-adaptive algorithms, and test specifications.</p> <p>Protocols and processes must be in place that address standardization of test administration. Examples may include defined test windows, test administration manuals, instructions for test administrators or school administrators regarding administration of assessments, and/or test security information.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: <span>Not Scored ▾</span></p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>	

**Criterion 4: Fairness and Accessibility**

The assessment provides a fair and accessible measure for all students.

Research Questions	Evidence Required
What procedures ensure items were created without bias and are fair for all students?	<p>The vendor must provide a narrative describing the item development and data review processes. A technical report should be submitted to document the design decisions and data review processes conducted during assessment development.</p> <p>Items must be developed with processes to ensure fairness and accessibility. Strong processes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stakeholder review (educators included);</li> <li>• use of universal design (especially in graphics);</li> <li>• review of linguistic complexity to avoid language barriers and ensure language is grade-level appropriate; and</li> <li>• avoidance of multi-meaning words in item stems.</li> </ul> <p>Data analyses should be conducted to identify differential item functioning, ensuring that any items exhibiting inherent bias against specific student populations are excluded. Additionally, the vendor may provide NCII documentation confirming that a thorough bias analysis was performed on the assessment.</p>
<p>Can all students (including students with disabilities and English learners) access the assessment and show what they know?</p> <p>What accommodations and/or supports are offered during testing?</p>	<p>Appropriate accommodations and supports must be available for a variety of student populations. Student accommodations must be provided during testing either by the assessment program or by the local school.</p> <p>Strong responses clearly describe how required accommodations, as well as universally available tools and supports, are both accessed by students and implemented by educators throughout administration. Instructions on how students access tools and supports during the assessment must be clear. Training materials should be provided to ensure educators administer the assessment with fidelity, while supporting the needs of all students.</p> <p>Vendors should address any access needs for specific subpopulations (including students with significant cognitive disabilities, students in Spanish immersion programs, and students who are blind or visually impaired) within this section, ensuring that construct-irrelevant barriers are identified and minimized as applicable.</p> <p>Vendors must provide a comprehensive list of all supports and accommodations for students with disabilities and English learners. Vendors must also provide a list of any tools or supports available to all students during the assessment.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾</p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>	

**Criterion 5: Consequences and Uses**

The assessment provides data to differentiate instruction based on performance on Indiana Academic Standards and to inform educational decision-making.

Research Questions	Evidence Required
How are the scores from the assessment intended to be used?	The vendor must articulate the intended purpose(s) and uses(s) of the assessment scores. Intended purposes and uses of scores should match test design and be research-based.
Are scores and reports useful for educators and parents to inform educational decision-making?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The vendor must provide evidence of reports generated through the delivery of the assessment.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports must provide data classifying student achievement (proficiency) related to the 2023 Indiana Academic Standards following each administration.</li> <li>Reports may provide data regarding student growth following each administration.</li> <li>Reports must be timely analyses of student performance.</li> <li>Reports must be available at the student level, class level, grade level, and school level at a minimum. Preference is given to reporting solutions that support aggregation and disaggregation of data based on additional filters (e.g., subpopulations of students).</li> </ul> </li> <li>The vendor must provide examples of training/resources that support educators in connecting provided data with educational action.</li> <li>The vendor must provide interpretive guides (or similar materials) for educators and parents.</li> <li>The vendor must provide examples of resources that guide educators' understanding of results and directly support data-driven implementation of appropriate mathematics interventions.</li> <li>The vendor may provide examples of instructional resources or other tools that support mathematics intervention, if available.</li> </ul> <p>If educators are required to participate in the scoring process, the vendor must provide evidence of appropriate training and monitoring that ensures reliability and validity of scores.</p>
Adequacy of Evidence: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail Committee Comments:	

**Criterion 6: Predictive Measure**

The assessment provides data to predict student performance on Indiana's statewide accountability assessment. This criterion is applicable for grades 3-8 assessments only.

*Note for schools: If interim assessment data is used by educators to inform instruction and remediation, interim assessments as a predictive measure should more consistently under-predict student performance. Predictive measures are highly impacted by the way that data is used in a school or corporation. Interim/formative assessment information should decrease the relationship between formative performance and summative performance because this information should be used to remediate.*

Research Questions	Evidence Required	Expectations for Acceptability
Can test scores/results provide predictive measures for student performance on Indiana's ILEARN assessment for students in grades 3-8?	The vendor must provide a formal predictive study showing how the assessment predicts student performance on ILEARN, Indiana's statewide summative assessment for grades 3-8. Predictive study results should be available to Indiana schools upon request.	<p>The predictive study may be completed internally but must be confirmed by a third party.</p> <p>The study must clearly describe the intervals considered. The predictive study may indicate predictive measures for assessments taken at different times (e.g., first quarter versus third quarter).</p> <p>Sample size (n) must be greater than or equal to 1500 and should closely represent student characteristics and distribution of characteristics across Indiana.</p> <p><b>Preferred:</b> The predictive study should indicate the probability of students achieving different proficiency levels on ILEARN based on their interim assessment score. For example, students scoring 250-275 are 80% likely to achieve At Proficiency and 20% likely to achieve Approaching Proficiency on ILEARN.</p> <p><b>Alternative:</b> Other research-based predictive models may be used. Assessment products without data from Indiana may use models that link available data but may NOT simply provide a linking study.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: <span>Not Scored ▾</span></p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>		