



Dear Educator,

**I am writing to request your help** on a research study through the Center for Accessible Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Systems (ATLAS) at the University of Kansas. In 2016, we received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to create new, innovative science assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities and students who are performing significantly below grade level. The project, Innovations in Science Map, Assessment, and Report Technologies (I-SMART) is led by five states (Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma).

I-SMART's ultimate goal is to make assessment more reflective of multidimensional science learning, more accessible and engaging for students who may struggle with learning, and more useful for teachers in planning science instruction. In the next project phase, we plan to pilot the science assessments to see if the content and questions are high quality.

**How you can help.** We are seeking teachers in grades 3 through 12 who will have students complete two new science testlets (short sets of related test questions) through the software Kite Student Portal. These assessments will be related to the science content standards that you are already teaching. Our staff will automatically assign I-SMART tests to those students who are eligible to take DLM alternate assessments. Teachers just need to make sure the First Contact Survey and Personal Needs and Preferences Profile are complete for their students and that students are rostered to science in the Kite system. Participation in the I-SMART pilot is voluntary and does not replace the DLM alternate assessment.

After the student takes the I-SMART testlets, you will be asked to complete a survey that collects information about your student's science academic skills, opportunity to learn science content, and overall experience with the I-SMART testlets. The survey will also include questions about your basic background demographics. We anticipate that administering the testlets and completing the survey will take approximately 60 minutes. All results and information obtained through the assessment and survey will be strictly confidential.

The pilot will be open from January 22 – March 1, 2019. By participating, your student will receive extra practice responding to and engaging with science assessment content. Your involvement will help us improve instruction and assessment for students. If you are interested, please visit <https://ismart.works/pilot> to view an introductory video, user guide, and parent notification letter.

Thank you for your consideration.

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