

Alabama Health Education Standards and DESSA Crosswalk

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Although Alabama's Department of Education does not provide statewide guidance to support the social and emotional competencies (SEC) of students and adults, their health education standards broadly align with CASEL's five-domain competencies. The DESSA is a standardized, norm-referenced behavior rating scale that aligns with CASEL's five-domain competencies. The DESSA assesses the social and emotional competencies of students in kindergarten to grade 12. It can be completed by teachers, guardians, and out of school time staff in about 5-8 minutes. The DESSA is strength-based; the items focus on positive social and emotional skills. This document outlines the alignment between Aperture's competencies applicable Alabama Health Education Standards.

The DESSA is organized into subscales that provide information about eight social and emotional competencies. These competencies include:

1. **Self-awareness:** a child's realistic understanding of their strengths and limitations and consistent desire for self-improvement;
2. **Social-awareness:** a child's capacity to interact with others in a way that shows respect for their ideas and behaviors, recognizes their impact on them, and uses cooperation and tolerance in social situations;
3. **Self-management:** a child's success in controlling their emotions and behaviors, to complete a task or succeed in a new or challenging situation;
4. **Goal-directed behavior:** a child's initiation of and persistence in completing tasks of varying difficulty;
5. **Relationship skills:** a child's consistent performance of socially acceptable actions that promote and maintain positive connections with others;
6. **Personal responsibility:** a child's tendency to be careful and reliable in their actions and in contributing to group efforts;
7. **Decision making:** an approach to problem solving that involves learning from others and from their previous experiences, using values to guide action, and accepting responsibility for decisions;
8. **Optimistic thinking:** an attitude of confidence, hopefulness, and positive thinking regarding themselves and their life situations in the past, present, and future.

Table 1. Alignment Between Alabama’s Health Education Standards and Aperture’s Competencies

Note. SA = Self-Awareness, SM = Self-Management, SO = Social Awareness, RS = Relationship Skills, DM = Decision-Making, GB = Goal-Directed Behavior, PR = Personal Responsibility, OT = Optimistic Thinking. This alignment applies across all grade bands.

Standard	Definition	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Anchor Standard 2	Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.		X	X	X				
Anchor Standard 4	Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.	X		X	X	X			
Anchor Standard 5	Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.		X			X	X		
Anchor Standard 6	Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.		X	X			X		X
Anchor Standard 7	Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.					X	X	X	



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