Iowa State SEL Standards and DESSA Crosswalk

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Iowa's State Department of Education outlines standards for student social and emotional learning in kindergarten to grade 12 that are aligned with CASEL's five-domain competencies. Schools and districts in Iowa might consider measuring student social and emotional competence growth using the DESSA. The DESSA is a standardized, norm-referenced behavior rating scale that 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. The DESSA can be used to inform how a student is progressing with their social and emotional development. This crosswalk outlines the overlap between Aperture's competencies measured by the DESSA and Iowa state social emotional learning 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. Overview of Alignment of Aperture's Competencies to Iowa State Standards

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 table uses the standards outlined for students in grades 6 to 8; however, the DESSA alignment is consistent for all grade bands.

Competency	Target	Definition	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Self-Awareness	Identifying Emotions	Recognize and communicate one's emotions to others in a healthy way.	X			X				
		Identify situations that evoke an emotional response in self and others.	X		X					
		Summarize how thoughts and emotions affect behavior.	X	X						
	Accurate Self-Perception	Identify personal qualities and interests.	X							X
		Explain the abilities needed to achieve high quality results and outcomes.	X							X
		Categorize personal skills, strengths and interests the learner wants to develop.	X							X
		Select priorities for personal improvement that builds on strengths.	X							X
		Differentiate how personal identity influences choices and outcomes.	X				X			
	Self-Confidence	Express positive beliefs in one's ability to achieve and contribute.	X		X					X
		Examine conditions that influence confidence in oneself.	X	X						
		Critique his/her abilities that lead to high quality results and outcomes.	X							X

Competency	Target	Definition	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Self-Management	Impulse Control	Identify productive self-regulating strategies to process emotions and reframe thoughts and behaviors.	X	X						
		Demonstrate productive self-regulating strategies to manage emotions and reframe thoughts and behaviors	X	X			X			
	Stress Management	Identify stressors that result in physical or emotional responses		X	X					
		Identify healthy practices that can minimize response to stress and promote physical and mental wellness.		X	X					
		Communicate the need for assistance to manage stress as needed.		X			X			
	Self-Discipline and Self-Motivation	Demonstrate the ability to stay actively engaged and persist in activities.		X			X	X		
		Demonstrate ability to delay immediate gratification.		X			X		X	
		Adapt for and overcome obstacles by demonstrating perseverance.		X			X	X		
		Demonstrate the ability to take initiative.		X			X		X	
		Demonstrate ability to work independently.		X					X	
	Goal Setting	Create, monitor, adapt, and evaluate goals to achieve success in school and life.		X				X		X
		Identify internal and external resources necessary to overcome obstacles in meeting goals.		X	X		X			
		Reflect on process and outcome of goal setting.		X				X		
	Organizational Skills	Select the appropriate supplies and tools needed for completion of tasks and/or projects.		X			X		X	
		Manage materials, space, time and responsibilities effectively.		X				X	X	

Competency	Target	Definition	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Social Awareness	Perspective-Taking and Empathy	Demonstrate awareness of other people's emotions, experiences and perspectives through a cross-cultural lens.			X	X				
		Identify and interpret social cues for how others feel and respond constructively.		X	X	X				
		Predict others' feelings and reactions		X	X	X				
		Recognize and validate another person's feelings and perspective.		X	X	X				
	Appreciating Diversity and Respect for Others	Recognize one's explicit and implicit biases and how they affect our understanding and judgment of others.			X	X	X			
		Demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of differences and respect for human dignity.	X	X	X					
		Identify contributions of various social and cultural groups.			X	X				
		Demonstrate willingness to integrate diverse points of view.			X					
		Demonstrate consideration for the feelings, wishes, rights, and traditions of others.		X	X	X				
		Work effectively with those who are similar and different from oneself.		X	X	X				
	Civic Engagement	Recognize the role of service in the functioning of our society.			X		X		X	
		Identify strategies to improve the community.			X				X	X
		Demonstrate advocacy skills.	X		X		X			
		Model active engagement in family, school, and community projects and events.	X		X		X			

Competency	Target	Definition	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Relationship Skills	Communication	Interpret and infer how facial expressions, body language, gestures, and tone of voice impact interactions.	X		X	X				
		Use facial expressions, body language, gestures, words, and tone of voice to interact effectively with others in a variety of ways.	X	X		X				
		Attentively listen and respond to the needs, wants, and ideas of others.		X	X	X				
		Deliver and receive compliments, feedback, and constructive critique, and respond appropriately.		X	X	X				
		Recognize impact of cell phone/tablet or other electronic forms on social interactions.	X			X			X	
	Social Engagement	Initiate and engage in social interactions with peers and adults.		X	X	X				
		Analyze social situations and environments, including social media, and respond in ways that build/sustain relationships.			X	X		X		
		Recognize that the same norms and behaviors for face-to-face interactions apply to interactions through social media.				X	X		X	
	Relationship Building	Identify and demonstrate personal qualities and decisions that contribute to a healthy relationship		X	X	X				
		Identify and apply strategies for handling relationships that are not safe, healthy, or positive.	X	X		X				
		Express interest and appreciation for others.			X	X				X
		Create and maintain positive and supportive relationships with adults and learners.			X	X				X
		Demonstrate advocacy skills for self and others when necessary.	X	X		X				
	Teamwork	Demonstrate collaborative skills with others (listen, encourage, acknowledge opinions, compromise, reach consensus).		X	X	X				
		Acknowledge others' diverse strengths and contributions to a group/team effort.			X	X				X
		Demonstrate graciousness in winning and losing.				X	X			X

Competency	Target	Definition	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Responsible Decision-Making	Identifying Problems	Identify a variety of problems and decisions that affect learners' lives.			X		X			
		Define characteristics of safe and unsafe situations, including online safety.			X		X		X	
	Analyzing Situations and Solving Problems	Generate multiple solutions for solving problems in a variety of situations.			X		X	X		
		Consider the wellbeing of self and others when making decisions.			X	X	X			
		Differentiate between situations where the learner can problem solve without assistance and situations that require assistance.			X		X		X	
		Identify when peer pressure, social, and/or cultural norms affect decision making.				X	X		X	
		Apply choice and accept responsibility for outcome.			X		X		X	
	Evaluating and Reflecting	Reflect on the positive and negative consequences of decisions for oneself and others.			X		X			X
		Reflect on past decisions, apply learning to new situations.	X				X		X	
		Reflect on choices and decisions and possible impact on the future.		X	X		X			
		Examine how personal emotional states contribute to or detract from the ability to problem solve.	X	X			X			
	Ethical Responsibility	Demonstrate awareness of equity, justice, fairness, and respect in actions that positively impacts school and community					X		X	X
		Identify ways decisions are based on greater good even if not good for them individually.					X	X		X
		Accept ownership for actions		X			X		X	

APERTURE EDUCATION

Aperture Education empowers over 3,000 schools and out-of-school-time programs across North America to measure, strengthen, and support social and emotional competence in K-12 youth and educators. This system enables education leaders to make strategic, data-based decisions about SEL within their organizations. The Aperture system includes the DESSA suite of strength-based assessments, CASEL-aligned intervention strategies, and robust reporting, all in one easy-to-use digital platform. Aperture has supported over one million students in their social and emotional growth and continues to develop innovative solutions to bring the whole child into focus. To learn more, visit www.ApertureEd.com.