

Michigan Social and Emotional Learning Competencies and DESSA Crosswalk

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Michigan's State Department of Education outlines social and emotional learning competencies and indicators for students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 that align to the competencies outlined by the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Schools and districts in Michigan might consider measuring student growth across these competencies using the DESSA. The DESSA is a CASEL-aligned, 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. This crosswalk outlines the overlap between Aperture's competencies measured by the DESSA and Michigan's social and emotional learning competencies and indicators.

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 Michigan Social and Emotional Learning Indicators with Example DESSA Items

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 3-5; however, the DESSA alignment is consistent for all grade bands.

Competency	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Self-Awareness	Demonstrate an awareness of their emotions	X							
	Demonstrate an awareness of their personal traits, including their strengths and interests	X	X						X
	Demonstrate awareness of their external supports	X				X			
	Demonstrate a sense of personal responsibility	X				X	X	X	
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show an awareness of their personal strengths? (SA) • Focus on a task despite a problem or distraction? (SM) • Use available resources (people or objects) to solve a problem? (DM) • Take steps to achieve goals? (GB) • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events? (PR) • Express high expectations for themselves? (OT) 								

Competency	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Self-Management	Identify and manage their emotions and behavior constructively	X	X			X			
	Demonstrate honesty and integrity		X			X		X	
	Set, monitor, adapt, and evaluate goals to achieve success in school and life		X				X		X
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how they were feelings? (SA) • Perform the steps of a task in order? (SM) • Show good judgment? (DM) • Take steps to achieve goals? (GB) • Follow rules? (PR) • Express high expectations for themselves? (OT) 								

Competency	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Social Awareness	Demonstrate awareness of other people's emotions and perspectives	X		X	X				
	Demonstrate consideration for others and a desire to positively contribute to the school and community			X	X	X			
	Demonstrate an awareness of different cultures and a respect for human dignity			X	X				
	Can read social cues and respond constructively			X	X	X			
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions to clarify what they did not understand? (SA) • Respect another person's opinion? (SO) • Express concern for another person? (RS) • Show good judgment? (DM) 								

Competency	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Relationship Skills	Use positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others			X	X	X			
	Develop and maintain positive relationships			X	X				X
	Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in helpful ways		X	X	X	X			
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think before they acted? (SM) • Forgive someone who hurt or upset them? (SO) • Respond to another person's feelings? (RS) • Show good judgment? (DM) • Say good things about their classmates? (OT) 								

Competency	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Responsible Decision-Making	Uses personal, ethical, safety, and cultural factors in making decisions	X				X			
	Develop, implement, and model effective decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations		X			X	X		
	Play a developmentally appropriate role in classroom management and positive school climate			X		X	X	X	
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give an opinion when asked? (SA) • Stay calm when faced with a challenge? (SM) • Contribute to group efforts? (SO) • Show the ability to decide between right and wrong? (DM) • Take an active role in learning? (GB) • Show care when doing a project or schoolwork? (PR) 								



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