

Pennsylvania Career Ready Skills and DESSA Crosswalk

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Pennsylvania outlines career readiness skills for students in kindergarten to 12th grade. Schools and districts in Pennsylvania might consider using the DESSA to measure students' social and emotional competence growth. The DESSA is a standardized, norm-referenced behavior rating scale that aligns with CASEL's competencies. The DESSA assesses students' skills across these competencies for 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 items on the DESSA are strength-based; they focus on positive skills and behaviors. 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 Pennsylvania's Career Ready Skills.

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 Pennsylvania’s Career Ready Skills

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 6-8; however, the DESSA alignment is consistent for all grade bands.

Standard	Indicator	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Self-Awareness & Self-Management	Communicate in ways that demonstrate respect for the feelings of self and others.		X	X	X				
	Adapt one’s communication with regard to context.		X		X	X			
	Adapt one’s communication with regard to the needs of others.		X	X	X				
	Describe how expressing emotions may impact others.	X	X	X					
	Explain how personal strengths align to career pathways.	X					X		X
	Contribute in group/team activities utilizing one’s strengths.		X	X					
	Identify characteristics of effective teams and how one contributes to team efforts.		X	X					
	Identify strategies to secure support based on needs and wants.	X	X	X					
	Determine relevant information to assist in selection of coping skills.		X				X		
	Persevere in adverse situations.		X				X		X
	Identify and manage common distractors and the means to overcome them.		X				X		
	Analyze and evaluate alternative strategies in meeting goals.		X				X	X	

Standard	Indicator	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Establishing and Maintaining Relationships	Demonstrate empathy in a variety of settings and situations.		X	X	X				
	Identify situations in which stereotyping, discrimination, and prejudice affects self and others.			X	X				
	Acknowledge diverse points of view.			X	X	X			
	Demonstrate a variety of strategies for collaborating with others.		X	X	X				
	Acknowledge others' abilities and strengths.		X	X	X				
	Seek to understand the perspectives of others.			X	X				
	Explain how clarifying questions builds better understanding between others.	X		X	X				
	List different styles of expression and their impact on others.			X	X				
	List different modes of expression and their impact on others.		X	X	X				
	Explain how to respond in a pro-active manner to peer pressure on self and others.		X	X			X		
	Model respectful ways to respond to others' points of views.			X			X		X
	Use conflict resolution strategies to resolve differences in group settings.			X			X		X
	Demonstrate receptiveness to others' feedback when resolving differences in opinions.		X	X	X				
	Explain how conflict can escalate behaviors.		X	X	X				
	Demonstrate flexibility in one's thinking or actions when resolving a conflict (e.g., ask for suggestions, think of alternatives; adapt to unexpected changes).		X	X	X				

Standard	Indicator	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Social Problem-Solving Skills	Analyze the consequences of a decision prior to making the decision.		X			X		X	
	Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of a decision.		X			X			
	Evaluate how external influences can impact decision making.		X	X		X			
	Apply models of decision making. (e.g., authoritative, consensus, democratic, individual) relevant to making a decision.		X			X		X	
	Analyze how various group dynamics affect one's feelings.		X	X		X			
	Analyze social situations to determine strategies to manage feelings and behavior.		X	X		X			
	Consider others' points of view.	X	X			X			
	Distinguish strategies others may use when framing a perspective.			X		X			
	Explain how individual, societal and cultural differences may impact perspective.			X		X			



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