

# Alaska Employability and Healthy Life Skills and DESSA Crosswalk

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Alaska's Department of Education outlines content standards for Employability and Skills for a Healthy Life for students in kindergarten to grade 12. Schools and districts in Alaska might consider using the DESSA to measure student growth across these content standards. 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 DESSA is strength-based; the items focus on positive 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 Alaska’s Employability Skills 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 indicators outlined for students in grades 6-8. Benchmarks and indicators are available for each grade band on Indiana’s Department of Education’s website.

Competency	Indicator	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Self-Awareness & Self-Management	A.1 - understand that a person’s well-being is the integration of health knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors	X					X		
	A.2 - understand how the human body is affected by behaviors related to eating habits, physical fitness, personal hygiene, harmful substances, safety, and environmental conditions					X			
	A.3 - understand and identify the causes, preventions, and treatments for diseases, disorders, injuries, and addictions					X			
	A.4 - recognize patterns of abuse directed at self or others and understand how to break these patterns			X		X			
	A.5 - use knowledge and skills to promote the well-being of the family		X	X					X
	A.6 - use knowledge and skills related to physical fitness, consumer health, independent living, and career choices to contribute to well-being					X			X
	A.7 - understand the physical and behavioral characteristics of human sexual development and maturity					X		X	
	A.8 - understand the ongoing life changes throughout the life span and healthful responses to these changes					X			
	B.1 - demonstrate an ability to make responsible decisions by discriminating among risks and by identifying consequences						X		X
	B.2 - demonstrate a variety of communication skills that contribute to well-being		X						X
	B.3 - assess the effects of culture, heritage, and traditions on personal well-being			X		X			
	B.4 - develop an awareness of how personal life roles are affected by and contribute to the well-being of families, communities, and cultures	X		X					X
	B.5 - evaluate what is viewed, read, and heard for its effect on personal well-being			X		X			
	B.6 - understand how personal relationships, including those with family, friends, and co-workers, impact personal well-being					X			X
	C.1 - resolve conflicts responsibly		X	X					
	C.2 - communicate effectively within relationships		X	X	X				
	C.3 - evaluate how similarities and differences among individuals contribute to relationships			X	X				

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Competency	Indicator	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Self-Awareness & Self-Management	C.4 - understand how respect for the rights of self and others contributes to relationships		X	X	X				
	C.5 - understand how attitude and behavior affect the well-being of self and others		X	X	X				
	C.6 - assess the effects of culture, heritage, and traditions on well-being			X					
	D.1 - make responsible decisions as a member of a family or community		X	X					
	D.2 - take responsible actions to create safe and healthy environments		X	X					
	D.3 - describe how public policy affects the well-being of families and communities			X					
	D.4 - identify and evaluate the roles and influences of public and private organizations that contribute to the well-being of communities			X					
	D.5 - describe how volunteer service at all ages can enhance community wellbeing			X					
	D.6 - use various methods of communication to promote community well-being		X	X	X				

Competency	Indicator	SA	SM	SO	RS	DM	GB	PR	OT
Employability	A.1 - develop and maintain a work ethic necessary for success in the workplace that includes honesty, integrity, dependability, punctuality, self-discipline, initiative, reliability, accuracy, productivity, respect, and perseverance	X				X	X		
	A.2 - understand how to apply skills and academic knowledge in a variety of work settings		X			X		X	
	A.3 - understand the process for seeking employment including résumé development, application completion, interview skills, and appropriate dress for work settings					X	X	X	
	A.4 - understand the process for developing self-employment opportunities including marketing studies, business plan development, and managing business finances					X	X	X	
	A.5 - understand how an individual job fits into the overall organization and how the organization fits into the overall economy						X		
	A.6 - understand the need for safe practices in workplaces					X			
	A.7 - understand employer and employee rights and responsibilities					X	X		
	B.1 - identify and appreciate personal interests, aptitudes, abilities, and priorities	X					X		
	B.2 - identify possible career options, considering both employment and self-employment, and understand how changes in the workplace affect career choice					X	X		X
	B.3 - use labor market information to identify occupational and economic trends and opportunities, and evaluate possible career options					X	X		
	B.4 - identify education and/or training needed for career options and advancement, and develop a career plan					X	X	X	
	B.5 - identify resources available to support education and training related to career possibilities					X	X	X	



Aperture Education empowers over 8,000 unique schools, over 156,000 educators and more than 2 million students across North America to measure, strengthen, and support social and emotional competence. The powerful data districts receive enables education leaders to take strategic action about SEL within their organizations. The Aperture System includes the DESSA suite of strength-based assessments, which is lauded by researchers for its high standards of reliability and validity. Educators also appreciate its ability to easily and quickly identify each student's personal social and emotional strengths and areas of needed support. Aperture partners with industry curriculum leaders to deliver research-based, CASEL™-informed intervention strategies to bolster specific areas of needed growth. With robust reporting in one easy-to-use system, Aperture is favored in districts nationwide. To learn more, visit [www.ApertureEd.com](http://www.ApertureEd.com).