Sample Parent Letter:

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Social-emotional skills are so important to every student’s success in school and in life. This includes skills such as working hard on challenging tasks, making good decisions, and working well in groups. The process by which students learn these skills is called socialemotional learning (SEL).

High school students need strong social emotional skills. In fact, when employers were asked what skills they look for in a job applicant, half of the skills were social and emotional skills. We want to make sure that high school students in (insert district/ school or state name) have these skills by the time they graduate.

To help our high school students develop SEL skills, we are using an SEL self-report survey called the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA – SSR). The DESSA-SSR targets 8 key social emotional areas. Students complete the DESSA-SSR on their own, and immediately get feedback on their strengths and their areas for growth. Then, students can use the feedback to choose the skills they want to improve and to set goals for themselves. The goal is for students to learn new strategies that will help them be successful.

The DESSA-SSR isn't about getting a score. It is about helping your student better understand their own social and emotional skills and then improving the skills that will help them be successful and happy.

Sample DESSA-SSR questions include:

• How often did you take steps to reach a goal?

• How often did you think about positive things?

• How often did you take an active role in your learning?

• How often did you show good judgment?

We hope that by learning about the DESSA-SSR you will have a better idea of the kinds of skills we are helping students learn at school, and that you will continue to help your student practice these skills at home. The DESSA is published by Aperture Education. Our (insert district/school or state name) chose the DESSA in part because of Aperture Education’s strong commitment to respecting and protecting your student’s privacy. Thousands of schools nationwide use the DESSA and trust Aperture Education with protecting their students’ data. Aperture Education will never share your child’s data with a third party. To view additional information about the DESSA or the privacy policy, visit: <https://apertureed.com/privacy-policy/>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact (insert name) at (insert number or email).

Sincerely, School official