

# DESSA UPDATE



## Introducing the DESSA 2 for the 2024-2025 school year!



With the release of the newly updated educator-completed DESSA 2 and DESSA 2 mini for **grades K-8**, please review the following information to ensure our DESSA program continues running as smoothly as possible. While utilizing the newest version of the DESSA should be relatively seamless in terms of collecting and analyzing data, the following steps will be important for organizing your plans and communicating with your team and stakeholders.

*Note:* Our account will automatically transition to the DESSA 2 form on August 8th, 2024.

## KEY CHANGES

- The full DESSA 2 form is shorter with only **40 items**
- The DESSA 2 measures **6 competencies**
  - Optimistic Thinking
  - Self-Awareness
  - Self-Management
  - Social Awareness
  - Relationship Skills
  - Responsible Decision Making
- Updated **normative sample from 2023-2024**
- Due to updated items, norms, and competencies, you cannot compare competency-specific scores between the original DESSA and the DESSA 2, but you can still compare Social-Emotional Composite (SEC) scores (*for example, while viewing the Impact Report, you can only compare the overall T-score between ratings that used the original DESSA and ratings that used the DESSA 2*)
- Based on educator feedback, items that were reportedly difficult to answer have been removed and new items that measure core social, emotional, and behavioral skills such as collaborative problem solving, positive identity development, and collective goal-setting have been added
- Parent/Guardian ratings are not currently supported with the DESSA 2 update

## ACTIONS

- Update any materials that refer to the original DESSA competencies and items
- Share the updated DESSA 2 forms with raters and other stakeholders in preparation for ratings
- With the shorter full DESSA 2 form, you may wish to have raters complete additional assessments for students that would benefit from tailored instruction and support with competency-specific data

## WHAT'S STAYING THE SAME?

- The DESSA 2 and DESSA 2 mini are nationally standardized, norm-referenced strength-based behavior rating scales that meet or exceed standards for reliability and validity.
- The DESSA 2 mini will still have 4 alternate forms.
- Scoring, interpretation, and reporting will remain the same.
- Educators that have already completed training do not need to be re-trained.

Learn more here: [\*The Only Resilience System with Post-Pandemic Norms: DESSA 2 Coming Soon\*](#)



Questions? Please reach out to your  
DESSA Program Administrator or  
Aperture Success Team Member