



APERTURE EDUCATION

Getting Started with the DESSA

Session Objectives

- Identify key components of the DESSA assessments in order to support educators with implementation.
- Learn best practices for completing ratings and interpreting the scoring result categories.
- Explore features of the Educator Portal.

Opening Activity



In the
chat...

**What hopes do you have for your
school community this year?**

WHAT IS THE DESSA?

HOW TO COMPLETE RATINGS

THE EDUCATOR PORTAL

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

OPTIMISTIC CLOSURE

AGENDA

What is the DESSA?

An evidence-based social and emotional competency assessment to support student growth.

Jair Abbott

DESSA 2 mini Form A

Student ID: 3459684 [Minimize Instructions](#)

This form describes a number of behaviors seen in some students. Read the statements that follow the phrase: **During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...** and click on the button underneath the word that tells how often you saw the behavior. Please answer each question carefully. There are no right or wrong answers. If you wish to change your answer, just click on the button for your new choice. Please do not skip any items.

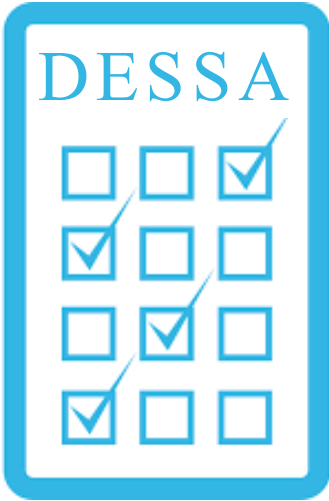
A "Never" response can mean that you have not observed the student engaging in that behavior or that the student does not engage in that behavior.

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1. cooperate with others to solve a problem?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. accept responsibility for their actions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. believe they can achieve their goals?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. work to develop their personal strengths?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. keep trying when unsuccessful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. show appreciation of others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. encourage others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. gather information before making an important decision?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

DESSA: The Basics



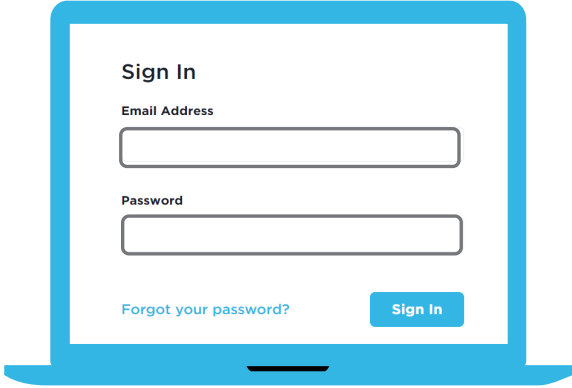
CASEL-aligned



Strength-based behavior rating scale, K-12 editions



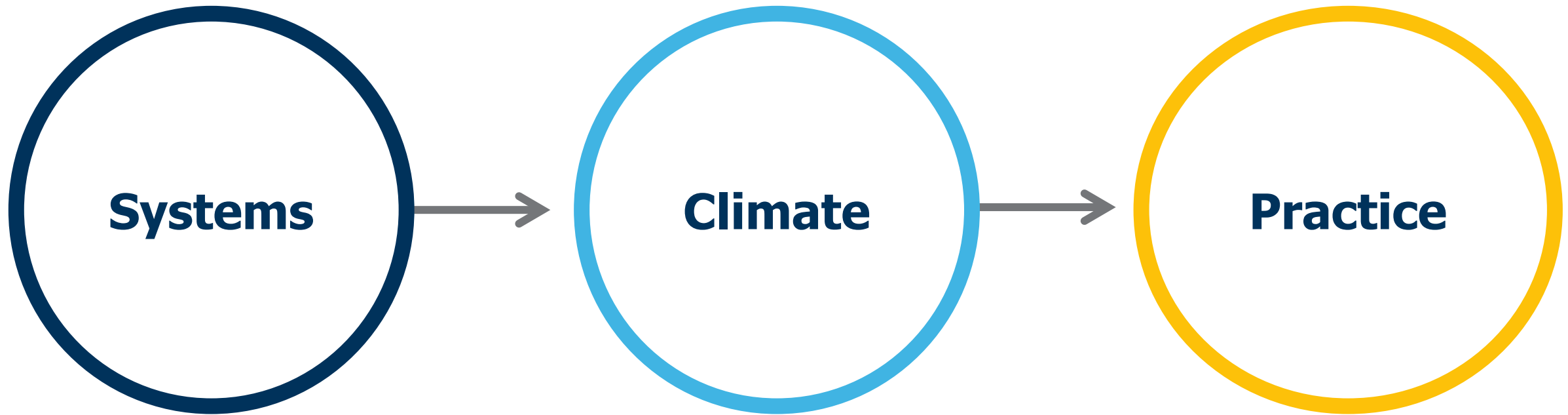
Site-based implementation schedule



Educator Portal: DESSA ratings & data reports, resources, support

Why Measure Social and Emotional Growth?

To Drive Meaningful Change and Evaluate Outcomes



Measuring Student Growth: The Basics



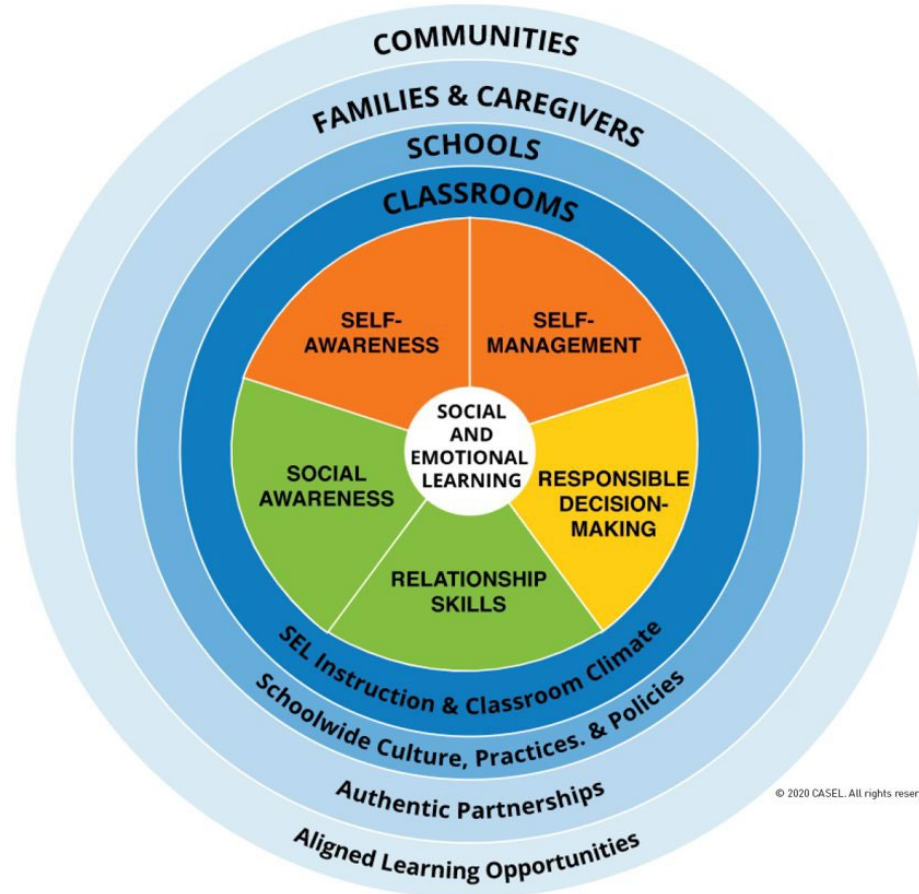
Group Share



How can measuring students' social and emotional competence be of value to your role?



CASEL & DESSA Alignment



DESSA Assessments



Standardized




Norm-Referenced



Strength-Based


**K-12th
Educators
Complete**

**DESSA-Mini
Universal Screener**



1 MIN

DESSA Assessment



5 MIN

K-8

DESSA 2 mini

Universal Screener
Educators Complete

4 Forms



Score:
Social-Emotional Total (SET)

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Almost
Always

1. cooperate with others to solve a problem?

2. accept responsibility for their actions?

3. believe they can achieve their goals?

9th-12th

DESSA-HSE mini

Universal Screener

Educators Complete

4 Forms



Score:

**Social-Emotional Total
(SET)**

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the youth...

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Almost
Always

1. show an awareness of their personal strengths?

2. stay focused despite a problem or distraction?

3. respect another person's opinion?

DESSA 2

K-8

**Assessment of 6
competency areas**

Educators Complete

Scores:

**Social and Emotional
Composite (SEC)
6 competency areas**

Quintin Abberley

DESSA 2

Student ID: 307084438 [Expand Instructions](#)

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1. show an awareness of their personal strengths?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. accept that making mistakes is part of learning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. get along well with different types of people?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. stay focused despite a distraction?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. describe the emotion they were feeling?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. view negative outcomes as a learning opportunity?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. ask questions when they did not understand something?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. respect a person's right to have a different perspective?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

DESSA-HSE

9th-12th

Assessment of 6 competency areas

Educators Complete

Scores:

Social and Emotional Composite

(SEC)

6 competency areas

Dominic Abbott

DESSA-HSE

Student ID: 3464032 [Expand Instructions](#)

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the youth...	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1. remember important information?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. keep trying when unsuccessful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. serve an important role at home or school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. speak about positive things?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. look forward to classes or activities at school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. get along well with different types of people?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. try to do their best?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. take an active role in learning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. say good things about their classmates?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. show respect for others in a game or competition?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. ask to take on additional work or responsibilities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

DESSA Results

T-scores are categorized into 3 descriptive ranges

<p>Need for Instruction</p> <p>T-Scores: 40 and below</p>	<p>Typical</p> <p>T-Scores: 41 – 59</p>	<p>Strength</p> <p>T-Scores: 60 and above</p>
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Reflects a lack of **skill acquisition**

DESSA: Continuum of Scores

Norms

16%

68%

16%

**NEED FOR
INSTRUCTION**

T Y P I C A L

STRENGTH



UP TO 40

41

→59

60+

DESSA Uses

Universal
Screening

Progress
Monitoring

Outcomes
Measurement

School
Leaders

Inform school improvement planning

Support funding requests

DESSA Reflections



After learning about the DESSA, what questions, curiosities, or epiphanies do you have?



Questions



Curiosities



Aha!

Think-Pair-Share

How might a strength-based approach improve:

- Conversations about student support?
- Culture and climate?
- Engagement with families?



WHAT IS THE DESSA?

HOW TO COMPLETE RATINGS

THE EDUCATOR PORTAL

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Tips for Completing Ratings

1. Be intentional in observation
2. Get familiar with DESSA items
3. Be strategic
4. Think broadly
5. Stick to YOUR facts
6. Plan your rating time



Dior Dillon

DESSA 2 mini Form A

Student ID: 3462111 [Minimize Instructions](#)

This form describes a number of behaviors seen in some students. Read the statements that follow the phrase: **During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...**and click on the button underneath the word that tells how often you saw the behavior. Please answer each question carefully. There are no right or wrong answers. If you wish to change your answer, just click on the button for your new choice. Please do not skip any items.

A "Never" response can mean that you have not observed the student engaging in that behavior or that the student does not engage in that behavior.

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3. believe they can achieve their goals?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. work to develop their personal strengths?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. keep trying when unsuccessful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. show appreciation of others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. encourage others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. gather information before making an important decision?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Practice: Completing the DESSA mini

Directions:

- On your own, complete the rating on yourself or with someone in mind
- Consider areas of strength based on your responses

Competency Connection

Based on your knowledge of the DESSA, which competency represents your greatest strength?

Which competency represents your greatest area of need?

How can you use your strengths to improve your area of need?

DESSA



Self-Awareness



Self-Management



Social Awareness



Relationship Skills



Responsible Decision Making



Optimistic Thinking

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Aperture System User Roles



**PROGRAM
ADMIN**

Can generate and view all reports for the program, sites, and students.



**SITE
LEADER**

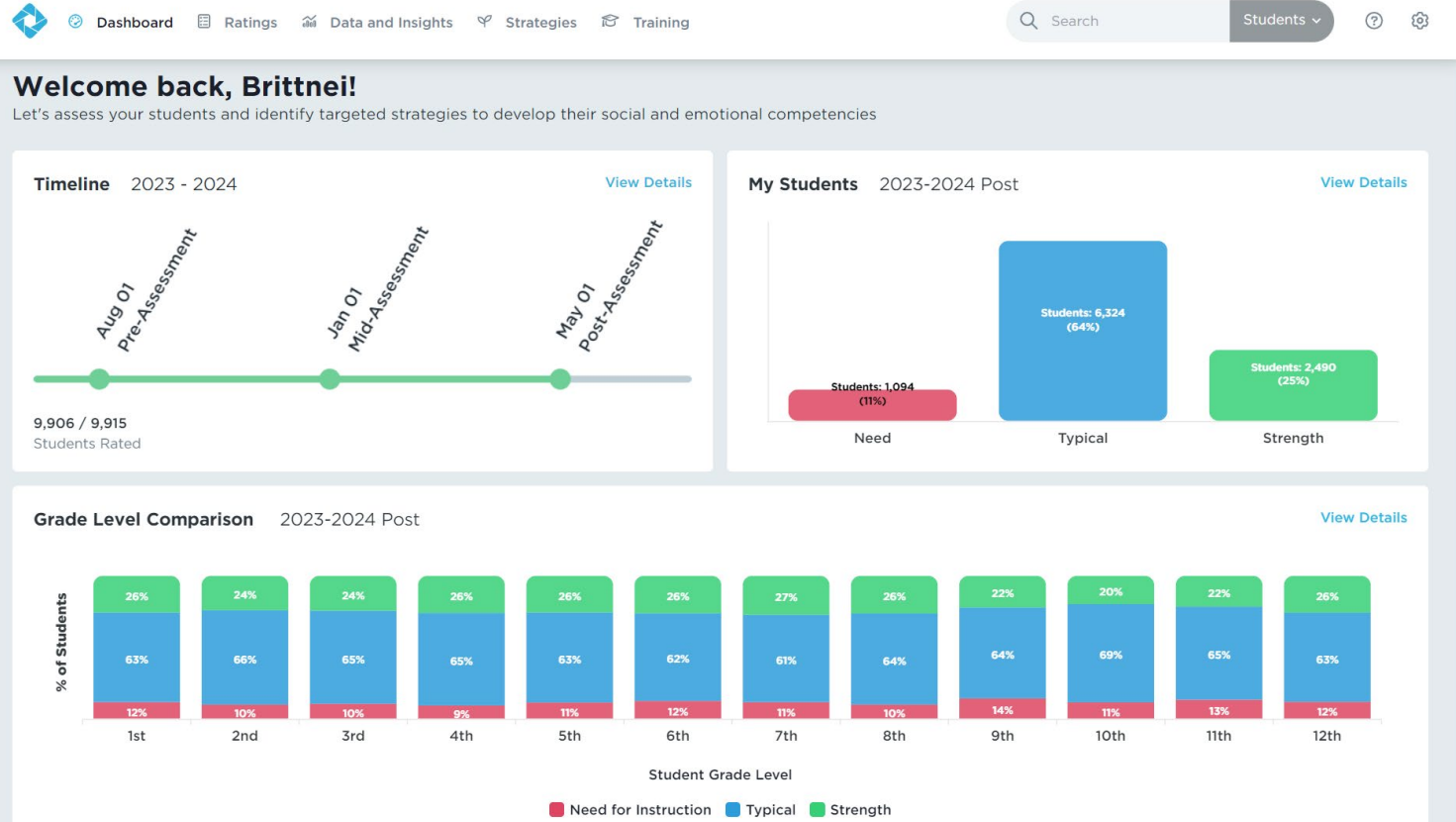
Can generate and view reports from their site only.



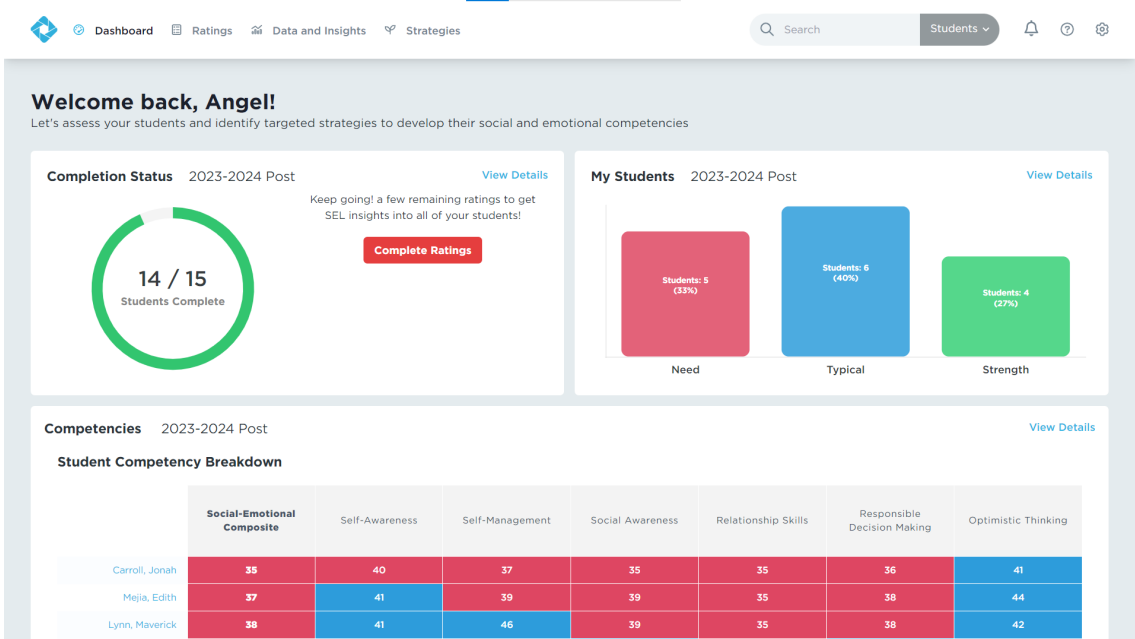
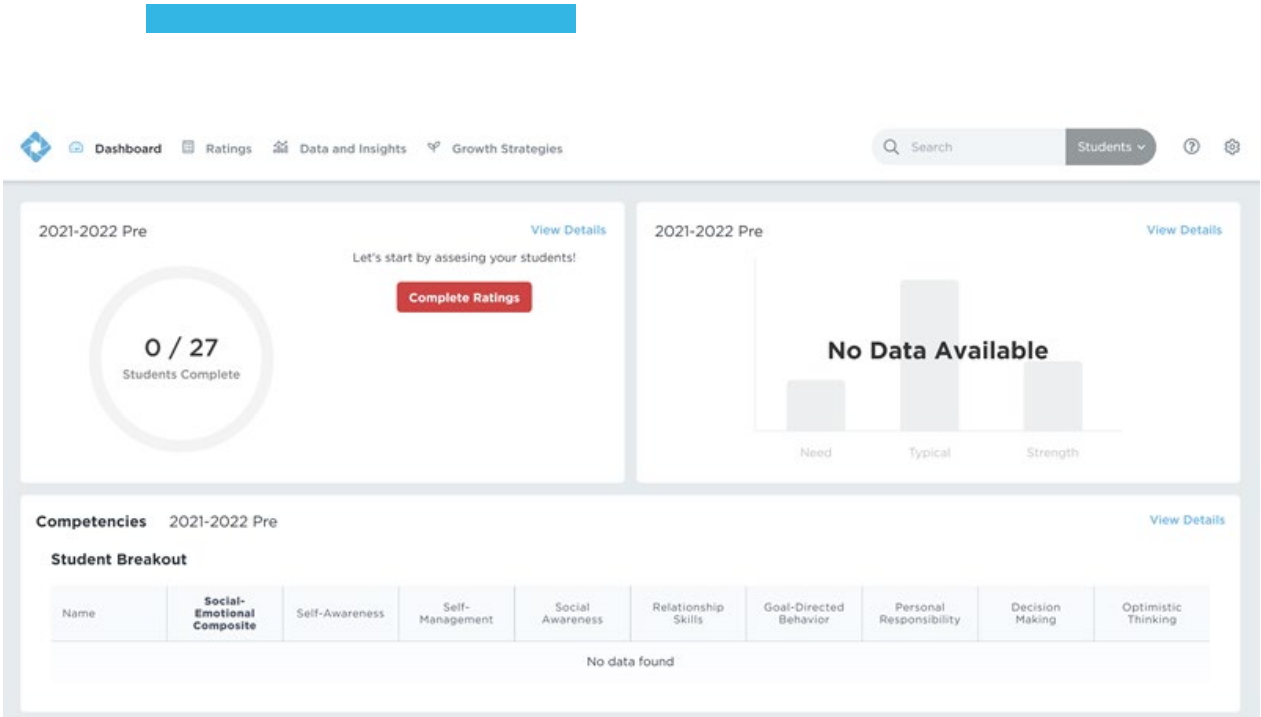
EDUCATOR

Can generate and view reports for their assigned students.

Site Leader Dashboard



Educator Dashboard



Educator Dashboard

Complete Ratings

- Ratings tab shows assigned roster of students.
- Answer all DESSA 2 mini questions.
- Educators can skip up to 2 questions on DESSA 2

The screenshot displays the DESSA 2 mini Form A interface. On the left, a sidebar shows a list of students with their IDs and status (checked or unchecked). The main area shows the form for student Aniya Abbott (ID: 3461283). The form includes instructions and a table for rating behaviors.

Students [Add Student](#)

- 43 Ricky Aaron ✓
- 28 Quintin Abberley
- Stanly Abbet
- 55 Aniya Abbott ✓
- 69 Dominic Abbott ✓
- 48 Malayah Abbott ✓
- 29 Payton Acosta
- 33 Crawford Adamowicz
- 46 Aydin Adams ✓
- 53 Chandler Adkins ✓

Aniya Abbott **DESSA 2 mini Form A**
Student ID: 3461283 [Minimize Instructions](#)

This form describes a number of behaviors seen in some students. Read the statements that follow the phrase: **During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...** and click on the button underneath the word that tells how often you saw the behavior. Please answer each question carefully. There are no right or wrong answers. If you wish to change your answer, just click on the button for your new choice. Please do not skip any items.

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3. believe they can achieve their goals?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. work to develop their personal strengths?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. keep trying when unsuccessful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. show appreciation of others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. encourage others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. gather information before making an important decision?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

View Mode: [Table](#)

[I am unable to rate this student](#) [Submit](#)

Data & Insights

- Real-time results
- Interactive, filterable charts
- Downloadable reports

The screenshot shows a web interface for 'My Students' with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Dashboard', 'Ratings', 'Data and Insights', 'Strategies', and 'Training'. A search bar and a 'Students' dropdown menu are also present. On the left, a sidebar lists various reports and completion reports. The main content area features a 'My Students' section with a bar chart showing the distribution of student assessment scores across three descriptive ranges: 'Need for Instruction' (11%), 'Typical' (64%), and 'Strength' (25%).

My Students - Data updated hourly

This report shows the distribution of student assessment scores across the descriptive ranges.

Filters ^

Students

Sites All | **Grades** All | **Raters** All | **Race** All | **Academic** All | **Custom Group**

Ratings

Rating Window 23-24 Post | **Forms** All | **Start Date** | **End Date**

Apply | **Reset Filters**

Descriptive Range	Number of Students	Percentage
Need for Instruction	1,051	11%
Typical	6,385	64%
Strength	2,472	25%

Number & Percentage of Students

Descriptive Range ⓘ

DESSA-aligned Strategies



Dashboard

Ratings

Data and Insights

Strategies

Training

Search

Students



Universal Strategies

Foundational Practices to create a positive classroom



DESSA-aligned Instructional Strategies

Optimistic Thinking



Self-Awareness



Self-Management



Social Awareness



Relationship Skills



Responsible Decision Making



Training



Aperture Training

My Dashboard

Brittnei M



Aperture System Academy

Choose Your Learning Experience




Self-Paced Courses
Interactive learning experiences designed to introduce you to the Aperture System, analyzing your data, and acting on it to support students' social and emotional learning.



On-Demand Video Library
Self-service, short on-demand videos that offer users a chance to learn about specific topics.



Live Sessions & Office Hours
Live web sessions where Aperture trainers engage learners with in-depth content and support deeper usage of the Aperture System.



24/7 Support Portal
A searchable resource library that contains FAQs, user guides and manuals, and articles with answers to commonly asked questions.



Tier 2 Intervention Programs
Multi-week Tier 2 Intervention Programs designed for targeted small groups of students who need intensive competency building.

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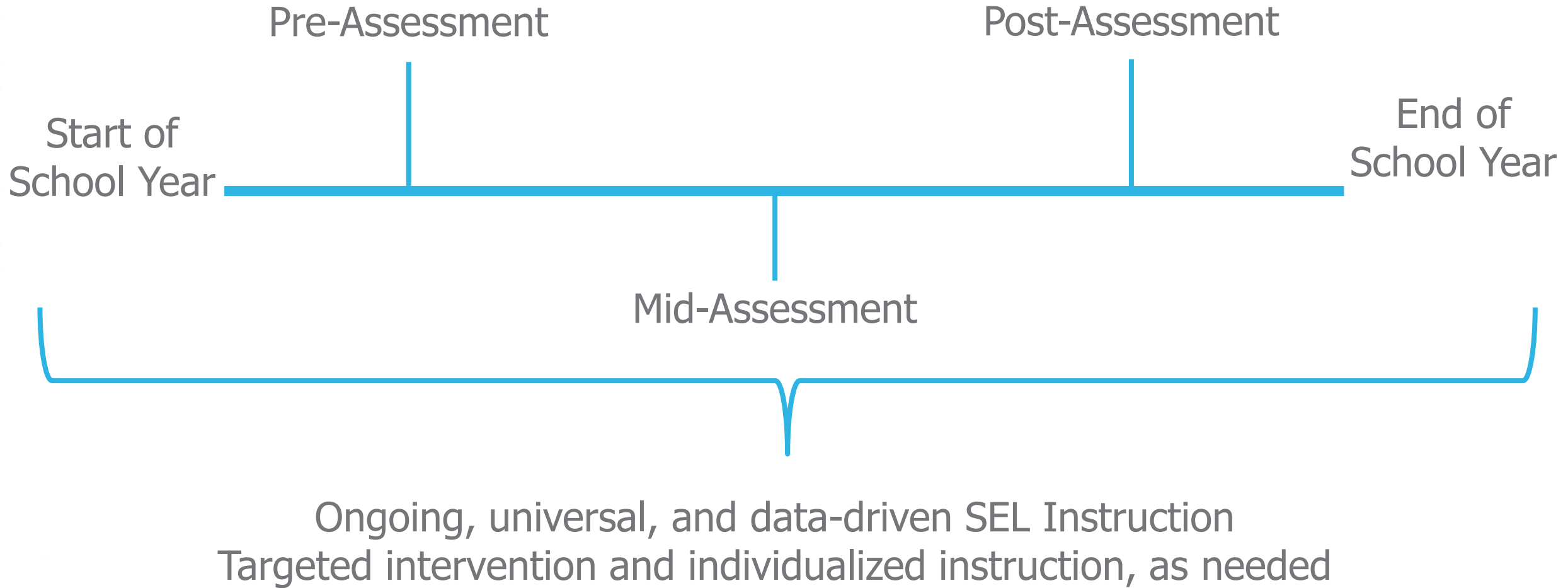
THE EDUCATOR PORTAL

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

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Implementation Overview



Keep in Mind



Implementation Planning Resource

School Leader Implementation Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Ensure that teachers have training on the DESSA. Training should include completing the DESSA-mini and the DESSA, as well as how to review and understand results .
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Designate a rating window for your first rating between 4-6 weeks after school start.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Provide time for teachers to complete DESSA-mini ratings. For example, some sites designate a common time/day or period to ensure all ratings are completed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Schedule and provide time for teachers to complete DESSA ratings for students who demonstrate a need for instruction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Create a process and coordinate the review of DESSA-mini results at school, grade, class levels.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Schedule time to review DESSA results.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Schedule mid-year ratings for DESSA mini and DESSA. Schedule a reminder to teachers 4-6 weeks prior so they are prepared to complete their ratings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Schedule end-of-year ratings. Schedule a reminder to teachers 4-6 weeks prior so they are prepared to complete their ratings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Schedule time to review, reflect on, and share results with stakeholders.

Implementation Planning Resource

Teacher Planning for DESSA Implementation Checklist

- 1. Attend and complete the Introduction to the Aperture Systems for Educators Training and Analyzing Data in the Aperture Systems Educators Training.
- 2. Become familiar with the DESSA-mini and DESSA items. You might also consider rating someone you know (or a fictional character) for practice.
- 3. Plan your observations strategically- what activities provide opportunities to observe the skills included in the DESSA? (e.g., building in small-group activities gives students the opportunity to cooperate, contribute to a group, etc.)
- 4. Make sure you have blocked time to complete your ratings- your school SEL team might have a schoolwide schedule or may provide a 'window' of time to complete ratings. Be sure you dedicate time for completing your ratings.
- 5. Schedule time to review your classroom DESSA-mini results.
- 6. Schedule time to complete DESSA ratings for students who demonstrate a need for instruction.
- 7. Schedule time to review DESSA results for the students you rated.
- 8. Use the DESSA results to guide classroom, group, or individual student SEL instruction (more information about how to do this is included in this guide).



Next Steps: Analyzing Data in the Educator Portal



System Setup



Getting Started with the DESSA



First Rating Period



Analyzing Data in the Educator Portal



Utilize data at district, school, and classroom levels



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Optimistic Closure

Based on your takeaways, what is one way the DESSA System will help improve your practice?

