[Suggested Letter from School District to Parents about the DESSA 2]

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We are thrilled to let you know about an exciting program taking place in your child’s classroom this school year! Over two decades of research has helped us understand the important role social and emotional skills play in each child’s success in school, in the community, and, eventually, in higher education and the workplace. Skills such as demonstrating self-control, persisting at challenging tasks, making good decisions, and working well in groups are all necessary to being successful students and adults. To support our students in developing these skills that will help them become successful and responsible adults, we will be implementing a life skills program throughout the school district.

As part of this program, our teachers will be using a tool called the DESSA 2. This tool asks teachers to assess how often a student has demonstrated specific life skills in the past month.

Sample DESSA 2 questions include:

* How often did the student keep trying when unsuccessful?
* How often did the student show appreciation of others?
* How often did the student prepare for school activities or upcoming events?
* How often did the student cooperate with others to solve a problem?

The purpose of the DESSA is to identify which life skills and strengths your child has already learned and what skills they might still need to develop. Once our teachers identify the skills their students still need to learn, they will teach those skills using <lesson plans that accompany the DESSA/a curriculum known as INSERT NAME>. Our goal is to ensure that your child is continuously developing the skills they need for lifelong success.

While the DESSA is just one component of our program this year, we want to make sure that you are informed of our use of this instructional tool. We believe that the information gathered from the DESSA will be beneficial to your child’s overall success both inside and outside of the classroom.

The DESSA 2 is published by Aperture Education, a Riverside Insights company. Our district chose the DESSA 2 in part because of Aperture Education’s strong commitment to respecting and protecting your child’s privacy. Hundreds of school districts and afterschool programs nationwide utilize the DESSA 2 and trust Aperture Education with protecting their students’ data. Aperture Education will never share your child’s data with a third party. We also chose Aperture Education because they offer a “parent portal” on their website that provides resources, tips, and strategies to parents on supporting their child’s development. To view additional information about the DESSA 2, the privacy policy, or the parent portal, visit <https://info.apertureed.com/parent-portal>

If you would like your child to OPT-OUT of this assessment, please contact <NAME> at <PHONE NUMBER AND/OR EMAIL> to discuss your concerns and to learn more about the assessment.

Thank you,

<NAME> <TITLE>
<ORGANIZATION>