Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We are thrilled to announce an exciting opportunity in your child's school this year! Over two decades of research has helped us understand the important role social-emotional skills play in each student's success in and outside of school and in life. Skills such as demonstrating self-control, persisting at challenging tasks, making good decisions, and working well in groups are all necessary to be successful students and adults.

To support our students in developing these essential positive skills, we will implement a strength-based observation tool and assessment process to build on students' self-efficacy and help them persevere when faced with challenges.

As part of this process, our teachers will utilize a strength-based social-emotional observation tool called the DESSA 2 for grades K-8 and the DESSA-HSE (High School Edition) for grades 9-12. Teachers will use this observation tool to assess to what degree each student has demonstrated specific skills and growth over time.

**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?

We are also using the DESSA High School Student Self-Report (DESSA HSE-SSR), which engages students in reflecting on their own social-emotional strengths.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and our district chose the DESSA System partly because of Aperture Education's strong commitment to respecting and protecting your student's privacy. Aperture Education will never share your child's data with a third party.

We have amplified our attention to this work for students and adults and to support our students in developing these essential skills to reach their fullest potential and flourish and thrive.

We are excited to implement the DESSA System this school year! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Below are some resources for your review regarding the DESSA.

* [**Aperture Education's Parent Portal**](https://info.apertureed.com/parent-portal)
* [**DESSA Parent FAQ**](https://info.apertureed.com/hubfs/DESSA-Parent-FAQ.pdf)

Sincerely,