

About the DESSA

Supporting Student Resilience and Wellbeing with Strength-Based Assessments for Lifelong Success

This year, a student in your care will be assessed by their teacher using the DESSA System, a suite of research-based screening and assessment tools for K-12 students. These assessments are designed to inform schools' instructional decisions and ensure that all students are developing foundational skills necessary for academic success, college and career readiness, and a positive school culture.

The DESSA measures your student's grasp of important skills that will help them grow and succeed throughout their school years and after they graduate from high school. These skills include taking responsibility for their actions, working well with others, and more.

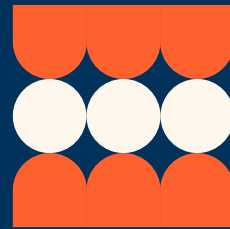
The skills measured by the DESSA can easily be taught and learned by students of all ages and are listed below:



Optimistic
Thinking



Self-management



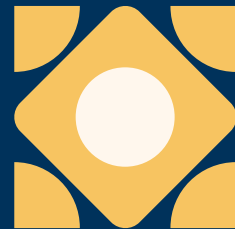
Relationship Skills



Social Awareness



Self-Awareness



Responsible
Decision-making

What is so important about these skills?

These skills are known as social, emotional, and behavioral skills and have been found to have a strong relationship with success in academics, positive engagement in school activities, and mental wellbeing. They are also some of the top skills that colleges and employers look for as they recruit.

The DESSA gives teachers and counselors an understanding of which of these skills are strengths for your student, and which ones they need further instruction in. They can then tailor their instruction for your student to help them build these skills.

One important thing to know about the DESSA is that it is a strength-based assessment. This means it highlights positive behaviors, helps students identify things they are already good at, and helps them leverage their strengths to grow in other areas. For example, if a student has strong Self-Management skills, but needs more support building their Relationship Skills, teachers can help that student use their goal-setting skills to improve their relationship skills.

What kind of questions does the DESSA ask?

Great question! The DESSA will ask teachers to assess behaviors they see in the classroom.

Sample DESSA 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?

How is my child's data used?

Your student's DESSA data will be used by school/organization staff, teachers, and administrators to make decisions about the type of support they need in the classroom. We have a strong commitment to respecting and protecting your child's privacy. Hundreds of school districts and afterschool programs nationwide utilize the DESSA and trust us with ensuring student data privacy. Data is never shared with a third party.

How can I learn more about supporting these skills at home?

If you are curious to learn more about the skills measured by the DESSA, or want to work on any of the skills with your child at home, you can find more information and activities at <https://info.apertureed.com/parent-portal>

