

Alabama Course of Study: Health Education and DESSA Crosswalk

February 2025

The 2019 [Alabama Course of Study: Health Education](#) draws on the most current knowledge to provide the framework for the health education program in Alabama's public schools. It lists the knowledge and skills that should be mastered at each grade level, with the goal of producing health-literate students who are equipped to experience a healthy lifestyle for the rest of their lives.

The DESSA suite of assessments measures key social and emotional competencies essential for student success now and into the future. The DESSA assessments span kindergarten through 12th grade and can be completed by educators, students, and parents or guardians. The assessments are nationally standardized, norm-referenced, strength-based behavior rating scales, measuring the positive skills, behaviors, and mindsets necessary for students to thrive.

This crosswalk highlights the alignment between select Alabama Course of Study: Health Education Anchor Standards and DESSA assessment items. It demonstrates how the DESSA assessments can be used by districts and schools to support students to understand and develop optimal health for life.

Alignment between Select Alabama Course of Study: Health Education Anchor Standards and DESSA Items

Interpersonal Communication	
Anchor Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.	
<i>Concept Thread</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to others• Encourage others• Do nice things for people• Show appreciation for others• Get along well with different types of people• Interact positively with classmates• Good at making and keeping friends
Emotions & Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize their emotions• Describe the emotion they were feeling• Respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways• Help make their class a place where everyone can learn• Make others feel welcome or included• Stand up for a friend or classmate

Conflict Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve conflicts positively • Recognize others' emotions • Cooperate with others to solve a problem • Ask for advice when needed
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Decision-Making	
Anchor Standard 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.	
<i>Concept Thread</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for advice when needed • Feel comfortable asking for help when they don't understand something • Update their thinking as they learn more about something • Do the right thing in a difficult situation • Gather information before making an important decision • Take action to solve problems

Goal-Setting	
Anchor Standard 6: Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.	
<i>Concept Thread</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set goals for themselves • Persist to achieve a goal • Believe they can achieve their goals • Take action to solve problems
Problem-Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe they can overcome setbacks • Ask for advice when needed • Feel comfortable asking for help when they don't understand something • Seek out challenging tasks

Self-Management	
Anchor Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.	
<i>Concept Thread</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
Monitor Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events • Do the right thing in a difficult situation • Accept responsibility for their actions • Expect that they will be successful



The DESSA System from Aperture Education: A Riverside Insights Company is a student resilience system that helps educators measure and strengthen social, emotional, and behavioral skills to reduce challenges that interfere with learning. The DESSA universal screening and supplemental assessments are widely used, practical, evidence-based measures of social and emotional competence of students in grades K-12. These powerful data analytic tools enable educators to identify trends, validate curriculum effectiveness, and drive positive academic and well-being outcomes for students. Robust reporting in the DESSA System provides insights for educators and staff to proactively differentiate instruction using DESSA-provided instructional strategies and tiered intervention resources. The DESSA System's strength-based approach is grounded in resilience theory and designed to bring the whole child into focus. To learn more, visit www.ApertureEd.com.