

Alaska Employability Standards and DESSA Crosswalk

February 2025

Proficiency in achieving [Alaska's Employability standards](#), revised March 2016, is fundamental to creating an employable individual. These employability standards are a critical part of student learning. They ensure Alaska students have the skills and knowledge necessary to be good citizens, effective parents, productive workers, and most of all, life-long learners.

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 now and in the future.

This crosswalk highlights the alignment between the Employability Content Standards and DESSA assessment items. It demonstrates how the DESSA assessments can be used by districts and schools to teach students to apply their skills and knowledge in a variety of settings to create a satisfying and productive life.

Alignment between Alaska Employability Content Standards and DESSA Items

A. A student should be able to develop and be able to use employability skills in order to effectively make the transition from school to work and lifelong learning.	
<i>A student who meets the content standard should:</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
1) develop and maintain a work ethic necessary for success in the workplace that includes honesty, integrity, dependability, punctuality, self-discipline, initiative, reliability, accuracy, productivity, respect, and perseverance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accept responsibility for their actions• Do the right thing in a difficult situation• Take action to solve problems• Listen to feedback so they can improve• Motivate themselves when they don't want to do something• Stay focused despite a distraction• Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events• Work carefully on projects and schoolwork• Express high expectations for themselves• Work to develop their personal strengths• Seek out things that challenge them• Set goals for themselves• Persist to achieve a goal

<p>2) understand how to apply skills and academic knowledge in a variety of work settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust their behavior to match different settings • Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior • Make positive contributions to their class, school, or community • Adapt well to new situations • Feel comfortable being themselves in different situations • Demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people • Show a willingness to update their thinking as they learn more about something
<p>3) understand the process for seeking employment including résumé development, application completion, interview skills, and appropriate dress for work settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events • Gather information before making an important decision • Work to develop their personal strengths • Work carefully on projects or schoolwork • Adjust their behavior to match different settings • Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior • Speak positively about their future potential • Express high expectations for themselves
<p>4) understand the process for developing self-employment opportunities including marketing studies, business plan development, and managing business finances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events • Work carefully on projects or schoolwork • Ask questions when learning new things • Take action to solve problems • Set goals for themselves • Expect that they will be successful • Believe they can achieve their goals
<p>5) understand how an individual job fits into the overall organization and how the organization fits into the overall economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make positive contributions to their class, school, or community • Believe their contributions to a group or team matter • Believe working with others leads to greater success • Feel comfortable asking for help when they don't understand something

6) understand the need for safe practices in workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior • Accept responsibility for their actions
7) understand employer and employee rights and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior • Accept responsibility for their actions

B. A student should be able to identify career interests and plan for career options.	
<i>A student who meets the content standard should:</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
1) identify and appreciate personal interests, aptitudes, abilities, and priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the things that matter most to them • List the personal traits that are most important to them • Recognize their strengths • Work to develop their personal strengths
2) identify possible career options, considering both employment and self employment, and understand how changes in the workplace affect career choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information before making an important decision • Think before they acted • Demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people • Update their thinking as they learn more about something
3) use labor market information to identify occupational and economic trends and opportunities, and evaluate possible career options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information before making an important decision • Think before they acted • Imagine a positive future for themselves
4) identify education and/or training needed for career options and advancement, and develop a career plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information before making an important decision • Take action to solve problems • Set goals for themselves • Believe they can achieve their goals • Seek out things that challenge them • Work to develop their personal strengths • Persist to achieve a goal • Expect that they will be successful
5) identify resources available to support education and training related to career possibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for advice when needed • Gather information before making an important decision • Update their thinking as they learn more about something • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events • Seek out challenging tasks • Speak positively about their future potential • Express high expectations for themselves



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.