

Iowa Employability Skills and DESSA Crosswalk

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Iowa has articulated a vision that each Iowa student will have the academic and social skills as well as the personal characteristics that empower them to be productive, caring, and competent citizens. As such, the state has outlined the [Iowa Employability Skills](#), published in 2007, which outline critical skills across curricular areas that will allow students to make the transition from the classroom to their roles as citizens and workers in an increasingly complex and unknown global market.

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 the Iowa Employability Skills and DESSA assessment items. This tool can be used by districts, schools, educators, and communities to help support students to develop the dispositions required for success in life beyond school.

Alignment between Iowa Employability Skills and DESSA Items

| ES.1 Communicate and work productively with others, incorporating different perspectives and cross cultural understanding, to increase innovation and the quality of work. | |
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| <i>Essential Skills</i> | <i>DESSA Items</i> |
| Work appropriately and productively with others. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooperate with others to solve a problem• Contribute to group or team goals• Make positive contributions to their class, school, and community• Believe their contributions to a group or team matter• Adjust their behavior to match different settings• Resolve disagreements positively |
| Use different perspectives to increase innovation and the quality of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people• Respect a person's right to have a different perspective• Compromise for the good of the group• Believe working with others leads to greater success• Listen to feedback to improve |

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| Use all the appropriate principles of communication effectively. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliment or congratulate others • Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior • Respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways • Listen to others • Ask questions when they don't understand something |
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| ES.2 Adapt to various roles and responsibilities and work flexibly in climates of ambiguity and changing priorities. | |
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| <i>Essential Skills</i> | <i>DESSA Items</i> |
| Adapt to varied roles, responsibilities, and expectations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust their behavior to match different settings • Accept responsibility for their actions • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events • Accept that making mistakes is part of learning |
| Work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt well to new situations • Show a willingness to update their thinking • Demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people • Believe they can overcome setbacks • Focus on the positive side of things • Expect they will be successful |
| Demonstrate appropriate risk-taking. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View negative outcomes as a learning opportunity • Gather information before making an important decision • Seek out things that challenge them |

ES.3 Demonstrate leadership skills, integrity, ethical behavior, and social responsibility while collaborating to achieve common goals.

| <i>Essential Skills</i> | <i>DESSA Items</i> |
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| Use interpersonal skills to influence and guide others toward a goal. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage others • Listen to others • Contribute to group or team goals • Make positive contributions to their class, school, and community • Help make their class a place where everyone can learn |
| Leverage the strengths of others to accomplish a common goal. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show appreciation for others • Cooperate with others to solve a problem • Compromise for the good of the group |
| Demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the right thing in a difficult situation • Accept responsibility for their actions • Express high expectations for themselves • Describe the things that matter most to them |
| Demonstrate mental, physical, and emotional preparedness to accomplish the task. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events • Gather information before making an important decision • Work carefully on projects or schoolwork • Stay focused despite distractions • Motivate themselves when they don't want to do something • Persist to achieve a goal |

ES.4 Demonstrate initiative and self-direction through high achievement and lifelong learning while exploring the ways individual talents and skills can be used for productive outcomes in personal and professional life.

| <i>Essential Skills</i> | <i>DESSA Items</i> |
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| Perform work without oversight. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivate themselves when they don't want to do something • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events • Take action to solve problems • Seek out things that challenge them |
| Use time efficiently to manage workload. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior |
| Assess mastery of skills. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize their strengths • Work to develop their personal strengths • Listen to feedback so they can improve • Ask questions when they did not understand something |
| Set and achieve high standards and goals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set goals for themselves • Express high expectations for themselves • Keep working until they achieve a goal • Believe they can achieve their goals • Believe they can overcome setbacks • Expect that they will be successful |
| Engage in effective problem solving process. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information before making an important decision • Take action to solve problems • Cooperate with others to solve a problem • Ask questions when learning new things • Update their thinking as they learn more about something |

| ES.5 Demonstrate productivity and accountability by producing quality work. | |
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| <i>Essential Skills</i> | <i>DESSA Items</i> |
| Deliver quality job performance on time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work carefully on projects or schoolwork • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events • Express high expectations for themselves |
| Demonstrate accountability for individual performance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept responsibility for their actions • Listen to feedback so they can improve • Work to develop their personal strengths • Accept that making mistakes is part of learning • View negative outcomes as a learning opportunity • Show a willingness to update their thinking |



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.