

Michigan's Social and Emotional Learning Competencies and Indicators and DESSA Crosswalk

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The Michigan Department of Education [Early Childhood to Grade 12 Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Competencies and Indicators](#), published in 2017, presents five core competencies related to social and emotional learning, and includes a rationale for each. It aims to help support a well-rounded education that teaches to the whole child.

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. The six competencies measured by the DESSA, their abbreviations, and their definitions are listed here:

- *Self-Awareness (SA)*: The ability to understand emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence one's behavior; recognize strengths and limitations; and develop healthy identities and a sense of purpose.
- *Self-Management (SM)*: The ability to manage emotions and behaviors across different situations and environments and to demonstrate agency as one works to set and achieve personal and collective goals.
- *Social Awareness (SO)*: The understanding of social norms for behavior; the ability to empathize with, respect, and take the perspectives of others; and the feeling of connection and belonging with family, peers, schools, and community groups.
- *Relationship Skills (RS)*: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and positive relationships including effective communication, collaborative problem-solving, negotiating conflict, and demonstrating helpful and supportive behaviors.
- *Responsible Decision Making (RDM)*: The ability to make careful, reliable, and constructive choices about personal and social behavior that are appropriate across diverse situations; to consider the personal, social, and collective impact of one's actions; and to demonstrate curiosity and an open-mindedness to learning.
- *Optimistic Thinking (OT)*: The belief and demonstration of confidence, hopefulness, and positive thinking regarding oneself, others, and one's life situations in the past, present, and future.

This crosswalk highlights the alignment between the Michigan SEL Competencies and Indicators and DESSA assessment items across the six competencies. It demonstrates how the DESSA assessments can be used by districts and schools to ensure every Michigan student develops the skills necessary for school and life success.

Alignment between the Michigan SEL Competencies and Indicators and DESSA Items

Self Awareness	
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
1A. Demonstrate an awareness of their emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize their emotions (SA) Explain what caused their emotions (SA) Know how their emotions influence their behavior (SA) Can tell when their emotions make it hard to pay attention (SA)
1B. Demonstrate an awareness of their personal traits, including their strengths and interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize their strengths (SA) Describe the things that matter most to them (SA) Can list the personal traits that are most important to them (SA) Feel comfortable being themselves in different situations (SA)
1C. Demonstrate an awareness of their external supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel comfortable asking for help when they don't understand something (SA) Ask for advice when needed (RDM) Believe working with others leads to greater success (OT)
1D. Demonstrate a sense of personal responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to feedback so they can improve (SA) Seek out challenging tasks (OT) Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events (RDM) Accept responsibility for their actions (RDM)

Self-Management	
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
2A. Identify and manage their emotions and behavior constructively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think before they acted (SM) Can motivate themselves when they don't want to do something (SM) Can calm down when they're upset (SM) Stay calm when faced with a challenge (SM) Adapt well to new situations (SM) Work carefully on projects or schoolwork (SM)

2B. Demonstrate honesty and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the right thing in a difficult situation (<i>RDM</i>) Accept responsibility for their actions (<i>RDM</i>)
2C. Set, monitor, adapt, and evaluate goals to achieve success in school and life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set goals for themselves (<i>SM</i>) Contribute to group or team goals (<i>SM</i>) Keep working until they achieve a goal (<i>SM</i>) Keep trying when unsuccessful (<i>SM</i>) Adapt well to new situations (<i>SM</i>) Believe they can achieve their goals (<i>OT</i>) Express high expectations for themselves (<i>OT</i>) Imagine a positive future for themselves (<i>OT</i>)

Social Awareness	
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
3A. Demonstrate awareness of other people's emotions and perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize others' emotions (<i>SO</i>) Respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways (<i>SO</i>) Respect a person's right to have a different opinion (<i>SO</i>)
3B. Demonstrate consideration for others and a desire to positively contribute to the school and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help make my class a place where everyone can learn (<i>SO</i>) Make others feel welcome or included (<i>SO</i>) Make positive contributions to their class, school, or community (<i>SM</i>)
3C. Demonstrate an awareness of different cultures and a respect for human dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show appreciation for others (<i>SO</i>) Respect a person's right to have a different perspective (<i>SO</i>) Get along well with different types of people (<i>RS</i>) Demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people (<i>RDM</i>)
3D. Can read social cues and respond constructively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways (<i>SO</i>) Adjust their behavior to match different settings (<i>SO</i>) Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior (<i>SO</i>)

Relationship Skills	
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
4A. Use positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact positively with classmates (RS) • Get along well with different types of people (RS) • Listen to others (RS) • Compliment or congratulate others (RS) • Encourage others (RS)
4B. Develop and maintain positive relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good at making and keeping friends (RS) • Do nice things for people (RS)
4C. Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in helpful ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve conflicts positively (RS) • Cooperate with others to solve a problem (RS) • Stand up for a friend or classmate (RS) • Respect a person's right to have a different opinion (SO) • Compromise for the good of the group (RDM)

Responsible Decision Making	
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
5A. Uses personal, ethical, safety, and cultural factors in making decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the right thing in a difficult situation (RDM) • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events (RDM) • Accept responsibility for their actions (RDM)
5B. Develop, implement, and model effective decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information before making an important decision (RDM) • Ask questions when learning new things (RDM) • Ask for advice when needed (RDM) • Update their thinking as they learn something new (RDM) • Accept responsibility for their actions (RDM)

<p>5C. Play a developmentally appropriate role in classroom management and positive school climate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events (<i>RDM</i>) • Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior (<i>SO</i>) • Contribute to creating a positive learning environment (<i>SO</i>) • Help make their class a place where everyone can learn (<i>SO</i>)
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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.