

Nevada Social Emotional Learning Essential Skills and DESSA Items Crosswalk

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The [Nevada Social Emotional Learning Essential Skills](#) articulate the core social emotional skills that are needed for academic development and personal well-being. These SEL competencies and essential skills can help Nevada educators, schools, districts, and communities promote individual well-being, foster positive relationships, and create safe learning environments for all.

The DESSA suite of assessments measures key social and emotional competencies essential for student success now and into the future. The DESSA assessments span K-12 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:

- *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.
- *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.

This crosswalk highlights the alignment between the Nevada Social Emotional Learning Essential Skills and the DESSA assessment items. This tool demonstrates how Nevada districts and schools can use the DESSA assessments to ensure every Nevada student has developed the essential skills needed for success now and into the future.

Alignment Between the Nevada Social Emotional Learning Essential Skills and DESSA Items

Self-Awareness The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values, and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and opportunities for growth with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.	
<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
1. Develop personal interests and self-efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the things that matter most to them (SA) • List the personal traits that are most important to them (SA) • Work to develop their personal strengths (SA) • Express high expectations for themselves (OT) • Believe they can achieve their goals (OT) • Believe they can overcome setbacks (OT) • Expect that they will be successful (OT)
2. Identify emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize their emotions (SA) • Describe the emotion they were feeling (SA) • Explain what caused their emotions (SA) • Tell when their emotions make it hard to pay attention (SA)
3. Cultivate a growth mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept that making mistakes is part of learning (OT) • Speak positively about their future potential (OT) • View negative outcomes as a learning opportunity (OT) • Focus on the positive side of things (OT)

Self-Management

The abilities to understand and respond to one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, be motivated and practice self-determination to accomplish personal and collective goals.

<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
4. Regulate emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stay focused despite a distraction (SM)• Stay calm when faced with a challenge (SM)• Motivate themselves when they don't want to do something (SM)
5. Set and achieve goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set goals for themselves (SM)• Persist to achieve a goal (SM)• Contribute to group or team goals (SM)
6. Develop agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take action to solve problems (SM)• Adapt well to new situations (SM)• Make positive contributions to their class, school, or community (SM)• Seek out things that challenge them (OT)• Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events (RDM)

Social-Awareness

The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, across diverse backgrounds, cultures and contexts. This includes the capacities to feel compassion for others, understand social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school and community resources and supports.

<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
7. Recognize the emotions and perspectives of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize others' emotions (SO)• Respect a person's right to have a different perspective (SO)• Respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways (SO)

8. Demonstrate empathy and compassion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways (SO) • Make others feel welcome or included (SO) • Contribute to creating a positive learning environment (SO)
9. Practice gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show appreciation for others (SO)

Relationship Skills	
<p>The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities. This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.</p>	
<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
10. Communicate effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to others (RS)
11. Practice teamwork and collaborative problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate with others to solve a problem (RS) • Resolve conflicts positively (RS) • Get along well with different types of people (RS) • Compromise for the good of the group (RDM) • Believe my contributions to a group or team matter (OT) • Believe working with others leads to greater success (OT)
12. Seek and offer support when needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage their friends or classmates (RS) • Stand up for a friend or classmate (RS) • Do nice things for people (RS) • Compliment or congratulate others (RS)

Responsible Decision Making

The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across a variety of situations. This includes the capacities to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, as well as to weigh the benefits and consequences of one's own actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.

<i>Essential Skills</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
13. Cultivate curiosity and open-mindedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people (<i>RDM</i>) • Update their thinking as they learn more about something (<i>RDM</i>) • Ask questions when learning new things (<i>RDM</i>)
14. Make reasoned decisions and judgments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information before making an important decision (<i>RDM</i>) • Do the right thing in a difficult situation (<i>RDM</i>) • Ask for advice when needed (<i>RDM</i>)
15. Understand the impact of one's actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept responsibility for their actions (<i>RDM</i>) • Make positive contributions to their class, school, or community (<i>SM</i>) • Believe they can make a positive difference in the world (<i>OT</i>) • Believe their contributions to a group or team matter (<i>OT</i>)



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.