

Wisconsin Social and Emotional Learning Competencies and DESSA Crosswalk

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The [Wisconsin Social and Emotional Learning Competencies](#), published in 2018, outlines skills that are essential for personal, academic, and social success for all ages, and are connected to healthy relationships, mental wellness, and career success. These competencies are designed to help prepare students for their future by developing the skills necessary to be successful adults.

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 Wisconsin Social and Emotional Learning Competencies and DESSA assessment items across the six competencies. It is informed by the grade level competencies, and demonstrates how the DESSA assessments can be used by districts and schools to ensure every Wisconsin student successfully accesses educational opportunities and utilizes academic skills and knowledge.

Alignment between the Wisconsin SEL Competencies and DESSA Items

Emotional Development Understand and manage one's emotions	
<i>Competencies</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
No. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize their emotions (SA) • Describe the emotion they were feeling (SA) • Can adjust their behavior to match different settings (SO)
No. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what caused their emotions (SA) • Know how their emotions influence their behavior (SA)
No. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay calm when faced with a challenge (SM) • Can calm down when they are upset (SM) • Stay focused despite a distraction (SM)
No. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work carefully on projects or schoolwork (SM) • Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events (RDM) • Set goals for themselves (SM) • Persist to achieve a goal (SM) • Can motivate themselves when they don't want to do something (SM) • Believe they can achieve their goals (OT)
No. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize others' emotions (SO) • Respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways (SO) • Respect a person's right to have a different perspective (SO) • Show appreciation of others (SO)
No. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize others' emotions (SO) • Respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways (SO) • Respect a person's right to have a different perspective (SO) • Help make their class a place where everyone can learn (SO)

Self-Concept Develop positive self-identity and recognize self as a lifelong learner	
<i>Competencies</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
No. 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak positively about their future potential (OT) • Express high expectations for themselves (OT) • Seek out challenging tasks (OT) • Recognize their strengths (SA) • Listen to feedback so they can improve (SA) • Work to develop their personal strengths (SA) • Accept that making mistakes is part of learning (OT) • View negative outcomes as a learning opportunity (OT)
No. 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show a willingness to examine their beliefs and opinions (SA) • List the personal traits that are most important to them (SA) • Describe the things that matter most to them (SA) • Demonstrate a sense of who they are and what is important to them (SA)
No. 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make positive contributions to their class, school, or community (SM) • Expect that they will be successful (OT) • Express high expectations for themselves (OT) • Believe their contributions to a group or team matter (OT)
No. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set goals for themselves (SM) • Contribute to group or team goals (SM) • Keep working until they achieve a goal (SM) • Keep trying when unsuccessful (SM) • Adapt well to new situations (SM) • Believe they can achieve their goals (OT) • Express high expectations for themselves (OT) • Imagine a positive future for themselves (OT)

No. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek out challenging tasks (OT) • Believe they can overcome setbacks (OT) • Keep trying when unsuccessful (OT) • View negative outcomes as a learning opportunity (OT) • Accept that making mistakes is part of learning (OT) • Listen to feedback so they can improve (SA) • Take action to solve problems (SM) • Set goals for themselves (SM)
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Social Competence Establish and maintain positive relationships by respecting others, practicing social skills, and making responsible choices while recognizing and connecting to the community at large	
<i>Competencies</i>	<i>DESSA Items</i>
No. 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a sense of who they are and what is important to them (SA) • Respect a person's right to have a different perspective (SO) • Resolve conflicts positively (RS)
No. 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact positively with classmates (RS) • Get along well with different types of people (RS) • Demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people (RDM)
No. 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get along well with different types of people (RS) • Demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people (RDM) • Respect a person's right to have a different perspective (SO)
No. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact positively with classmates (RS) • Get along well with different types of people (RS) • Compliment or congratulate others (RS) • Encourage others (RS)
No. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to others (RS) • Good at making and keeping friends (RS)

No. 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt well to new situations (<i>SM</i>) • Adjust their behavior to match different settings (<i>SO</i>) • Agree to and follow expectations for their behavior (<i>SO</i>) • Listen to feedback so they can improve (<i>SA</i>)
No. 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact positively with classmates (<i>RS</i>) • Cooperate with others to solve a problem (<i>RS</i>) • Contribute to group or team goals (<i>SM</i>) • Believe their contributions to a group or team matter (<i>OT</i>) • Believe working with others leads to greater success (<i>OT</i>)
No. 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve conflicts positively (<i>RS</i>) • Cooperate with others to solve a problem (<i>RS</i>) • Compromise for the good for the group (<i>RDM</i>) • Stand up for a friend or classmate (<i>RS</i>) • Respect a person's right to have a different opinion (<i>SO</i>)
No. 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information before making an important decision (<i>RDM</i>) • Ask questions when learning new things (<i>RDM</i>) • Ask for advice when needed (<i>RDM</i>) • Update their thinking as they learn something new (<i>RDM</i>)
No. 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>) • Adapt well to new situations (<i>SM</i>) • Adjust their behavior to match different settings (<i>SO</i>)
No. 22	<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>) • Compromise for the good for the group (<i>RDM</i>)

No. 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel comfortable asking for help when they don't understand something (<i>SA</i>) • Stand up for a friend or classmates (<i>RS</i>) • Ask for advice when needed (<i>RDM</i>)
No. 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take action to solve problems (<i>SM</i>) • Make positive contributions to their class, school, or community (<i>SM</i>) • Make a positive difference in the world (<i>OT</i>) • Believe their contributions to a group or team matter (<i>OT</i>) • Cooperate with others to solve a problem (<i>RS</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.