

American School Counselors Association (ASCA) Standards and DESSA Crosswalk

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The ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success:K-12 College and Career Readiness for Every Student comprise of 35 standards students need to achieve academic success, college and career readiness and social/emotional development. The mindset and behavior standards identify and prioritize the specific attitudes, knowledge and skills that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of a school counseling program. The DESSA is a standardized, norm-referenced behavior rating scale for students in kindergarten to grade 12. It can be completed by teachers, guardians, and out of school time staff in about 5-8 minutes. The DESSA is strength-based; the items focus on positive skills.

This crosswalk serves to show at a glance how the DESSA can support a counselor in differentiating and evaluating instructional programs.

The DESSA is organized into subscales that provide information about eight social and emotional competencies. These competencies include:

1. **Self-awareness:** a child's realistic understanding of their strengths and limitations and consistent desire for self-improvement;
2. **Social-awareness:** a child's capacity to interact with others in a way that shows respect for their ideas and behaviors, recognizes their impact on them, and uses cooperation and tolerance in social situations;
3. **Self-management:** a child's success in controlling their emotions and behaviors, to complete a task or succeed in a new or challenging situation;
4. **Goal-directed behavior:** a child's initiation of and persistence in completing tasks of varying difficulty;
5. **Relationship skills:** a child's consistent performance of socially acceptable actions that promote and maintain positive connections with others;
6. **Personal responsibility:** a child's tendency to be careful and reliable in their actions and in contributing to group efforts;
7. **Decision making:** an approach to problem solving that involves learning from others and from their previous experiences, using values to guide action, and accepting responsibility for decisions;
8. **Optimistic thinking:** an attitude of confidence, hopefulness, and positive thinking regarding themselves and their life situations in the past, present, and future.

Table 1. Alignment of Aperture’s Competencies to the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success with Example DESSA items

Note. SA = Self-Awareness, SM = Self-Management, SO = Social Awareness, RS = Relationship Skills, DM = Decision-Making, GB = Goal-Directed Behavior, PR = Personal Responsibility, OT = Optimistic Thinking. This table uses the indicators outlined in the complete ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success K-12 College-Career and Life Readiness Standards for Every Student.

Standard	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	GB	PR	DM	OT
Category 1: Mindset Standards	M 2: Sense of Acceptance, respect support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment	X		X	X				
	M 5: Beliefs using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes		X			X		X	X
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> show an awareness of their personal strengths (SA) Seek Advice (DM) carry themselves with confidence (OT) express concern for another person (RS) 								

Standard	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	GB	PR	DM	OT
Category 2: Behavior Standards (Learning Strategies)	B-LS 3: Time management, organizational and study skills							X	
	B-LS 5: Media and technology skills to enhance learning		X					X	
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask questions to clarify what they did not understand (SA) stay calm when faced with a challenge (SM) work hard on projects (GB) use available resources (people or objects) to solve a problem (DM) 								

Standard	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	GB	PR	DM	OT
Category 2: Behavior Standards (Self-Management Skills)	B-SMS 1: Responsibility for self and actions	X							
	B-SMS 10: Ability to Manage transitions and accept change		X						
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> make accurate statements about events in their life (SA) do routine tasks or chores without being reminded (PR) adjust well to changes in plans (SM) act comfortable in a new situation (SM) 								

Standard	Indicators	SA	SM	SO	RS	GB	PR	DM	OT
Category 2: Behavior Standards (Social Skills)	B-SS 1: Effective Oral and written Communication skills and listening skills							X	
	B-SS 7: Leadership and teamwork skills to work effectively in diverse groups		X					X	
Example DESSA Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give an opinion when asked (SA) • Respect another person's opinion (SO) • act as a leader in a peer group (PR) take an active role in learning (GB) • Cooperate with peers or siblings (SO) 								