

Middle School DESSA

Student Self-Report

[Aperture Education](#) promotes the social and emotional competence of all children and youth in both schools and out-of-school time programs. We do this through the DESSA – a strength-based behavior rating scale that measures social and emotional skills of students in grades K-12. The DESSA can be completed by teachers, parents, and high school students. We are now developing a new version of the DESSA for middle school students to report on their own social and emotional skills and [we need your help!](#)

We are seeking [middle school students](#) (approx. 6th-8th grades) across the United States to complete the DESSA middle school self-report and basic demographic information about themselves. These ratings will be used to select the DESSA items that are the best indicators of positive outcomes for students. They will also be used to create the scoring norms that will enable districts, schools, and programs to compare their students' social and emotional skills to the skills typically demonstrated by students in the United States.

What your school or program will be asked to do:

- [Identify a site coordinator](#) to serve as our primary point of contact and to coordinate communication with parents (to obtain passive consent) and students.
- [Invite up to 50 middle school students to participate](#). Each student can provide 1 anonymous online rating of their own social and emotional skills.

To thank you for assisting us, each student will receive a \$10 Amazon gift card and your school or program will receive a \$100 honorarium* for coordinating this opportunity. Schools and programs that provide the maximum number of student ratings (50) will also receive 100 free student self-report licenses good for one school year upon release.

If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please contact Emily Parker at EParker@ApertureEd.com or Matt Buczek at MBuczek@ApertureEd.com.

Thank you for your consideration!

[This study has been approved by the Devereux Foundation's Institutional Review Board \(IRB\).](#)

*If preferred, we are happy to offer a \$100 honorarium directly to the designated site coordinator in lieu of a site honorarium.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long will this take students to complete?

We estimate that it will take up to 20 minutes for students to respond to the DESSA self-report items and the brief demographics questionnaire.

What type of parent permissions will we need?

We will ask the site coordinator to send a passive consent letter to parents/guardians of up to 50 potential middle school student participants. Parents will only need to sign and return the letter if they do NOT want their child to be invited to participate. Parents should be given at least 2 weeks to return the signed letter. Once the 2 weeks have passed, students without a signed letter may be invited to participate. Student participation is voluntary.

How much time will it take to coordinate this?

We expect that it may take the site coordinator up to two hours to coordinate sending and receiving the parent letters and an additional hour to monitor completed ratings and correspond with the Aperture Education team member.

How will this data be used?

We will be collecting ratings from over 2,000 middle school students across the United States. These ratings will be used to select the DESSA items that are best indicators of positive outcomes for students. They will also be used to create the scoring norms that will enable districts, schools, and programs to compare their students' social and emotional skills to the skills typically demonstrated by middle school students in the United States.

How will privacy be protected?

No personally identifiable information will be collected to protect the privacy and confidentiality of students. Students will complete the study forms via Qualtrics, an online data collection website. Qualtrics is a secure platform; information about system access, encryption, and security testing is posted and updated on the Qualtrics website at <https://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/>.

Will I get to see the results?

We will not be able to share individual students' assessment results or aggregated results for your school or program. This is because we are not collecting student names and because the DESSA middle school self-report is still in development and not yet scorable. If you would like to receive the final study results, please email EParker@ApertureEd.com.

Why can't all the students in my school or program participate?

We are limiting participation to up to 50 students per site. Our goal is to collect a large representative sample of ratings from middle school students across the United States. This will ensure the sample from which the scoring norms are developed is reflective of the diversity of students today.

Why should we participate?

Your participation in this study will help Aperture Education develop a middle school student self-report for use by schools and programs across the United States. This will enable students to have a voice in reporting on their own social and emotional skills and will help your staff better understand their students' perceptions of their skills, supporting social and emotional learning (SEL) efforts. Students will receive a gift card for their time and your site (or site coordinator) will receive a \$100 honorarium as thank you for your time. Your school or program will also be acknowledged in the manual.