

RULER and DESSA Crosswalk

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RULER is an evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning (SEL) developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. RULER also is an acronym for the five skills of emotional intelligence, including *recognizing* emotions in oneself and others, *understanding* the causes and consequences of emotions, *labeling* emotions with a nuanced vocabulary, *expressing* emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context, and *regulating* emotions with helpful strategies. RULER supports school communities in understanding the value of emotions, building the skills of emotional intelligence, and creating and maintaining positive climates. RULER for Elementary School programming is designed for students in grades K through 5 and includes routines that embed into classroom activities as well as a curriculum divided into 5 units focused on (1) community, safety, and climate, (2) the RULER skills, (3) self- and social awareness, (4) personal values and emotion regulation, and (5) empathy, perspective taking, and community restoration.

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.

The purpose of this document is to show the ways in which RULER programming for kindergarten through fifth grade relates to the competencies assessed by the DESSA for kindergarten through eighth grade. It demonstrates how the DESSA assessments can measure student progress in districts and schools using RULER to create a healthier, more equitable, innovative, and compassionate society.

The DESSA was developed and is distributed by Riverside Insights and is not affiliated with the RULER approach developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence.

RULER Skill-Building Activities Staff personal and professional learning, pre-K to 12 classroom content, and family engagement materials include activities to enhance development of the five RULER skills of emotional intelligence.						
<i>Skills</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>SM</i>	<i>SO</i>	<i>RS</i>	<i>RDM</i>	<i>OT</i>
<i>Recognizing</i> emotions in oneself and others	✓		✓	✓		
<i>Understanding</i> the causes and consequences of emotions	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<i>Labeling</i> emotions with a nuanced vocabulary	✓					
<i>Expressing</i> emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<i>Regulating</i> emotion with helpful strategies		✓	✓		✓	

RULER Tools RULER builds a common language and set of strategies for the entire school community. Beginning with a shift in mindset, leaders, educators, students, and families learn why emotions matter and how the skills of emotional intelligence can be cultivated. RULER continues with four foundational tools and teaching of Feeling Words.						
<i>Tools</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>SM</i>	<i>SO</i>	<i>RS</i>	<i>RDM</i>	<i>OT</i>
The “Emotions Matter” Mindset: To support a school-wide mindset around the importance of developing emotional intelligence and a positive emotional climate, RULER begins with research and reflections on the impact of emotions on learning, decision making, relationships, and wellbeing.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
RULER Tool #1: <i>The Charter</i> Designed to build and sustain positive emotional climates, the Charter represents agreed-upon norms for how everyone in a school, classroom, home, or other space want to feel and what needs to happen for those feelings to be consistently present.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RULER Tool #2: <i>The Mood Meter</i> By organizing our thinking around feelings into two qualities of emotions: energy and pleasantness, the Mood Meter enhances self- and social awareness and supports the development of a nuanced vocabulary and a strategic repertoire for emotion management.	✓	✓	✓	✓		

RULER Tool #3: <i>The Meta-Moment</i> With the goal of improving reflective practices and self-management, the Meta- Moment provides a process for identifying and developing one’s “best self” and for shifting from automatic, unhelpful reactions to strategic, effective responses that align with that “best self.”	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RULER Tool #4: <i>The Blueprint</i> Through a process for reflecting on and resolving interpersonal conflict, the Blueprint promotes perspective taking, builds empathy, develops conflict resolution skills, and provides a means for restoring relationships and communities affected by conflict.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Feeling Words Staff development, student learning units, and family engagement content include the introduction of a rich vocabulary of feeling words that empower students and teachers to describe, understand, and manage the full range of human emotions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



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.