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Unlocking Student Strengths with the DESSA System

Goals for Today's Session

By the end of today's session, you will be able to:

- Understand how social and emotional assessments can support students receiving special education services.
- Use students' DESSA data as a guide when writing present level of performance statement(s) and individualized education plan goal(s).
- Choose strategies and resources based on DESSA data to promote skill building.

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Opening Activity

What strengths do you recognize in your students receiving special education services?

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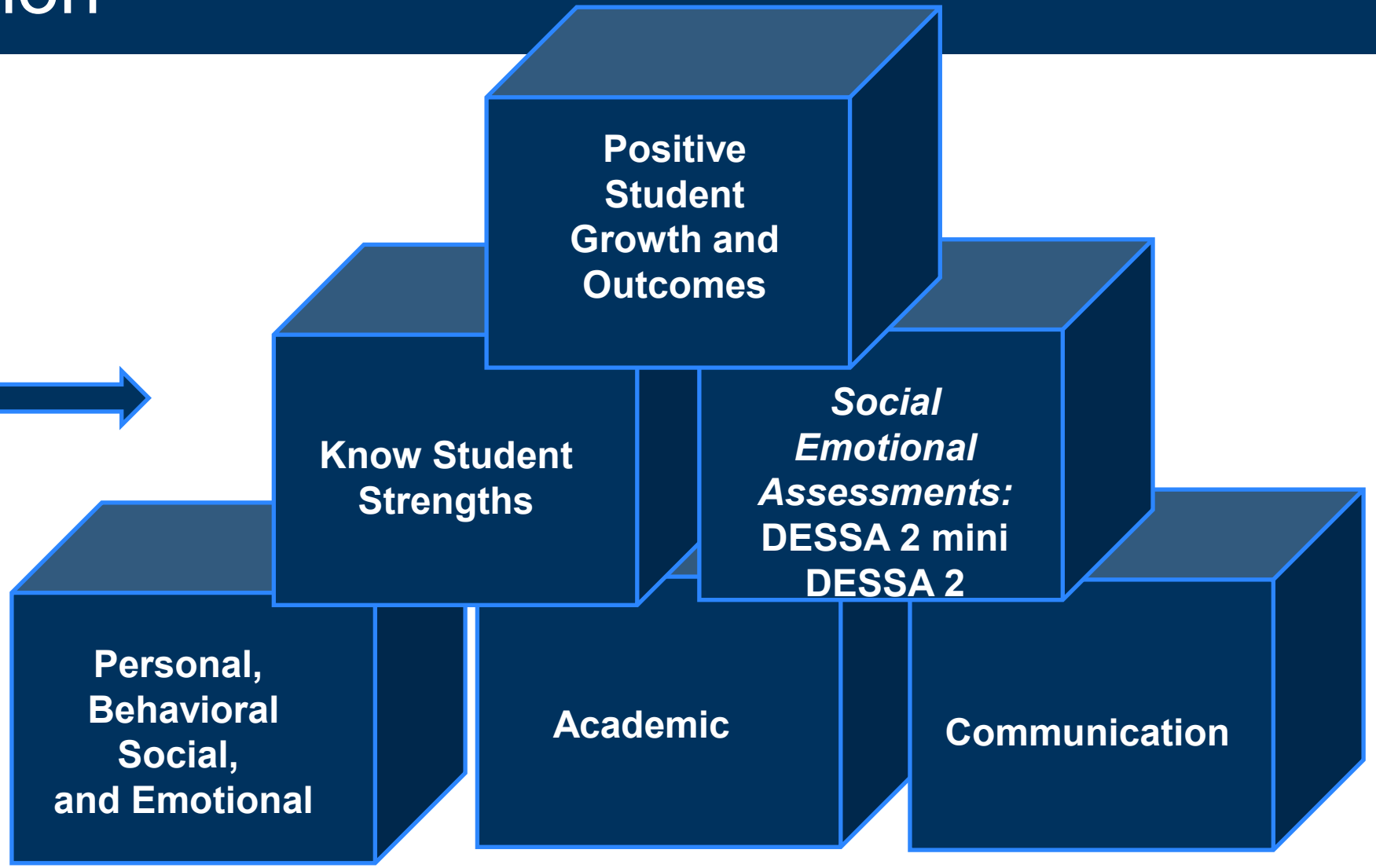
Social Emotional Competence and Special Education

Social Emotional Competence and Special Education

Identify Student Strengths Using Research-based Assessments

Complex Needs



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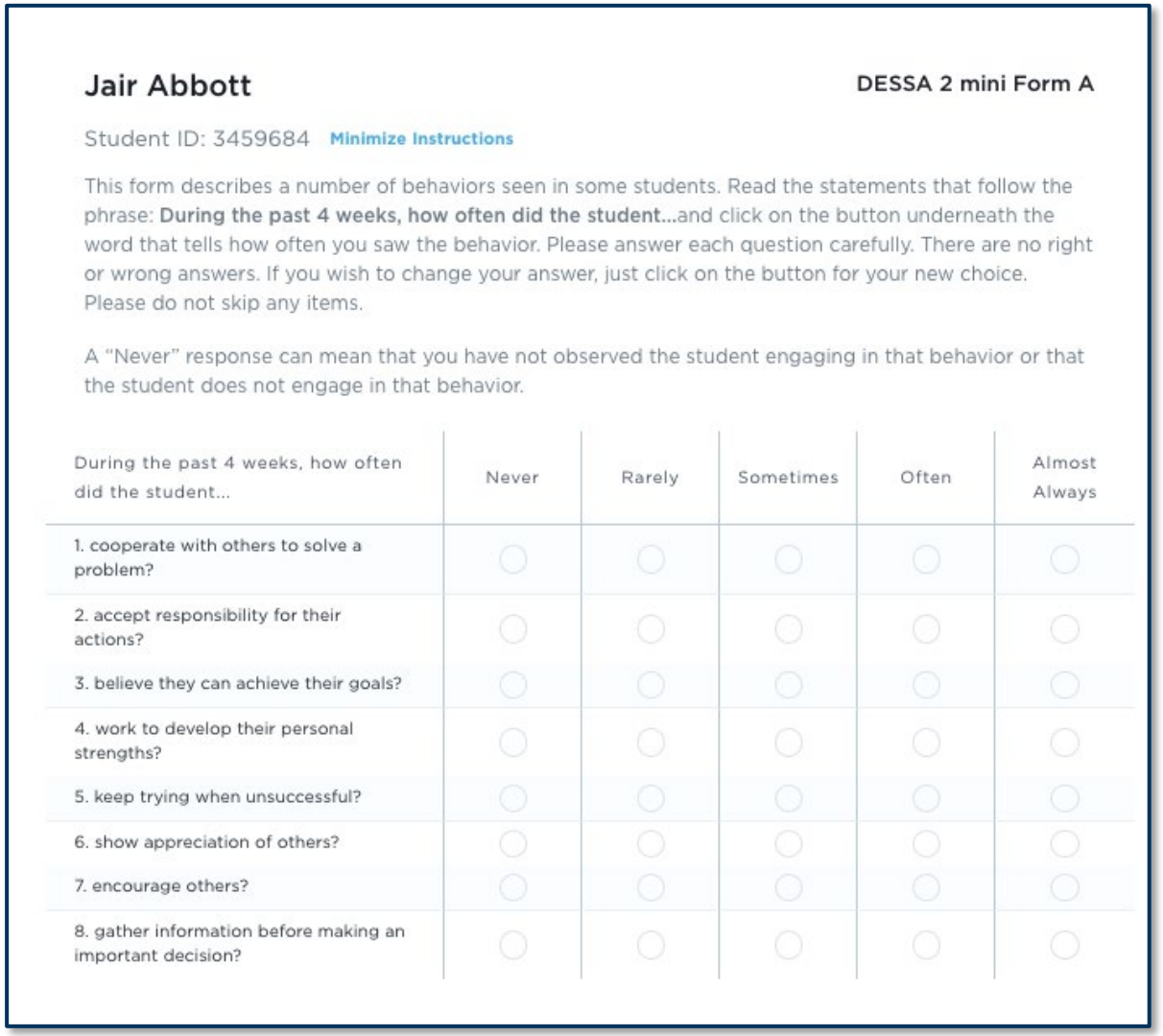
The DESSA

What is it and how can it support students receiving special education services?



Jair Abbott DESSA 2 mini Form A

Student ID: 3459684 Minimize Instructions

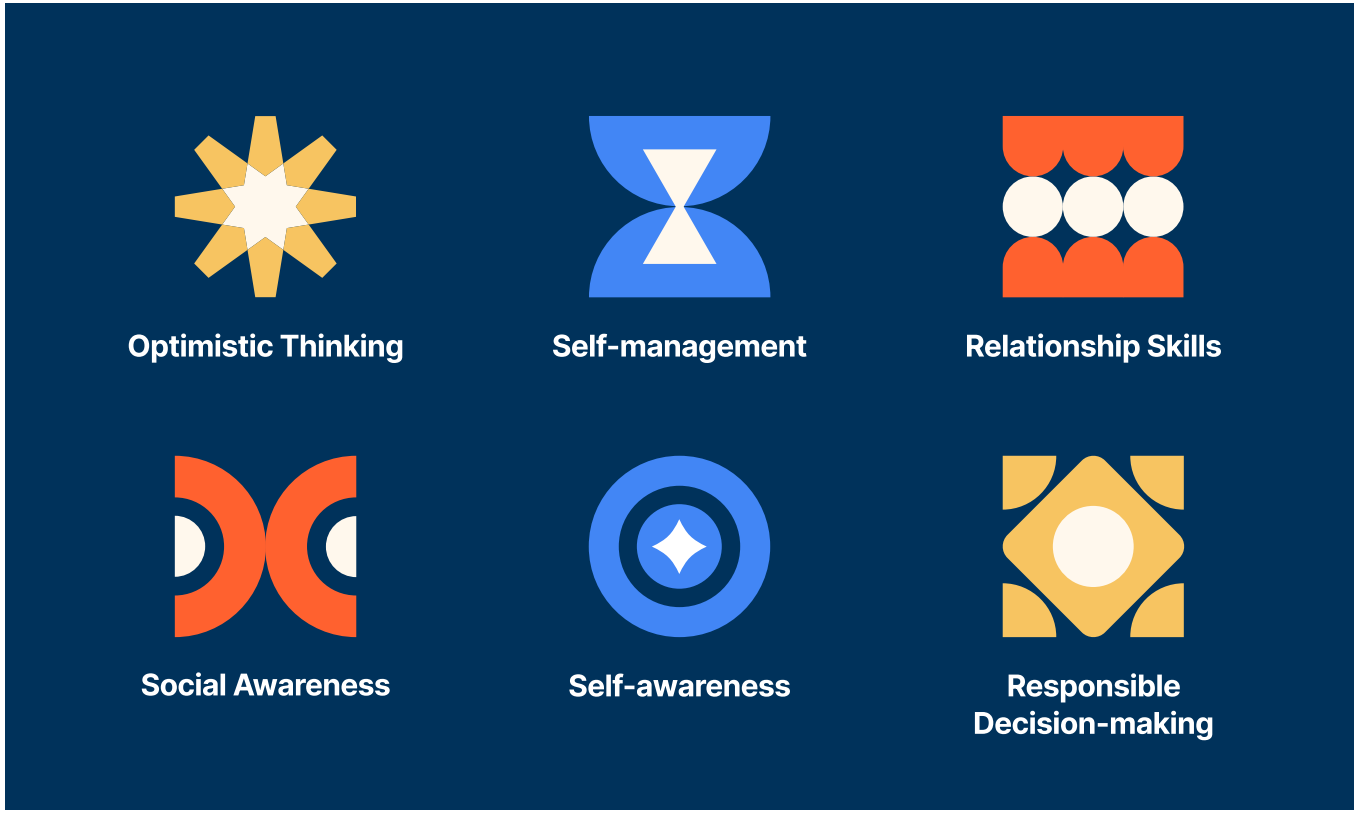
This form describes a number of behaviors seen in some students. Read the statements that follow the phrase: **During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...**and click on the button underneath the word that tells how often you saw the behavior. Please answer each question carefully. There are no right or wrong answers. If you wish to change your answer, just click on the button for your new choice. Please do not skip any items.

A "Never" response can mean that you have not observed the student engaging in that behavior or that the student does not engage in that behavior.

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1. cooperate with others to solve a problem?					
2. accept responsibility for their actions?					
3. believe they can achieve their goals?					
4. work to develop their personal strengths?					
5. keep trying when unsuccessful?					
6. show appreciation of others?					
7. encourage others?					
8. gather information before making an important decision?					

Defining the DESSA

The DESSA is an evidence-based social and emotional competency assessment to support student growth.

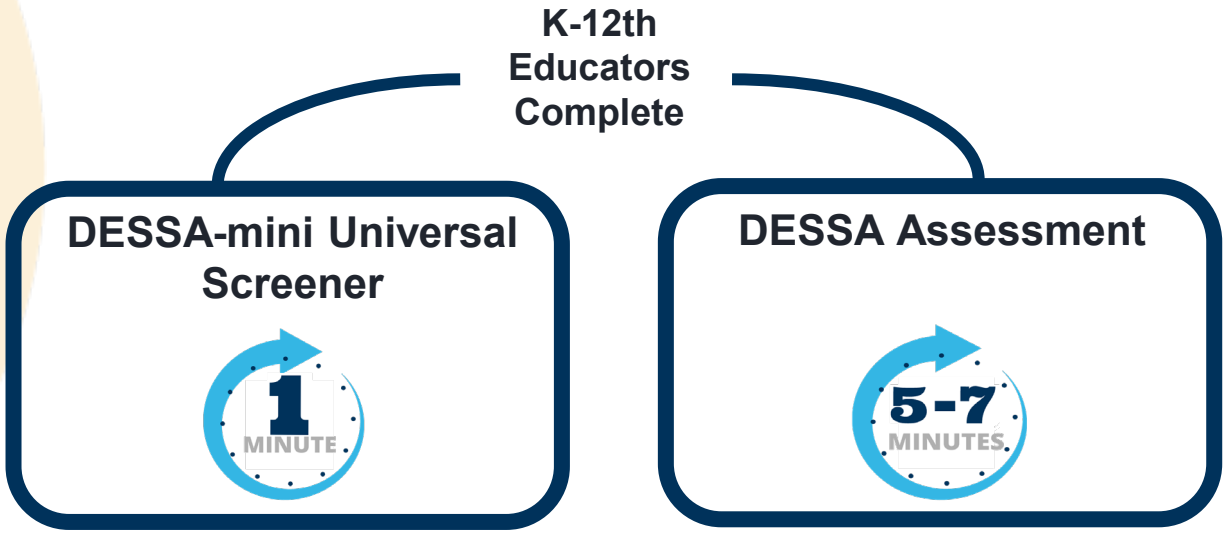


Fast Facts about the DESSA

Standardized

Norm-Referenced

Strength-Based



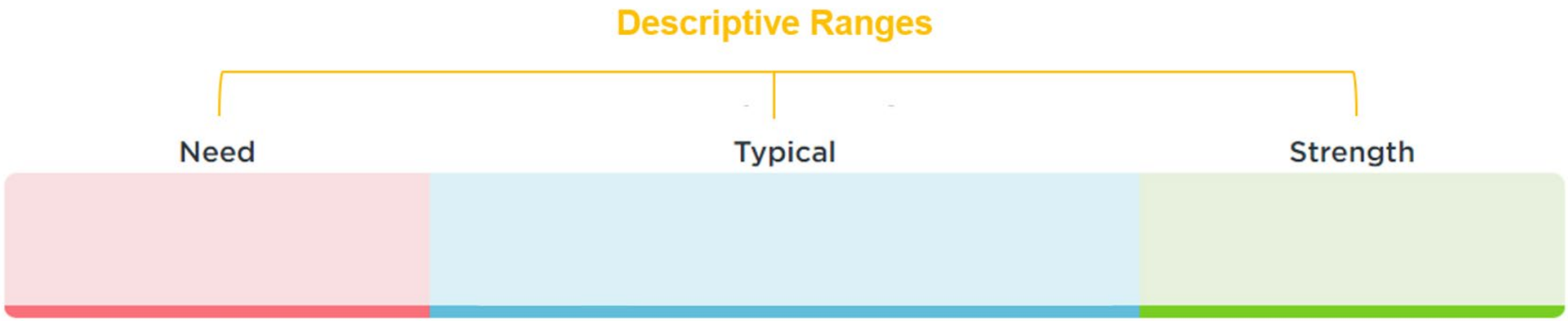
DESSA 2 mini (K-8)

Universal Screener
Educators Complete

4 Forms

1 MIN

Score:
Social-Emotional Total (SET)



DESSA High School Edition (HSE) Mini (9-12)

Universal Screener

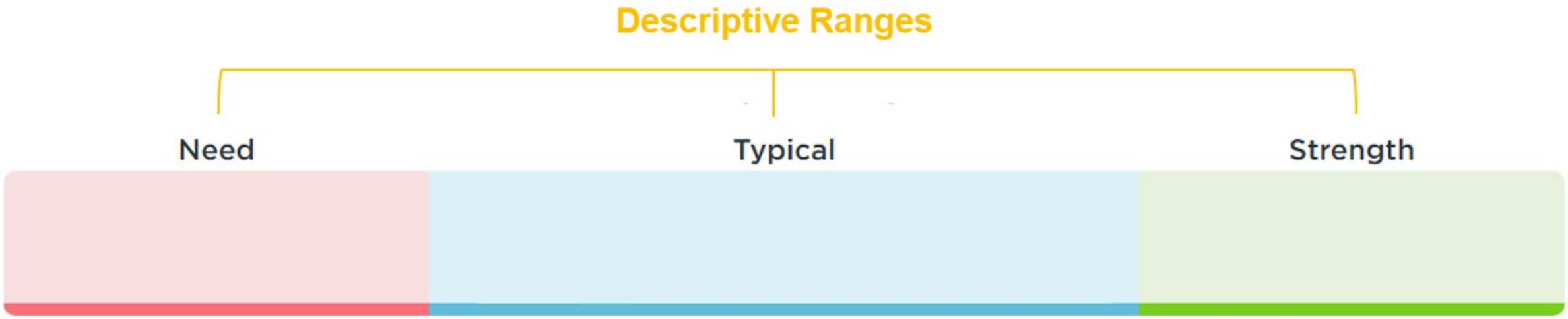
Educators Complete

4 Forms

1 MIN

Score:

Social-Emotional Total (SET)



DESSA 2

K-8

Assessment of 6 competency areas

Educators Complete

Scores:

Social and Emotional Composite (SEC)
6 competency areas

Quintin Abberley DESSA 2

Student ID: 307084438 **Expand Instructions**

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the student...	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1. show an awareness of their personal strengths?	○	○	○	○	○
2. prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events?	○	○	○	○	○
3. accept that making mistakes is part of learning?	○	○	○	○	○
4. get along well with different types of people?	○	○	○	○	○
5. stay focused despite a distraction?	○	○	○	○	○
6. describe the emotion they were feeling?	○	○	○	○	○
7. view negative outcomes as a learning opportunity?	○	○	○	○	○
8. ask questions when they did not understand something?	○	○	○	○	○
9. respect a person's right to have a different perspective?	○	○	○	○	○
10. demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people?	○	○	○	○	○

DESSA High School Edition (HSE)

9th-12th

Assessment of 8 competency areas

Educators Complete

<u>Scores:</u>
Social and Emotional Composite (SEC)
8 competency areas

Dominic Abbott DESSA-HSE

Student ID: 3464032 Expand Instructions

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the youth...	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1. remember important information?	○	○	○	○	○
2. keep trying when unsuccessful?	○	○	○	○	○
3. serve an important role at home or school?	○	○	○	○	○
4. speak about positive things?	○	○	○	○	○
5. look forward to classes or activities at school?	○	○	○	○	○
6. get along well with different types of people?	○	○	○	○	○
7. try to do their best?	○	○	○	○	○
8. take an active role in learning?	○	○	○	○	○
9. say good things about their classmates?	○	○	○	○	○
10. show respect for others in a game or competition?	○	○	○	○	○
11. ask to take on additional work or responsibilities?	○	○	○	○	○

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Think-Pair-Share:

How might a strength-based approach improve conversations about students' IEP goals and performance?

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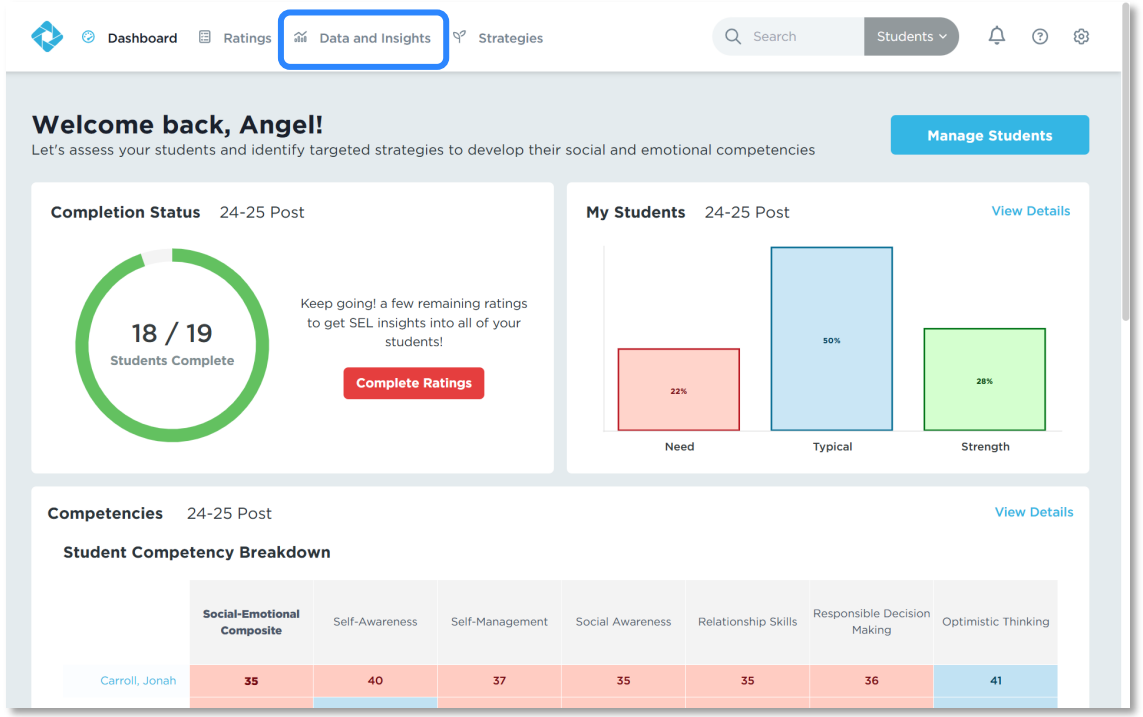
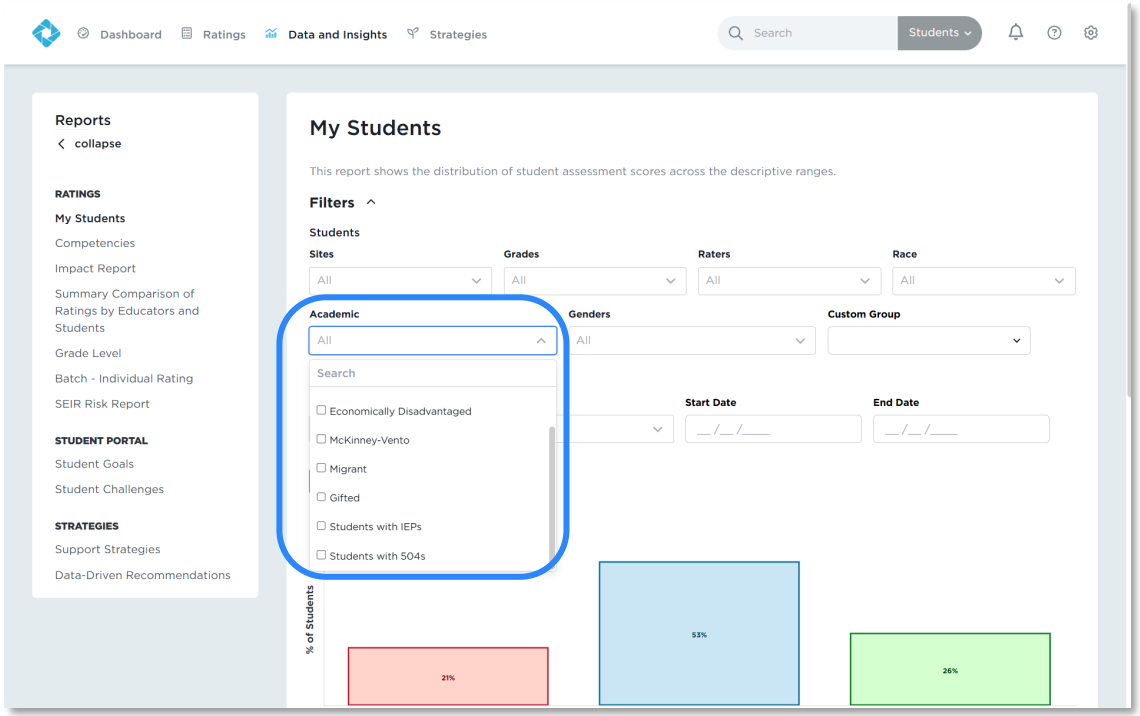
The DESSA and the IEP Process

Accessing Student Data



Click the “Data and Insights” tab.

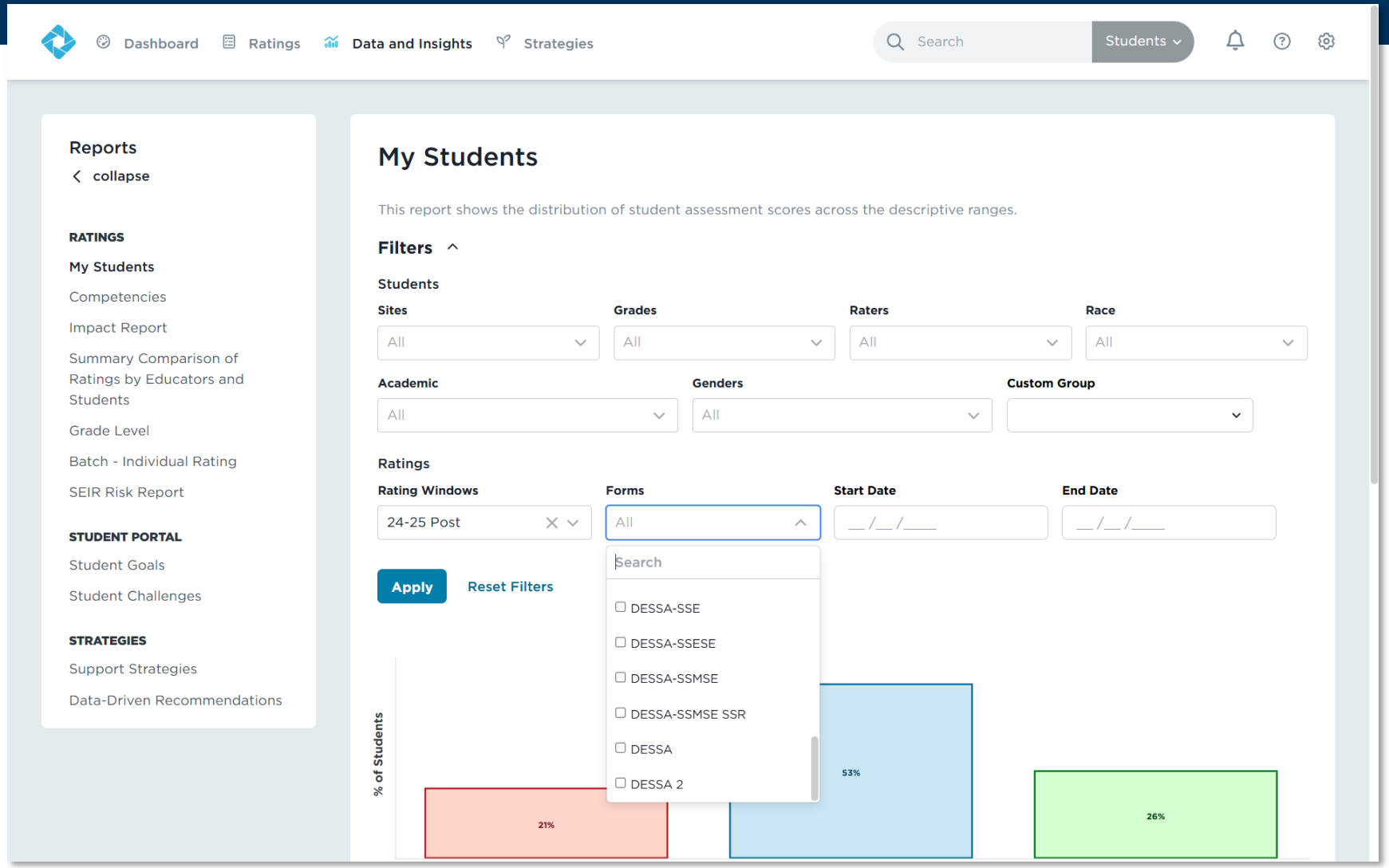


Use the “Academic” filter to view students receiving special education services.

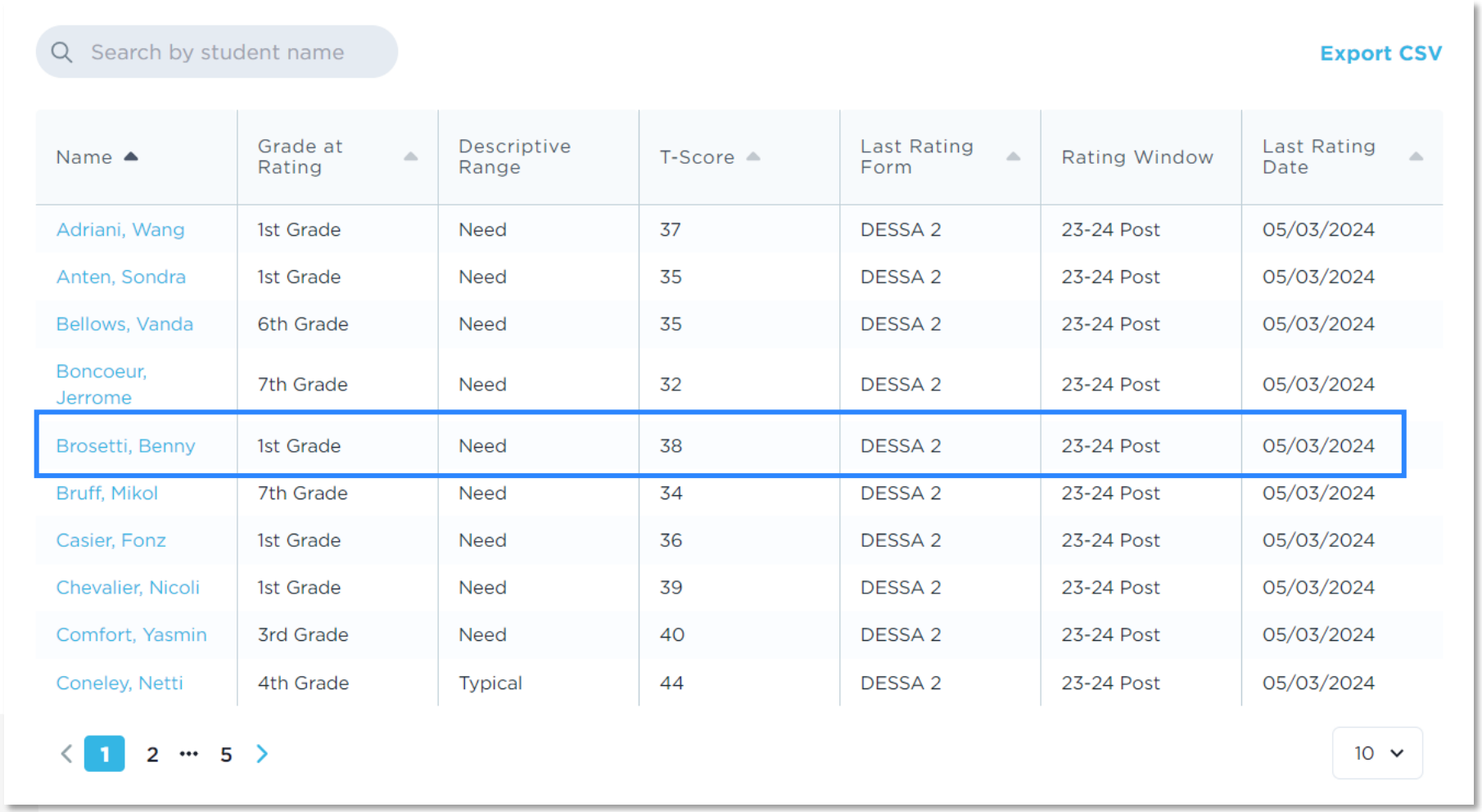
Accessing Student Data

1. Filter for the DESSA 2 form or DESSA-HSE form.

2. Click apply.

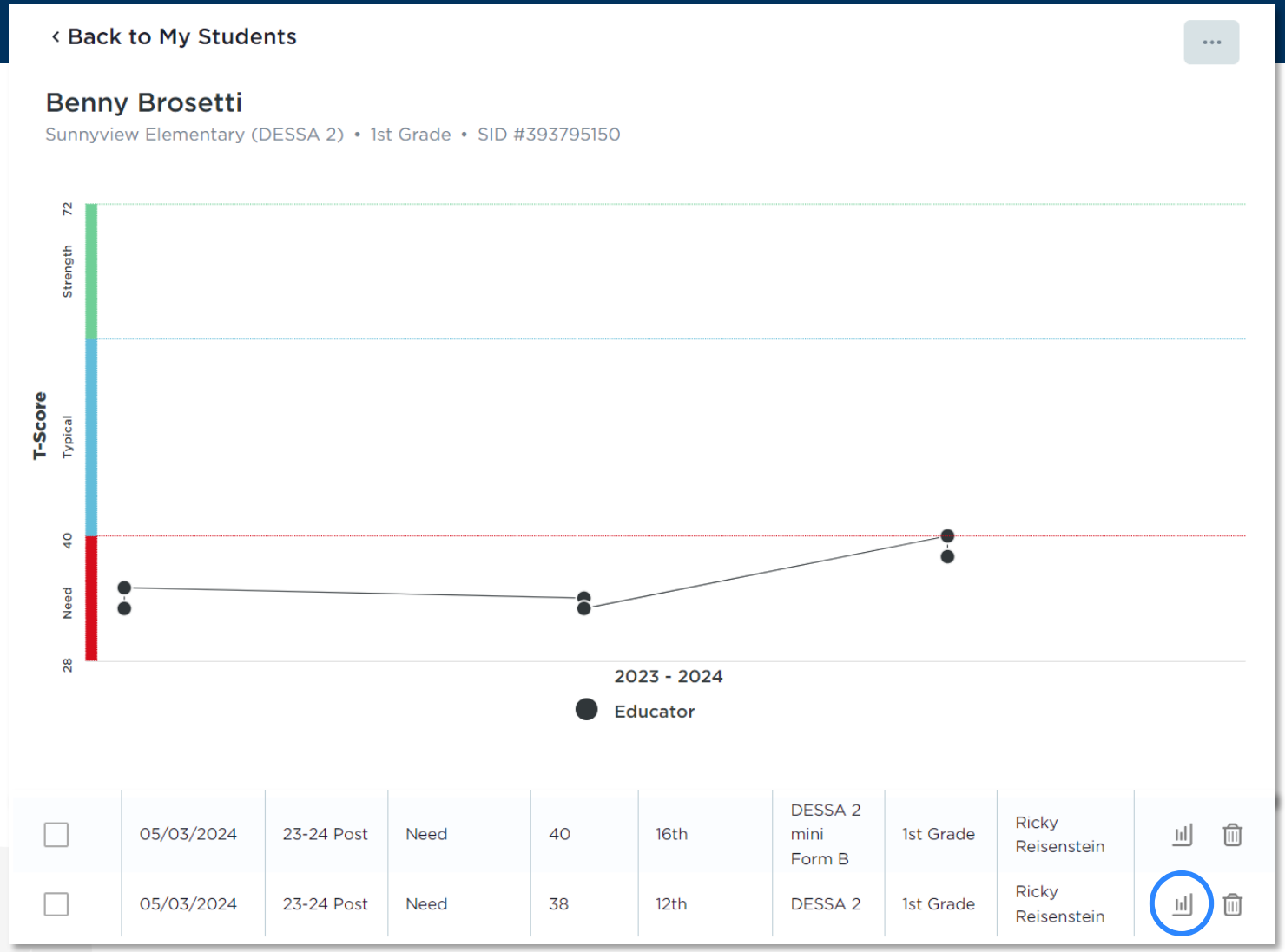


Accessing Student Data



Click on a student's name to go to their individual student profile.

Accessing Student Data



1. View progress over time.
2. Scroll down to view general information about assessments on which the student previously has been rated.
3. Click on the report icon to review DESSA data from a specific rating.

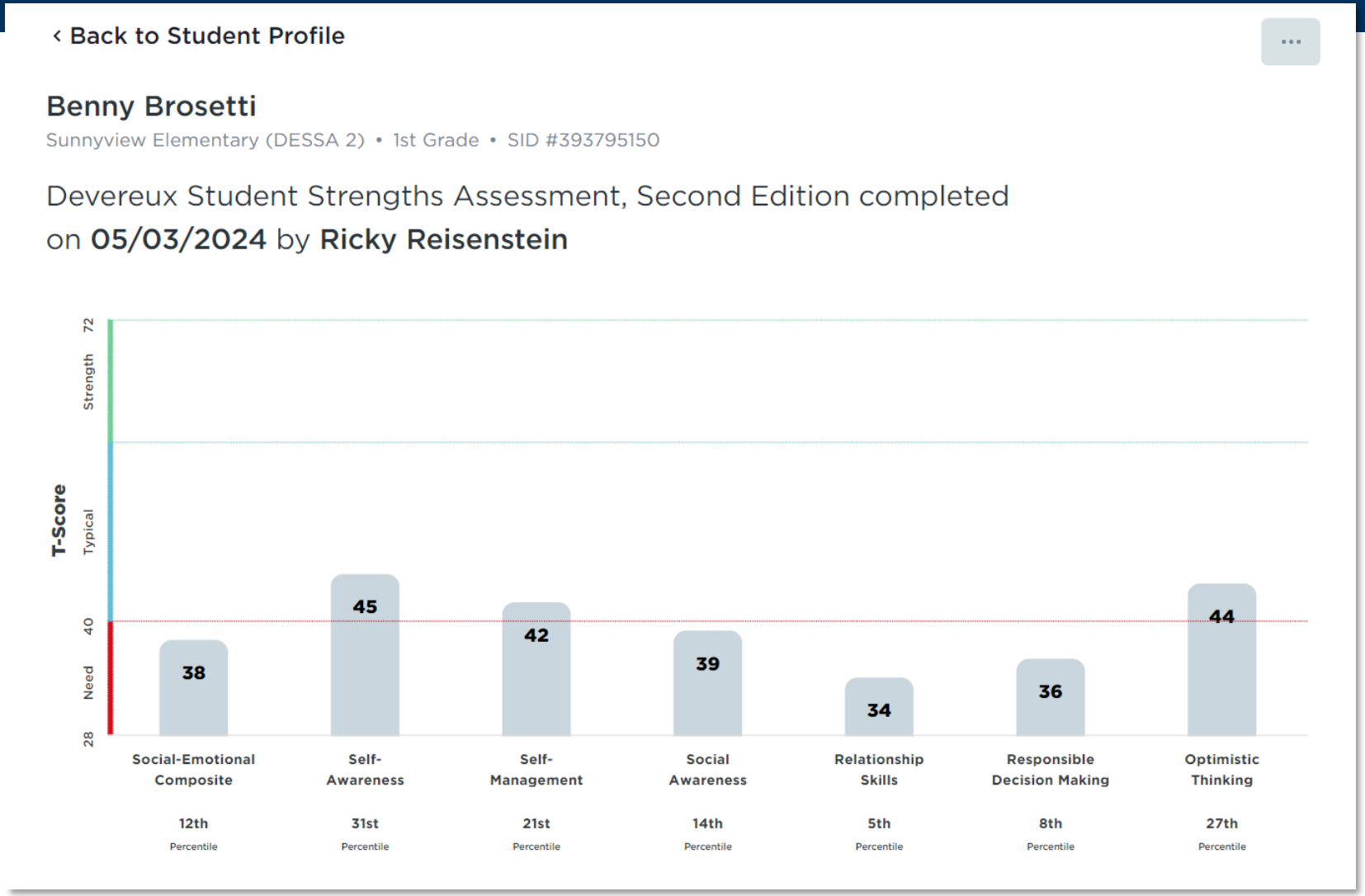
Individual Student Report

Relative Strengths:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Optimistic Thinking

Need for Instruction:

- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision Making



Individual Student Report

Present Level of Performance

Individual Item Analysis Self-Awareness

Competency	Item	Response	Category
Self-Awareness	show an awareness of their personal strengths?	Often	Typical
Self-Awareness	ask questions when they did not understand something?	Sometimes	Typical
Self-Awareness	demonstrate a sense of who they are and what is important to them?	Sometimes	Typical
Self-Awareness	work to develop their personal strengths?	Sometimes	Typical
Self-Awareness	explain what caused their emotions?	Often	Typical
Self-Awareness	describe the emotion they were feeling?	Rarely	Need

Example: Student A has strong acquisition in Self-Awareness as they often show an awareness of their personal strengths and can often explain what caused their emotions. While Student A is self-aware, they require additional support to describe the emotion they were feeling.

Individualized Goal

Individual Item Analysis Self-Awareness

Competency	Item	Response	Category
Self-Awareness	show an awareness of their personal strengths?	Often	Typical
Self-Awareness	ask questions when they did not understand something?	Sometimes	Typical
Self-Awareness	demonstrate a sense of who they are and what is important to them?	Sometimes	Typical
Self-Awareness	work to develop their personal strengths?	Sometimes	Typical
Self-Awareness	explain what caused their emotions?	Often	Typical
Self-Awareness	describe the emotion they were feeling?	Rarely	Need

Example: "By the end of the school year, the student will be able to identify emotions they were feeling, and apply strategies taught to describe those emotions 8 out of 10 observed instances."

Individualized Goal

Individual Item Analysis Relationship Skills

Competency	Item	Response	Category
Relationship Skills	get along well with different types of people?	Sometimes	Typical
Relationship Skills	interact positively with classmates?	Sometimes	Typical
Relationship Skills	encourage others?	Rarely	Need
Relationship Skills	listen to others?	Rarely	Need
Relationship Skills	stand up for a friend or classmate?	Rarely	Need
Relationship Skills	cooperate with others to solve a problem?	Rarely	Need
Relationship Skills	resolve conflicts positively?	Rarely	Need

Example: By the end of the school year, the student will be able to identify conflict triggers and apply strategies taught to resolve disputes in 8 out of 10 observed instances.

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Reflect and Connect:

What are some ways that you would support Student A in meeting a goal set for conflict resolution skills?

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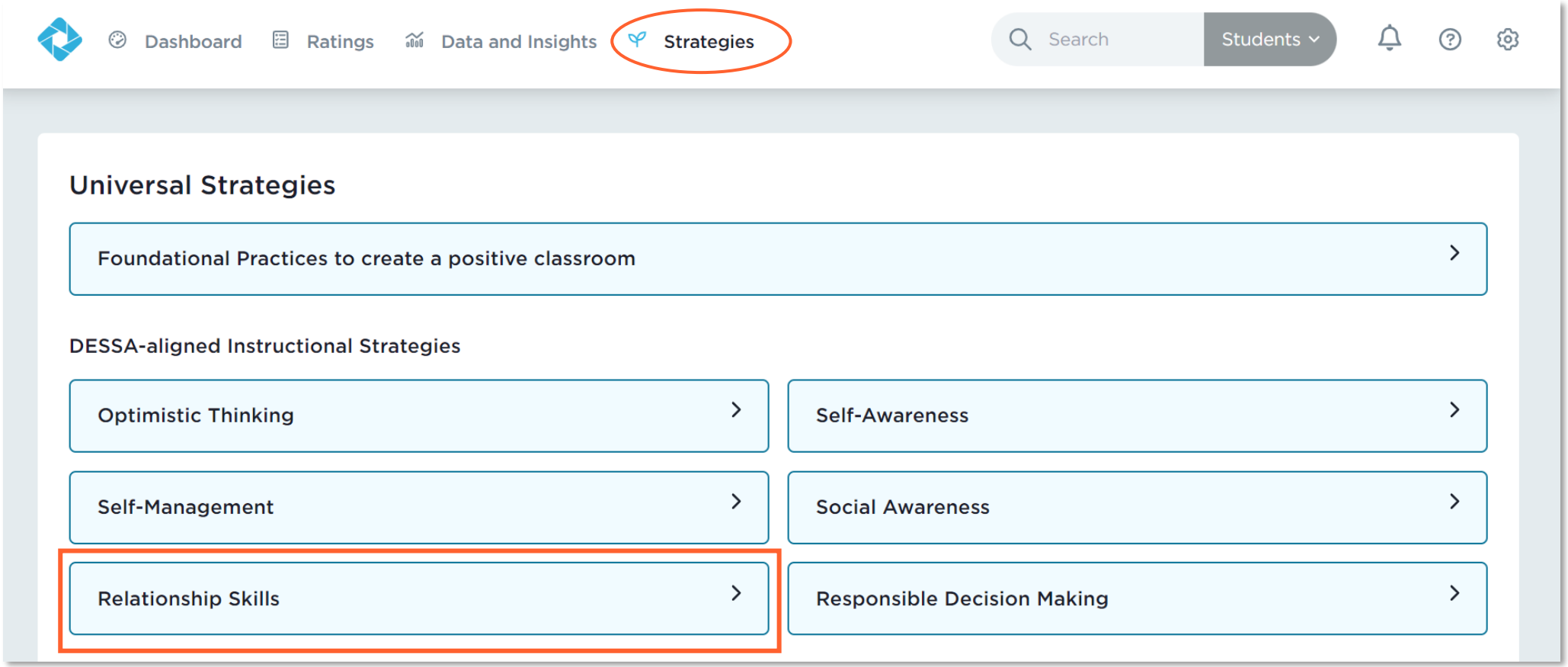
Data-Driven Skill Building

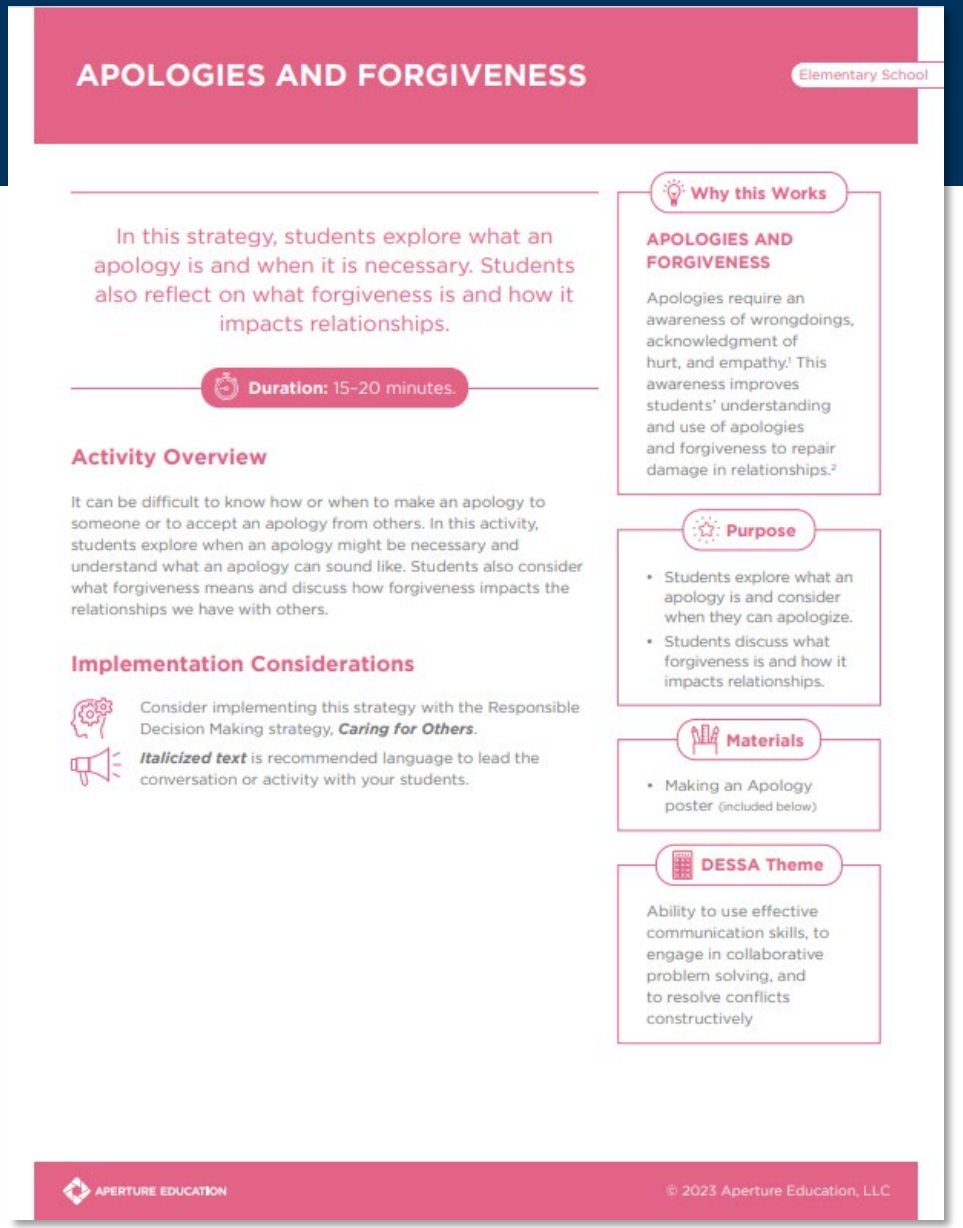
Data-Driven Skill Building



Data-Driven Skill Building

Relationship Skills: Apologies and Forgiveness

- Students define what an apology is and learn when it is appropriate to apologize.
- Students also reflect on what forgiveness is and how it impacts relationships.
- At the end of the lesson, students make an apology.



APOLOGIES AND FORGIVENESS

Elementary School

In this strategy, students explore what an apology is and when it is necessary. Students also reflect on what forgiveness is and how it impacts relationships.

Duration: 15–20 minutes.

Activity Overview

It can be difficult to know how or when to make an apology to someone or to accept an apology from others. In this activity, students explore when an apology might be necessary and understand what an apology can sound like. Students also consider what forgiveness means and discuss how forgiveness impacts the relationships we have with others.

Implementation Considerations

Consider implementing this strategy with the Responsible Decision Making strategy, ***Caring for Others***.

Italicized text is recommended language to lead the conversation or activity with your students.

Why this Works

APOLOGIES AND FORGIVENESS

Apologies require an awareness of wrongdoings, acknowledgment of hurt, and empathy.[1] This awareness improves students' understanding and use of apologies and forgiveness to repair damage in relationships.[2]

Purpose

- Students explore what an apology is and consider when they can apologize.
- Students discuss what forgiveness is and how it impacts relationships.

Materials

- Making an Apology poster (included below)

DESSA Theme

Ability to use effective communication skills, to engage in collaborative problem solving, and to resolve conflicts constructively

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Optimistic Closure

How might a strength-based approach improve:

- Conversations about student support?
- Culture and climate?
- Engagement with families?