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January 7, 2022

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We are thrilled to let you know about an exciting program taking place in your child's classroom this school year! Over two decades of research has helped us understand the important role social and emotional skills play in each child's success in school, the community, and eventually, in higher education and the workplace. Skills such as demonstrating self-control, persisting at challenging tasks, making good decisions, and working well in groups are necessary to be successful students and adults. To support our students in developing these skills, that will help them become successful and responsible adults, we will be implementing a life skills program throughout the school district.

As part of this program, we will use a tool called the DESSA. This tool will enable K-8th grade teachers to assess their students and 9-12th grade students to self-assess. Both methods are used to discern how often a specific life skill has been demonstrated in the past month.

Sample DESSA questions include:

- How often did the child keep trying when unsuccessful?
- How often did the child offer to help someone?
- How often did the child accomplish tasks in a timely fashion?
- How often did the child work well in groups?

The purpose of the DESSA is to identify which life skills your child has already learned and what skills they might still need to develop. Once we identify the skills students still need to learn, those skills will be taught through our programs. Our goal is to ensure that your child continuously develops the skills they need for lifelong success.

While the DESSA is just one component of our program this year, we want to make sure that you are informed of our use of this instructional tool. We believe that the information gathered from the DESSA will be beneficial to your child's overall success both inside and outside of the classroom.

The DESSA is published by Aperture Education. Our district chose the DESSA in part because of Aperture Education's strong commitment to respecting and protecting your child's privacy. Hundreds of school districts and afterschool programs nationwide utilize the DESSA and trust Aperture Education with protecting their students' data. Aperture Education will never share your child's data with a third party. We also chose Aperture Education because they offer a "parent portal" on their website that provides resources, tips, and strategies for parents on supporting their child's development. To view additional information about the DESSA, the privacy policy, or the parent portal, visit <http://info.apertureed.com/parent-portal>.

If you would like your child to OPT-OUT of this assessment, please click the link below and complete this form by Wednesday, January 12, 2022.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DESSAopt-out>

Sincerely,

Aeneid H. Mason
Director of Student Support Services

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