



Elmer Thienes – Mary Hall Elementary School

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Dan White
Principal

Kimberly Kelley
Assistant Principal

October 6, 2022

Dear Marlborough Elementary School Families,

Marlborough Elementary School will be participating, for the second year, in a Connecticut State Department of Education supported initiative in partnership with the Aperture Corporation to support the social emotional learning of our children. The partnership will provide us access to a strength based social emotional screener, providing us data that will be used on school wide, grade and individual levels to plan and provide effective social emotional learning supports for our children. Skills such as demonstrating self-control, persisting at challenging tasks, making good decisions, and working well in groups are social emotional skills that will be focused on.

As part of this program, our teachers will be using a tool called the Devereux Student Strength Assessment (DESSA). This tool asks teachers to assess how often each student in their class has demonstrated specific life skills 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 somebody?
- How often did the child get things done in a timely fashion?
- How often did the child work well in groups?

The purpose of the DESSA is to identify which skills your child has already learned and what skills they might still need to develop. Once our teachers identify the skills their students still need to work on, our school team will work to build knowledge in this area. The use of the DESSA tool aligns with Goal 2 – Social and Emotional Wellness and Health in the MES Strategic Continuous Improvement Plan (SCIP).

We want to make sure that you are informed of our use of this instructional tool (DESSA). 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 to parents on supporting their child's development. To view additional information about the DESSA, the privacy policy, or the parent portal, visit <https://info.apertureed.com/parent-portal>.

If you would like your child to OPT-OUT of this assessment, please contact Dan (dwhite@marlborough.k12.ct.us) or Kim (kkelley@marlborough.k12.ct.us) to discuss your concerns.

Sincerely,

Dan & Kim