

# Fletcher W. Judson Elementary School

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**Kristin Raymond**

Principal

October 3, 2022

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

The Watertown Public Schools is committed to a well-rounded education that focuses on cultivating both the academic and social emotional needs of our students. Two decades of research has helped us understand the important role social and emotional skills play in each child's success in school, in 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 all necessary to being successful students and adults.

In core academic subjects, teachers pause and collect and review academic achievement data in the fall, winter and the spring. For example, K-8 students take the iReady Diagnostic Assessment in reading and mathematics. Just as we do with core academic subjects, during the months of October, February, and May, teachers and counselors will complete a short screening assessment called the DESSA that collects how often students have demonstrated specific life skills in the past month. The DESSA is a strengths-based assessment designed to highlight student's positive behaviors and skills. The DESSA takes approximately one minute in duration and is completed by a student's teacher or counselor. Students do not have to complete anything. [Attached is an FAQ.](#)

The purpose of the DESSA is to identify which life skills students have already learned and what skills students should continue to develop. The information collected by the DESSA screener helps teachers identify opportunities where teachers can teach/ encourage specific social emotional skill development. Our goal is to ensure that all students are continuously developing the skills they need for lifelong success.

The DESSA is published by Aperture Education and is utilized by hundreds of school districts and afterschool programs nationwide and meets Connecticut's student data privacy regulations. To view additional information about the DESSA, the privacy policy, or our Family Resources page, visit [www.ApertureEd.com](http://www.ApertureEd.com).

If you have any questions or would like to opt your child out, please feel free to email [raymondkr@watertownps.org](mailto:raymondkr@watertownps.org).

Respectfully,

*Kristin Raymond*

Principal

