

Parent & Family Information Guide

Understanding the FCPS SKILLS Student Self-Assessment

Dear Fayette County Public Schools Families,

To support your child's academic success and overall well-being, our district focuses on teaching foundational life habits alongside core subjects like math, reading, and science. This year, students in grades 3–12 whose families have provided signed consent will participate in a brief check-in called the **FCPS SKILLS Student Self-Assessment**.

Below is information regarding what this tool is, why we transitioned to it, and how it helps us partner with you to support your child.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the SKILLS Self-Assessment? The SKILLS assessment is a short, 10-to-15-minute self-reflection completed by students during a low-stress window in the school day (such as homeroom or advisory). It asks students to reflect on how often they practice specific learning and organizational habits across six key areas:

- **S** – Self-Awareness & Self-Management
- **K** – Knowledge of Social Environments
- **I** – Interpersonal & Relationship Skills
- **L** – Logic in Decision-Making
- **L** – Learning & Growth Mindset
- **S** – Social Responsibility & Community Impact

Is this a test? Will it affect my child's grades or record? **No.** This is not a test, it is never graded, and there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. A student cannot pass or fail. It is simply a confidential tool for students to share their personal perspective on daily school routines, managing emotions, and working with group members. In compliance with Kentucky state law, only students with signed parental consent will participate in this self-assessment.

Why did the district switch from the DESSA to SKILLS? In previous years, our district used a national tool called the DESSA. We shifted to SKILLS to move away from national peer rankings and focus entirely on our local goals:

- **No Peer Comparison:** DESSA was a norm-referenced tool that compared your child to national averages. SKILLS is criterion-referenced; it **does not rank or compare** students against their peers.
- **Tailored to FCPS Goals:** SKILLS measures self-perception directly against our district's **Social-Emotional-Behavioral (SEB) Standards** and **Portrait of a Graduate (POG)** promises.
- **Actionable Habits:** Instead of broad ratings, SKILLS looks at concrete, everyday habits—such as starting tasks independently, adapting to schedule changes, and managing frustration—so teachers know exactly how to assist.

How does the school use this information? We view these behaviors as practical skills that can be taught and built over time, just like reading or long division.

- **Celebrating Strengths:** If a student reports feeling confident in a skill, teachers celebrate that strength and look for opportunities for the student to take on leadership roles.

- **Targeted Support ("Instructional Triggers"):** If a student rates a skill at 0 ("Never") or 1 ("Almost Never"), it serves as an **Instructional Trigger**. This is not a diagnosis or a penalty; it simply signals that a skill is "not mastered yet". Our school team (teachers, counselors, and support staff) uses this insight to provide simple, practical supports—such as visual step-by-step checklists for task initiation.

How can I support my child at home? Students complete the check-in using a 0 to 4 frequency scale (*0 = Never, 1 = Almost Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Almost Always*). You can use this same shared language at home to discuss routines! For example, ask your child how they feel about their "Task Initiation" when starting homework or how they practice "Emotional Regulation" when feeling overwhelmed.

Our goal is to ensure every student feels supported, seen, and equipped with essential life skills to graduate ready for the future. If you have any questions or wish to review the assessment materials, please reach out to your school's administration or counseling team.