



ABSECON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

800 Irelan Avenue, Absecon NJ 08201
(609) 641-5375 FAX (609) 641-8692



Dr. Daniel J. Dooley
Superintendent of Schools

Tina Maruca
Business Administrator

Joseph Giardina, Principal
H.Ashton Marsh Elementary School

Lindsay Reed
Director of Special Services/Curriculum

Kevin Burns, Principal
Emma C. Attales Middle School



The S.M.I.L.E Program is geared towards children who need more confidence in reading. A team consisting of a handler and a dog visit the classroom, or the therapy animal visits during library time and acts as an independent center, and children spend 5-15 minutes one-on-one for a reading session. Children sit and read to a cuddly, comforting animal to improve their literacy, inflection, communication, and vocabulary skills while boosting their attention span and confidence. In addition to improving literacy skills and overall interest in reading, a therapy dog program in schools offers the following benefits to the reader:

- **Compassion**
- **Confidence**
- **Stress Relief**
- **Better Focus**
- **Socialization**
- **Improved Moods**
- **Boosted Attention Span**
- **Calming**
- **Teaches Children to be Gentle and Kind to Animals**

If you would like your child to participate in our S.M.I.L.E Program with Skye and Hope, our District Therapy Dogs, please return the completed form to your child's Homeroom Teacher.



Sincerely,

Kevin Burns
Principal

Joseph Giardina
Principal

Please visit our website at www.abseconschools.org



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Silent Mentors in Literacy Education

Students Name: _____

Classroom Teacher: _____

Grade Level: _____

Any known pet allergies: Yes / No If yes, Please explain:

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____