



Parent Guide to Enrollment

Dear Prospective Gillingham Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the Wolfpack! We hope you and your young learners are excited to join our community at Gillingham Charter School! No matter where in the enrollment process you currently find yourself, this guide will serve as a helpful reference for you to learn more about us, to keep track of deadlines and requirements, and to ensure your child's transition into Gillingham Charter School is as smooth as can be!

Take a Tour!

Schedule a virtual tour of our school building. Email enrollment@gillinghamcharterschool.org to set up your tour time today.

Who We Are

We at Gillingham Charter School offer K-12th grade students a unique tuition-free public education in a small learning environment designed to maximize their desire to learn and live fully. We want to be a school where students and teachers don't have to go, but WANT to go!

Gillingham offers a Relational Education that is based on the ideas of Charlotte Mason. This way of educating is deeply rooted in two primary principles:

1. Children have a natural desire to learn.
2. We offer students a “banquet of learning” to put them in relationship with the vast inheritance of knowledge around them—with others, ideas, and the natural world—through rich language and real experiences.

How We're Different

Gillingham Charter School focuses on shaping children in several core ways, with methods that have been shown to help them become more independent and thoughtful. If you would like to better understand how we do this, head over to our [“About”](#) webpage.



We have a VERY different approach to education than other public schools. The next 2 sections are things that your child's teachers will ask students to do that your child may have never even heard of before...

Narration & Copywork

Narration - Students are constantly asked to "narrate" or "tell back." Narration is simply telling back something that you've read or listened to or saw. Students tell back by talking, writing, drawing and even acting! Research has shown that we know and remember things best when we've retold them.

Copywork - Students also complete copywork at every grade level. Copywork is writing or drawing things exactly as you see them. This can be done by copying an excerpt from a book, drawing a recreation of a great artwork, or writing the musical notes heard in a specific song

These things may be challenging for your child at first, as new things tend to be, but all of our students quickly pick up on it, internalize the information they learn from it, and even enjoy it before long!

"Check-In" Questions & Circles

Gillingham is dedicated to establish a great student/teacher bond by using "check-in" questions and other team-building exercises in the classroom daily.

Each day in class all of the students sit in a circle with their teacher and answer a "check-in" question. One person starts and picks the direction of the circle until everyone has answered the question. This is such an important part of the day where everyone's voice is heard, relationships are developed, and trust is built.

Lottery

Register for enrollment by completing a Lottery Application [HERE](#).



Since Gillingham Charter School has limited seats available, we use a lottery system. When seats are full in a class, prospective students are placed on a waiting list. Enrollment may occur anytime, though, throughout the school year as seats become available!

Public lotteries are held each summer to determine which students get seats. During the lottery and whenever seats become available, preference will be given in the following order:

GILLINGHAM LOTTERY PREFERENCE

1. Current GCS Students
2. Students who are Children or Grandchildren of GCS Founding Members
3. Students Residing in Pottsville Area School District w/ at least 1 Current GCS Student as a Sibling
4. Students Residing in Pottsville Area School District
5. Students Residing Outside of Pottsville w/ at least 1 Current GCS Student as a Sibling
6. Students Residing Outside of Pottsville Area School District

Deadlines

According to our [Enrollment & Admissions Policy](#) and [Pennsylvania's charter school law](#), there are certain deadlines prospective parents are required to meet to ensure their children receive available seats in their grade. They include:

- Parents have **48 hours** to accept the seat once notified of its availability and will otherwise forfeit it, and the seat will be offered to the next student on the waiting list.
- The online enrollment forms (required and optional documents) must be completed within **5 business days** in order for the student to retain the accepted seat. Otherwise, the seat will be forfeited and offered to the next student on the waiting list.
- Returning Student forms must be received by GCS by a **given due date** before the end of each school year. This way, GCS knows how many seats to save for new students during the summer lottery.

Enrollment Paperwork



Once you accept an available seat for your child, you can complete the enrollment paperwork online by following these steps:

1. Create an account [HERE](#).
 - a. Skyward will send you an email with a username (your email) and a 5-digit password.
 - b. Write that information down for future reference.
2. Fill out the information and select “Complete step and move to Step ___” after each section.
3. Upload the required documents.*
 - a. Proof of Birth (i.e. birth certificate)
 - b. Proof of Residency
 - c. Student’s Immunization Records.
 - i. Read a full list of what fulfills these requirements [HERE](#)
4. Submit the application when complete. You will be contacted with the next steps.

Meetings

To ensure we find the best class placement for your child and make the transition to Gillingham as smooth as possible, we may want to meet your child.

Programming Assessment

Either before your child enrolls or shortly afterwards, the Enrollment Coordinator may arrange a meeting with our administration to evaluate your child’s academic capabilities and to further explain our methods. This helps us place your child in the correct classes for the best fit!

Welcome Meeting

A welcome meeting with our Director of Education and Student Coach is encouraged. This meeting may also be after your child has already started with us. The purpose of this meeting is for you to meet a school director and hear our school policies and expectations, as well as for us to hear your story! This is your chance to share with us and ask any questions you may have.

Communication



Alert Notifications

Once your child is enrolled, text the word “YES” to 67587.

Email/Call Us

Find the full list of GCS teachers and staff [HERE](#).

Follow Us on Social Media!

Website: gillinghamcharterschool.org

Facebook: [@GillinghamCharterSchool](#)

[Gillingham Charter School Parents \(Group\)](#)

Instagram: [@gillinghamcharter](#)

YouTube: [Gillingham Charter School](#)

Newsletters

We do our very best to communicate with you constantly and simply. Each week we send out a weekly newsletter, the Weekly Howler.

Questions?

If you have questions about our enrollment process, please email enrollment@gillinghamcharterschool.org.