



TYPE: POLICY
SECTION: PUPILS
TITLE: ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT POLICY
REVIEWED & REVISED: May 11, 2021

ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT POLICY

Purpose

In accordance with Charter School Law and the Pennsylvania Department of Education's direction, the Board of Trustees recognizes the following:

The Board of Trustees of Gillingham Charter School recognizes that its admission and enrollment policy must reflect current requirements of the Pennsylvania Charter School Law at 24 P.S. § 17-1723-A, Pennsylvania Public School Code, 22 Pa. Code, Chapter 11 and Pennsylvania Department of Education's ("PDE") Basic Education Circulars on Enrollment of Students and Charter School Law. Gillingham Charter School is a K-12 non-tuition, non-sectarian institution in all respects, and does not discriminate against any student, employee, or other person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability, or any other criteria prohibited by law. An admission criterion does not consider intellectual or athletic ability, aptitude, disability, race, creed, national origin, religion, or ancestry. Therefore Gillingham Charter School complies with these admission and enrollment procedures to ensure that both resident and eligible non-residents are promptly enrolled through the policy provisions set forth below.

Non-Discrimination Mission

The intent of Gillingham Charter School is to develop a school for a diverse group of children and families in the school community. The School hopes that students and families from all backgrounds in the district and county experience a broad curriculum and a respectful atmosphere that help prepare them for college or whatever endeavor they pursue after graduation. They will be proud of who they are, from whence they come, and for what they will do for this community and the world. Facilitating such inclusive practices is a relational principle; therefore, having a diverse group of children and families involved with school is viewed as a strategic advantage. Our strategy is to advertise openly, share information and provide options to the community. Furthermore, we have and will further target advertising to low-income families to ensure successful dissemination of information.

Admissions

According to section 1723-A (a) of the Charter School Act, if more students apply to the charter school than the number of attendance slots available in the school, then students must be selected on a random basis from a pool of qualified applicants meeting the established eligibility criteria and submitting an application by the deadline established by the charter school.

As permitted by the Pennsylvania Charter School Laws, Gillingham Charter School will give preference in enrollment to the following categories of students, in the following order:

1. Existing Gillingham Charter School Charter School students.
2. Children or grandchildren of those who participated in the founding of the charter school, as recorded on the list of Founding Members; Pottsville founders take precedence.
3. Students residing in Pottsville Area School District with at least one current Gillingham

student as a sibling. For the purpose of this policy, a sibling is defined as a child who is related to an existing student by blood or adoption and who shares a legal tie to at least one common parent;

4. Students residing in the District in which the charter school is located. For the purposes of this policy, District is defined as Pottsville Area School District;
5. Siblings of students residing outside the school District who are currently enrolled in the school. For the purpose of this policy, a sibling is defined as a child who is related to an existing student by blood or adoption and who shares a legal tie to at least one common parent;
6. Students residing outside the school district in which the charter school is located (all other school districts within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania).

Any child who is qualified under applicable state law is qualified for admission to the school. The school is an equal opportunity educational institution. This admissions policy is available to the public.

Prior to opening the enrollment period, School Administrators will determine the projected capacity of a program, class, grade level or building, for the particular school year. This determination depends upon several factors, including facility constraints, classroom space constraints, enrollment capacity per class or grade as described in the Charter, and teacher/student ratio calculations. The capacity of a program, class, or grade level must stay within compliance of Gillingham Charter School's charter, which states Gillingham Charter School's goal is to have 16-20 seats available per grade level. Classes shall not exceed twenty-two (22) students in any class.

Gillingham Charter School shall enroll an eligible student whose parent(s)/legal guardian(s) submits a Lottery Application unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level or building. In such cases, a random lottery will be conducted (see Lottery section of policy).

An eligible Kindergarten student must be age five before August 15 of the year in which the school year begins; beginning students must be six before entering 1st grade.

At the end of the enrollment period, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of acceptance to the School or assigned a lottery number, in the event that applications exceed capacity. If capacity is not reached after the established enrollment period, subsequent applications will be accepted as received until the class is full. All following applicants will be placed on the waiting list according to their Lottery preference.

It is the responsibility of each parent to familiarize themselves with the admissions and enrollment process, including deadlines. All deadlines are final, and no exceptions will be made.

Student/Parent Orientation

All new parents and students will be requested to join the student coach, special education teacher (if applicable) and enrollment coordinator for a "New Parent/Student Orientation." This orientation will cover the following items in a streamlined way and allow us to get a better grasp on the student's needs:

- Explain the policies for dress code, attendance, make up work
- Explain how we differ from other public schools
 - i.e. how we "grade" work, what our expectations for work and respect are, how we implement Nurtured Heart, our uses of narration, living science books, nature

study, etc.

Including this step will allow the administration team to:

- Introduce students and families to who we are
- Understand why the student's and family's reason for joining Gillingham
- Determine the best placement in our academic programming
 - Special education programs
 - Title I program
 - Self-contained classrooms program
 - Habit Formation Plan
 - Attendance and Truancy Improvement Plan

Re-enrollment

Students currently attending Gillingham Charter School will have the opportunity to re-enroll for the next school year by accurately completing and returning the required Returning Student Form by the deadline provided. Students whose parents fail to return an accurate Returning Student Form by the posted deadline will not be guaranteed enrollment for the upcoming school year and will be required to participate in the lottery process with new students seeking admission.

Lottery

In the event the number of applicants exceeds the number of enrollment slots (seats) available based on the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building, the school will accept students by a random selection process. A public lottery will be held, as necessary, to determine enrollment. An impartial individual will be selected to conduct the lottery. The school will grant enrollment preference according to the aforementioned criteria. The date, time, and location of the public lottery will be posted at the school, on the school's website, and in a newspaper of general circulation at least one week prior to the lottery being held.

The lottery drawing will continue until every name has been drawn and scheduled for enrollment or placed on a numerical waiting list. The lottery will be system generated.

The school will notify applicant parents within 30 days of the public lottery with the outcome as to whether their child has been accepted or has been placed on a wait list.

Parents of students picked from the public lottery will have 10 days to accept or decline the student's seat for the student to be enrolled at Gillingham Charter School.

Wait lists

After all available enrollment slots (seats) are filled, wait lists will be created and maintained for each grade. The initial wait list will be created randomly (within each "pool" according to the Lottery preference) as part of the public lottery. Students on the wait list are offered seats when they open according to their lottery placement and timeframe of enrollment for each subsequent school year. The amount of time on the wait list isn't predictable. When a slot becomes available in a grade, the parents of the first student on the wait list will be contacted and given forty-eight (48) hours to accept. Acceptance is determined by the parent emailing, calling, or stating their acceptance of the seat to the Enrollment Coordinator within forty-eight hours of being notified by the school. If the enrollment slot is declined or if no response is received within forty-eight hours of being notified the enrollment slot will be forfeited and the next student on the wait list will be contacted.

A student on the wait list will move to the next grade's wait list at the end of the school year, if the student was not able to receive a seat during the school year in which they applied. This will continue until a seat becomes available or the parents decide to remove the student from the wait list.

Lottery Deadline and Admission

Once the lottery is completed and parents or guardians of newly admitted students are chosen for a seat and accept the seat, they will have 10 days to complete and submit the required enrollment documentation to secure the student's seat and formally enroll the student at Gillingham Charter School. The New Student Online Enrollment portal link and directions will be emailed to parents once they have accepted the student's seat. This is where enrollment documentation can be completed. Paper copies of the enrollment forms are available in the school office upon request. Electronic signatures will be accepted (See policy on Electronic Signatures). A waiting list will be set for each grade level after the lottery, and any openings will be filled from this waiting list.

Applications received after the lottery deadline will be placed at the end of the waiting list. If there is no waiting list and there is space in a grade level, then the student can be immediately enrolled once the required enrollment documentation is received.

Basic Education Circular – Enrollment of Students

Gillingham Charter School adheres to instructions from the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding admission and enrollment. To read the complete laws enrollment see 24 P.S. §13-1301 – §13-1306.


The Board of Trustees reserves the right to amend the Admissions & Enrollment Policy at any time.

Written Policies

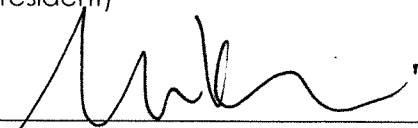
Gillingham Charter School's written policy on Admissions & Enrollment is a public record.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER OR APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS AND/OR CHARTER CONTROL.

Adopted this 16 day of NOV, 2021



(BOT President)



(BOT Secretary)