

Gillingham Charter School, 915 Howard Avenue, Pottsville, PA 17901

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Schuylkill County has the third highest dropout rate in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia County – 16.4%; Lancaster County- 16%; Schuylkill County – 14.5%; Entire State- 9.6%). Schuylkill students are ashamed of their county and leave it to live elsewhere after college, so the county has the third lowest number of college graduates. Only 10.1 percent have a bachelor's degree in a state where the average is 18 percent. Leaders in Schuylkill County are concerned.

"The numbers are ominous. It's indicative of the fact that we have to ratchet up the value of education," Mark Scarbinsky, Schuylkill County administrator and director of economic development has stated. Gillingham Charter School (GCS) will break the county's trends. Our goal is to see 95% of incoming freshmen graduate; 90% of GCS graduates enter and complete some form of education after high school; 100% of GCS students participate in the high school internship program for two years; and 50% of our students return to live in the county.

To meet the above stated goals, Gillingham seeks to "ratchet up education" in Schuylkill County and the US. After one successful year, the school seeks federal monies to further develop and implement the unique, innovative, research-based Relational Education program that will make GCS 1.) a high quality public education option for students in the county and 2.) a high quality charter school that models innovative Relational Education practices for schools to copy and research.

Schuylkill County needs GCS as an educational option. Gillingham is the first and only brick and mortar charter school *in the entire county*, a place lacking in effective educational