

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Character of Our Community: The SSU Regional Identity Contest

SCHUYLKILL HAVEN, Pa. – South Schuylkill Unified (SSU) invites the community to bring the spirit of South Schuylkill to life through an original character, name, and story. Entries are due Monday, November 2, 2026. The winning individual or group will receive a \$500 prize sponsored by an SSU Board member.

The contest is free and open to all ages and skill levels. Individuals, families, students, businesses, community organizations, groups, classes, and teams are invited to enter. No artistic training or professional experience is required.

“You do not need to be an artist. You only need an original idea that brings South Schuylkill to life,” said Donna Eberhart, SSU Executive Director. “We want the best original community idea, not simply the most professionally rendered image.”

Characters should reflect South Schuylkill as a region, drawing inspiration from its people, history, local businesses, arts, natural assets, and shared future. The concept should connect across communities, rather than represent only one municipality, school, or business. The selected character may appear in SSU outreach, events, educational materials, social media, and other promotions.

Entries must include a character name, an original drawing or visual rendering, and a short concept statement explaining the character’s story and regional connection. Hand-drawn work and original digital artwork are welcome. Entrants under age 18 must have written consent from a parent or legal guardian, including minors participating in groups, classes, or teams.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is prohibited in creating any part of an entry, including the concept, name, story, or artwork. AI-generated content that has been traced, redrawn, or modified is also prohibited. All work must be original. Entrants may use ordinary digital drawing tools to create their own artwork.

SSU will convene a volunteer committee of diverse community members to conduct a blind review of all submissions on November 9, 2026, with entrant names and identifying information removed from judging materials. Entries will be judged on the strength of the idea, story, regional relevance, memorability, and adaptability for future uses. Professional artistic polish will not be a judging criterion.

Three finalists will be selected, and all entrants will be notified of the status of their submission by November 11, 2026. Finalists will be asked to give a short, in-person presentation at SSU’s November 19, 2026, Board meeting. The Board will make the final selection and vote at that meeting.

SSU reserves the right to refine the winning design for future use or to select no winner.

For full contest details and submission instructions, visit SouthSchuylkillUnified.org. For questions, contact Donna Eberhart, Executive Director, at deberhart@southschuylkillunified.com.

About South Schuylkill Unified

South Schuylkill Unified is a nonprofit that works to build a welcoming, generationally diverse, and economically strong region by supporting local businesses, attracting new opportunities, connecting natural assets, and encouraging community participation.

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