



Dear GCA Families.

The lawsuit is the final salvo from the opposition and, despite the attention of the press, we believe it is without foundation and is a last desperate tactic intended to discourage families already enrolled from attending. Let me try answer the questions I have received from families in the hope that they will answer any you have as well.

**Do we need to worry about the lawsuit closing the school before it opens?**

**No. The lawsuit will be dismissed immediately or in summary judgement.**

We have been working with Foley Hoag, one of the finest law firms in the country. The main contentions of the suit are that the school was illegally approved by Commissioner Chester because he didn't follow the process or abide by the recommendation of the Charter School Board that reviewed the charter application. This is an old complaint that has already been raised and dismissed. The state has already indicated that the charter school review board are on the Commissioner's staff - and he had the authority to do whatever he wants regardless of their recommendation. The charter was approved legally and the Gloucester Community Charter School is a legal agent of the state.

The only other basis identified is ‘damage’ caused by the charter school funding in which the district will have to make adjustments due to the loss of per-pupil funding. All charters are funded in the same way. This cannot and will not be viewed as a ‘damage’. In fact, in the first year, the district receives 100% of the funding - so not only will there be no damage - the district is actually ahead - meeting the needs for fewer students but receiving the same funding.

**Is the meeting with the Commissioner seeking to ‘cut a deal’ that will do away with the Charter and cause the school not to open?**

**No. Absolutely not. We will open at the end of August.**

We received an invitation from the Commissioner on June 15 to attend a meeting on June 21. The Mayor had to cancel and we have been seeking a mutually agreeable date since. The only topic of the meeting defined was and is, “the Gloucester Community Arts Charter School”.

We have received no agenda from the Commissioner regarding the meeting he requested but, in the spirit of collaboration are happy to listen.

We are not seeking a compromise or any change in the Charter. We have a legal charter. According to the Charter School Office, and we are “on track” in all requirements defined in the Opening Procedures Guide. Our enrollment is solid. Work on the permanent building is moving quickly and all the classrooms will be framed-in by the end of the week. We are excited about the teachers who have been hired and look forward to opening day in August.

**Will the temporary classrooms be ready on time?**

**Yes.**

We have submitted plans for two different modular classrooms. The units in the first plan are the same as those used by the city. The units in the second plan are slightly larger and newer. Both models only take 10 days to install, so we full expect to open on time at the end of August. Work on the permanent building is moving along very well. (please see attached photograph- and more will be up on our website soon). Please drive by anytime - it is very exciting. Your children will be moving into a new facility in November!

**When can we meet the teachers?**

**At the end of the month we will have another reception for all families to come and meet the teachers! And...**

We’re finalizing our lease agreement with **Apple** computers for 20 laptops and the rolling carts for the portable laptop lab; ordering math materials from *Investigations* (grades K-5 math) and *Connected Math* (grade 6-8 math); negotiating with **Project Adventure** to work with our PE program; arranging teacher training workshops with **Responsive Classroom**.

We are in our new offices at 11 Blackburn Center. Please stop by for a visit!

With best wishes,

Tony Blackman  
Executive Director

Jane O'Connor  
Head of School