

Submitter: Tammy Puri
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB767

As an employee, parent of a student that completed her entire K-8 education and community member of Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School, I vehemently oppose this bill that would effectively knee cap a highly praised public charter Montessori charter school that has been in existence for over 14 years and has graduated hundreds of children that have gone on to be highly effective leaders and in the top of their respective high school graduating classes. Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School has been leasing space from our sponsoring Gresham Barlow School District for over 10 years and in September 2022 was told that their long-term lease with the District was being terminated at the end of June 2023 so that they could consolidate their administration and operations departments into one location. Our school is being forced to relocate its 400+ student, families, teacher and staff body in an incredibly short amount of time when the real estate inventory that would be able to accommodate 17 classrooms, in addition to normal common and office space, is VERY LOW, if non-existent. The leadership of the school has been fortunate to find and enter into a Purchase and Sale Agreement for a building that would accommodate the NEEDS of the school; however low and behold it is 1,000 FEET OUTSIDE THE GBSD BOUNDARY LINE and in the Reynolds School District!!! Moving our school into a more suburban to urban environment will allow access to open up for enrollment to the under-served, more diverse populations in the Rockwood and surrounding area while continuing to serve our current families. This increased access is a key part of our current Strategic Plan - to be accessible to more diverse communities The availability of public transportation in the potential new location is also a HUGE asset for our current families, teachers and staff simply due to the fact that the school would no longer be in a rural area that is not accessible by public transportation. Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School is trying to find a home so that they can continue to provide students and families access to a free, high-quality, public Montessori school education that they are entitled to. Please vote NO on SB 767 and allow well established charter schools to be located within proximity to their existing community!