

Submitter: Tami OKinsella  
On Behalf Of: Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB767

I am writing on behalf of Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School, located in Damascus, Oregon, which has been serving children in Damascus and the surrounding areas for over 14 years. I strongly oppose Senate Bill 767 which was created to amend ORS 332.158. I oppose this because it has dire consequences for the children and families which Lewis and Clark Montessori School serves. Although the school would love to remain in the area of its sponsoring district, the school has recently been told by its sponsoring district to move out of the building the school is in--they are terminating the lease with the school, on June 30, 2023. Although the Administration has searched diligently, finding a building to accommodate all 17 classrooms and 400+ has proven impossible. The good news is that a building has been found which is only 1000 ft from the sponsoring district that can accommodate them. Additionally, it can also give more access to underserved and diverse populations in Rockwood and the surrounding area, a mission which the school has been trying to live out for the past 10 years but which has been hampered by the inaccessibility of public transportation to the Damascus area. They can do this and also continue to serve current families. This school has had a tremendous impact of students and families that were not being well served in their previous schools. Montessori Education is particularly effective approach with young children and continuing in this program through the elementary and middle school years has had tremendous benefits in terms of well-being and academic readiness for high school and college. The students are happy, they are given choices and allowed to move throughout the day. Please do not support SB 767 as it will likely end a very good program for children and families in Oregon.