

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

This bill will have disastrous consequences on a very well established, highly regarded charter school, Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School, and likely others across the state. Charter schools provide an important alternative educational experience to students who are often not successful in other school settings. School districts are not obligated to provide buildings for charter schools and as such, it is a terrible burden to limit the physical location of charter schools. My children have attended 2 different charter schools in Oregon and while both have prioritized staying within the district that holds their charter, both have been forced to consider properties in neighboring districts when their leases on current buildings were not renewed.

In the case of Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School, they were given months to secure a new location for a school that serves kids in pre-k through 8th grade. In this real estate and economic climate, that is a daunting task! They have found a great location just feet outside of their district boundary. This bill will have immediate and dire consequences to this thriving school that has developed a robust community and highly successful students over its 14 years of existence. Moreover, my moving to a more urban location this school, which already goes above and beyond most charter schools by providing before and after school care, bussing, and other services to increase access to this model of education, Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School will be better able to serve diverse communities and increase access to their school.

Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School means the world to my student who has attended 2 elementary schools, in addition to homeschooling for a time, before finding Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School. Now as a 6th grader she is a respected leader in her multi-grade classroom. testing in top percentiles and is eager to go to school each day. Please do not pass this bill without implementing a plan to ensure that charter schools are provided stable locations in their home district. In the case of Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School, their lease was terminated by their sponsoring district and no assistance was offered to aid in finding an alternate location. Children NEED stability and secure school locations are a necessity. Please do not punish schools who are forced out of their buildings in this economy and who are doing their best to continue providing high quality education to their students.