

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

To whom it may concern, as a parent of a 4th grade student that attends Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School in Damascus Oregon in the Gresham Barlow School District, I am writing in opposition to SB 767.

Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School has been in existence for over 14 years. It's charter is hosted by Gresham Barlow School District. We are forced to relocate in June 2023 due to a sudden lease termination by our sponsoring district, GBSD. It would be ideal for us to remain inside GBSD boundaries but given an extremely limited time frame and lack of existing facilities to accommodate 17 classrooms, our choices are limited. A facility has been found and Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School is in the process of purchasing the facility. The proposed new facility is located less than 1000 ft from the GBSD boundary. SB 767 passing would effectively close this incredible school. Over less than a 1000 feet!

We chose a charter school because of the unique learning style that is Montessori. The school begins in preschool and continues through 8th grade. Montessori education has such a positive impact on an individual, community, society and our world. Charter schools offer alternative education styles that better our world, offering options to the one size fits all standard education system. SB 767 would place an even greater hardship on charter schools than they already carry. Charter schools are often mistreated by their hosting district.

Our school, Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School is trying to find a permanent home so they can continue to provide students access to a free, high-quality, public Montessori education.

Our 4th grader began at Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School as a Kindergartener. She is thriving in the Montessori environment, and we would like to see her be able continue at this remarkable school. The school has such a positive impact on our family and our community. Please do not pass this bill and close our school. Below is a letter from our 9 year old daughter:

"Let Us Stay

I have learned so much in this school and I don't want to lose it. I have friends. Imagine if you were me at your school and one day you heard the news you were getting kicked out of your school by the district and a new proposed bill. Please let us stay...as a school...and as a family. "