

Submitter: Rudie Watzig  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB767

Good afternoon Education committee. I write you today to ask you to vote against this bill (SB 767), which would cause our charter school to close its doors for ever.

I have three boys, ages 8 to 13 who are enrolled at Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter school in Damascus, Oregon. Currently the school is sponsored in the Gresham Barlow School district, and is located within it's bounds. However we have been kicked out of this building we lease, and have been forced to find a new location. After months of searching with a short 6 month timeline, and with real-estate as it currently is, we finally found a fit. Unfortunately, if this bill passes, we would lose our charter, as it is located within the Reynolds School district. We had no other choice.

My three boys are very creative, and have special needs as well. I am a huge proponent for neighborhood schools and Teachers alike. My boy's brains are wired differently, however, and the local school never worked well for them. My oldest was not succeeding at all.

As a kid, I grew up an only child, and I was fortunate enough that my parents were able to afford to send me to a Montessori school for grade school. I attribute this education to my great success in life today, decades later. I wanted so badly to offer the same to my kids, however they run about \$800 per month per child. I simply cannot afford that tuition for three kids. We finally found this Montessori Charter school a few years ago.

My three kids are thriving! They love going to school every day. They are learning so much about science, math, nature, music and how the world works, and in a way that is perfect for their thought processes. How many kids do you know that, when sick, they fake being well so they do not miss out on school? My kids are three examples of this.

My youngest child Bruno is a math prodigy. He could count by base numbers 1 through 10 starting at the age of 2. For example, "Bruno, can you count to 100 by 7's?" a 2 year old, with his lack of speech skills would ramble off quickly, "7, 14, 21, 28...." This school allows for him to do math several grade levels above his actual grade, while also working on his diminished speech and writing that are below grade level. He is thriving.

My middle son, Otto is a musical genius, but suffers speech some problems. He is

very artistic. This school allows him to shine. He actually has friends at this school who care about him. He is fully engaged and interested in learning. He is thriving.

My oldest son Gerhard hated school from the very beginning of Kindergarten. He is now in the middle school program and loves it. His focus is on engineering and building stuff in the wood shop. His blueprint drawings are amazing and perfectly proportioned in 3D. While he used to be failing as a student before, at this school he has mostly A's and a few B's. He is thriving.

They have their friend networks, their support. This would disrupt the entire family of successful Oregonians. Please strongly consider your vote before casting that devastating aye vote on this bill, Senate Bill 767.

Respectfully yours,

Rudie Watzig  
SE Portland