

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

Dear Senators,

I am a staff member of Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School in Damascus, Oregon. We LOVE our school which has been in operation for 14 years, serving 400+ pre-K through Middle School students, families, teachers, and staff. We are currently in the Gresham-Barlow School District (GBSD) and are being forced to terminate our 7-year lease abruptly this year, which is year 3 of our formal 7-year lease. We have only until June to find a facility that will accommodate our 17 classrooms, cafeteria, PE, etc. The proposed facility that we have finally found is located less than 1000 feet from the GBSD boundary!

We are doing our very best to provide students with a high-quality, free, public Montessori school education. Our students perform exceedingly well in all academic areas, including children from all walks of life who are challenged physically, mentally and emotionally. Without an opportunity to turn an unfortunate situation into a positive one we will have 400+ children and 40+ staff members with nowhere to go in 4 short months!

Senators, please DO NOT support SB 767! It will wreak senseless havoc not only on our public charter school, but on other schools as well. Like you, we SHOW UP every day for our children, students, families, and staff. We are doing our utmost to deliver our students the BEST possible education day in and day out..

Please lend us your support by VOTING NO on SB767! It is a matter of security and stability for our wonderful school and all the children and families who depend on us!.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Laura K. Merrell, MA.